From Boys to Men

Social constructions of masculinity in contemporary society

Edited by T Shefer, K Ratele, A Strebel, N Shabalala & R Buikema

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CONTENTS

Foreword

This impressive collection of research on men, boys and masculinities would have been impossible just a generation ago. To earlier scholars, the main subject matter of the social sciences and humanities was indeed men – but men misunderstood as universal representatives of humanity, not men understood in their specificity as gendered beings. It took the worldwide impact of the women's liberation movement, and the many feminisms that have since developed, to change that – to bring gender into focus as a fundamental dimension of culture, politics and economy, and therefore to bring men into focus as participants in a gender system.

This did not happen immediately. 'Women's Studies', as it was practised in the universities of the rich countries from the 1970s on, was overwhelmingly concerned with women's experience, women's history and women's culture, filling in the huge gaps left by patriarchal systems of knowledge. Yet feminist analysis constantly raised new questions about men, as bearers of privilege in gender relations, and about how masculinities were made and sustained.

Substantive gender research focused on men followed gender research focused on women by a good ten years, but it was a logical consequence, and it has gradually built up. A joint effort by women and men, this research documented different patterns of masculinity, the social settings in which they were found, and the social processes through which they were maintained. Theoretical work, drawing on psychoanalysis, gay liberation theory, feminism and power structure research, developed new models for understanding men and masculinities.

What I call the 'ethnographic moment' in masculinity research has been immensely productive, and is well represented in this book. This does not only mean research by ethnographers – some are life history studies, some are documentary, some are surveys, some participant observation. All of them, however, share ethnography's concern with the detailed documentation of local social realities. This approach has been extraordinarily fruitful, and has provided massive documentation of the diversity of masculinities, the interplay between different forms of masculinity, the patterns of hegemony and contestation, and the embedding of masculinities in economic and cultural contexts.

This research first developed, as an organised field, in countries that had both abundant economic resources and political or cultural traditions likely to support it: the United States, Britain and Australia, Germany and the Nordic countries. The relevance of the approach was certainly not confined to those countries, and the last ten years has seen a great internationalisation of research on men and masculinities.

A couple of years ago I counted the collections (not just individual studies) of research on masculinity that had recently been published. Just five years saw the appearance of collections of research from Brazil, Germany, France, the middle East, Scandinavia, North

America, Latin America generally, southern Africa, Japan, New Zealand and Australia. More have been added since, together with the 2005 Handbook of Studies on Men and Masculinities that attempts to be worldwide in its coverage.

This has, naturally, affected the themes of research on men and masculinities. The history of colonialism in shaping masculinities, and the relevance of contemporary capitalist globalisation in reshaping gender relations, have come much more into focus. The interplay of gender politics with race politics, an unavoidable concern as southern Africa grapples with the legacy of apartheid, has also emerged as an important issue in other parts of the world, including Australia. The specificity of regional patterns of masculinity, even the relevance of the European-derived language of 'masculinity' and 'femininity', is being debated in Latin American and east Asian research.

Other conceptual changes have affected the field. Earlier research on masculinity has been criticised by poststructuralists for relying on a too-rigid concept of gender identity. There is something in this criticism, and very interesting new research has shown how both men and women can shift strategically between different positions in gender discourse. From early on, researchers recognised the existence of multiple masculinities and hierarchies among them – that was, indeed, one of the founding insights of the field. We are now more able to see the very complex tissue of gender beliefs and practices that operate in particular situations, and the varying ways young men (for instance) draw on them in constructing ways of life.

What is the use of this research effort? Why would we put time, money and researchers' ingenuity into what was, a generation ago, not even imagined as a research field?

I would answer this question in part by pointing to the growth of applied masculinity research, which takes the findings of descriptive research and theory, and puts them to work in highly practical ways. The range of applications is now impressive. It includes

- work in education, including the learning problems of boys, school discipline and violence, sexual harassment and sexism in schools, curriculum content and the training of teachers;
- work in health, including occupational health and safety, the prevention of road deaths and injury; reproductive and sexual health, especially the prevention of Aids;
- work on violence, including interpersonal violence and its prevention, including domestic violence and violence in public places; also on international peacemaking, and social reconstruction after civil or international war;
- work on men's relationship to children, especially as fathers in families, but also as teachers;
- the counselling and psychotherapy of men, in ways that pay attention to gender relations, and

- work in organisations, such as public sector agencies, exploring men's place in gendered organisational cultures and their relationships to equal opportunity and other reform programmes.

I would also argue that this research has a wider cultural importance, though this is harder to prove. Feminist research has conclusively shown the massive patterns of gender inequality that mark the contemporary world – so conclusively that the issue can only be ignored by those who wilfully close their eyes to massive social injustice. Men, as the principal holders of power in modern gender orders, are in an important sense 'gatekeepers' for reform. Though different groups of men vary greatly in their capacity to effect change, change among men – on a wide scale too – is necessary if we are to move towards a world of gender equality.

One of the main obstacles to such change is ideological, the belief that men cannot change, that the way they behave is fixed – by the genes, by tradition, by self-interest, by socialisation, or whatever. Research on men, boys and masculinities has already been significant in contesting this belief. Research has documented, on a massive scale, the rich variations in ways of being a man, and has shown dramatic processes of gender change in history, in communities and in individual lives. To spread this knowledge – even without debating how to apply it – is an important contribution by research to the public culture.

Anti-sexist, pro-equality politics among men have now moved into international arenas. For instance, UNESCO undertook an initiative connecting the 'culture of peace' with changes towards more peaceable masculinities. In 2004, the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (a committee of the General Assembly) adopted a document on the role of men and boys in achieving gender equality, the first international policy agreement on this issue. Research has provided support for these moves, and will continue to be important in turning them into practice on the ground.

We cannot be complacent. The year 2004 also saw the re-election of George Bush in the aftermath of the bombing and invasion of Iraq and the mass bombing of Afghanistan. Neo-conservatism's appeal to toughness in the face of challenges, the quick resort to violence, the dogmatism, ethnocentrism and preoccupation with control, all signify (and are intended to signify) a restored masculinity, an authoritative, in-command masculinity. We can go backwards, in terms of equality, human rights, and decent human relations. Research cannot stop the bombs. But it has a role to play in broadening understanding of how such things happen, and creating a cultural climate in which they are less likely to happen.

Raewyn Connell
Sydney, January 2006

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INTRODUCTION

From boys to men: An overview

Tamara Shefer, Kopano Ratele, Anna Strebel, Nokuthula Shabalala & Rosemarie Buikema

It has become increasingly popular in South Africa and internationally to theorise about and research boys and men. Emerging to a large extent from feminist theoretical work, critical men's studies is a growing discipline in its own right. While not wholeheartedly embraced by all feminists, the focus on the construction of masculinities has constituted an important shift in the local and international study of gender. The term gender, in spite of being heavily contested, was always intended as a way of speaking of the social representation of men and women, masculinities and femininities. On the other hand, in this country and elsewhere, the term gender has for the most part been (problematically) conflated with women.

In South Africa, the focus on gendered identities and sexualities has been accelerated by the imperatives of challenging HIV/Aids and the growing awareness of the extent and severity of gender-based violence. It is a well-established fact that among young Africans, and with South Africa representing the hub of the sub-Saharan infection, HIV/Aids rates are at epidemic levels (Shisana et al., 2005; Statistics South Africa, 2006; UNAIDS, 2005). What is more, alongside the deaths and incapacity from Aids and HIV, particularly in South Africa, are the high rates and severity of sexual- and gender-based violence. Gross violence and sexual- and gender-based violence continue to be endemic in South African communities and, as evident from figures such as those below, represent a major social problem (Crime Information Analysis Centre, 2005). In the last few years, figures of reported rape have remained above 50 000 per annum, and alarmingly appear to be increasing – in 2004/2005, 2 931 more victims reported rape than in 2003/2004. It has also become more than evident that gender-based violence is enmeshed with the spread of HIV/Aids, both contributing to the increase of those infected and exacerbating the impact on those infected and affected (see, for example, Vetten & Bhana, 2001).

Much of the research and intervention in both of these priority areas in the early post-1994 years tended to focus on girls and women and inadvertently ignored boys and men. Notwithstanding the priority of work on girls and women, who are generally at the receiving end of gender-based violence and coercive, inequitable and unsafe sexual practices, a range of problems related to the emphasis on women by researchers, policy makers and practitioners has begun to emerge. For one, it has become evident that women have inadvertently been blamed for the spread of HIV/Aids as well as, in some cases, for gender-based violence. This is increasingly evident in the gendered analysis of HIV/Aids stigmatisation, where women appear to carry the projected load of social stigma and blame for HIV/Aids (e.g., Strebel, 1993; Baleta, 1999; Bollinger, 2002; Jennings et al., 2002; POLICY Project et al., 2003; Ratele & Shefer, 2002). Similarly, the focus on women in intervention work with respect to halting the spread of HIV inadvertently lays the responsibility of challenging and mitigating the impact of HIV/Aids on women.

Researchers have not been immune to the slippery slide into problematic discourses that reproduce and legitimise the very power inequalities and traditional assumptions that they seek to challenge. Thus, much of the research in the area of HIV/Aids and sexuality tends inadvertently to reproduce traditional constructions of masculinity and femininity. Women, in the empirical literature on HIV/Aids and gender-based violence, emerge as passive, submissive and inevitable 'victims', while men are positioned in a deterministic manner as perpetrators, dominant and in control over women. While such knowledge needed to be exposed in the understanding of the power dynamics inherent in ways in which (hetero)sexuality is negotiated, the uncritical discourse of male dominance–female submissiveness has presented a unitary and essentialist (whether biological or sociological) picture of masculinity, femininity and heterosexual relationships.

Interrogating men

Thus the 'turn to men', has been important. Men have always been the privileged partners in the binarism of gender, invisibilised by their normativity, yet assumed to be the centre by their dominance. Like whiteness, heterosexuality and middle-classness, masculinity has not been scrutinised in the same way as femininity. And when men and boys have been studied, it has been predominantly in the traditional mode of exploring men as perpetrators. Until recently, there have been few studies that allow for a more complex understanding of women and men and the ways in which they negotiate their relationships. It is also argued that, if we cannot acknowledge alternative masculinities and femininities and see the resistance, the strength, of both men and women, we cannot successfully challenge the dominant mode of gender identities and gender relations (which arguably facilitates problematic and dangerous outcomes for both men and women).

There has been a growing body of work internationally in theorising masculinities. While the overriding approach is social constructionist, there is also some debate about the extent to which certain contemporary dominant versions of masculinity are relatively universal. At any rate, ethnographic work in South Africa reflects quite strongly international findings in terms of traditional versions of masculinity as active, dominant, controlling and with (hetero)sexual prowess as a key component of the achievement and performance of successful masculinity. On the other hand, it is also more than evident that even those apparent commonalities are nuanced and shaped by the particular context in which they occur. The chapters in this text are testimony to this. While the centrality of sexual prowess, risk-taking and being a patriarch/father are key threads emerging throughout the various chapters, so too are the complexities of the particularities of different contexts, across time, place and space.

In South Africa and on the continent there have been a number of recent texts that have paved the way for further work on masculinities (e.g., Morrell, 2001d; Ouzgane & Morrell, 2005; Reid & Walker, 2005; Richter & Morrell, 2006), but a focus on boys and men, nationally and internationally, remains relatively marginal. While the theoretical frameworks in critical men's studies are widely accepted, there remains a lack of data – notwithstanding continued debates – of stories and narratives of boys and men. It is this gap that the current text seeks to address.

It needs to be said, by way of contextualising the gaze on boys and men, that this is not only important in terms of the theoretical arguments made here but also because, in some ways, boys and men and their particular vulnerabilities have been ignored or obfuscated in the dominant view of men as perpetrators. One of the key components of hegemonic masculinity that has been written about internationally is the imperative to 'prove' masculinity. Thus masculinity, like femininity, does not come 'naturally', but is rather constantly and continuously fought for through performances of idealised and normative versions of masculinity, including being macho, hypersexual, and so on. The attention to males would then converge with studies on male power and practices of masculinity, especially on sexuality and sexual- and gender-based violence (e.g., Connell, 2000; Morrell, 2001d). One of the key tenets of critical studies on masculinities is that there are undeniable pressures on young males, in a wide variety of contexts, to be like other, older males. At the same time there is pressure on all males, young and old, to conform to the prevailing dominant mode of masculinity. Two key elements of the dominant mode of masculinity are heterosexuality and fearlessness or risk-taking: to wit, a real male is not a sissy; a man is defined by having sex with women; and a man is afraid of nothing. Expectations of young males have thus traditionally tended to demand that they take all manner of risks, specifically sexual and mortal risk, but also risks related to smoking, using other drugs and substances, and engaging in sexually abusive and other violent behaviours (*The New Men?*, 1998; Brod & Kauffman, 1994; *Masculinities in Southern Africa*, 1998).

Therefore it is not surprising that in South Africa there are hundreds of thousands of what may be termed missing males. According to Statistics South Africa (2006), the population of the country was approximately 47 390 900 by mid 2006, of which under 23 300 000 were males and over 24 000 000 females (see table 1). In other words, there is at this moment a numerical male–female difference of approximately 735 700.

Table 1 Estimates of males and females and age cohorts, mid-year 2006

Male	Female	Total	Ages
2 600 900	2 563 600	5 164 500	0-4
2 522 600	2 489 500	5 012 100	5-9
2 556 800	2 533 000	5 089 800	10–14
2 476 900	2 461 100	4 938 000	15–19
2 332 800	2 321 000	4 653 800	20–24
2 166 900	2 104 200	4 271 100	25–29
1 932 500	1 909 000	3 841 500	30–34
1 393 500	1 448 600	2 842 100	35–39
1 158 300	1 269 900	2 428 200	40–44
1 052 600	1 162 400	2 215 000	45–49
855 200	965 600	1 820 800	50–54
671 200	784 900	1 455 100	55–59
586 500	683 100	1 269 600	60–64
437 000	537 800	974 800	65–69
290 500	381 900	672 400	70–74
168 400	237 200	405 600	70–79
125 900	210 500	336 400	80+
23 327 600	**24 063 300**	**47 390 900**	**Total**

Source: Statistics South Africa, 2006

The estimates show that there are more males than females from birth to around the mid 30s, when there is a drop in male population figures. The age cohort of 35 to 39 shows that there are nearly 55 100 fewer 35- to 39-year-old males than females. The fact that the numerical difference between males and females is greatest between the ages of 40 to 59 – a difference of over 440 000 – ought to worry social, political, cultural and economic leaders.

One of the points that it is clear when looking at population figures, and not immediately so when looking at rates of fatal and non-fatal crimes (see table 2 below), is that there needs to be as much understanding about what is happening to boys and men as there is about violence against girls and women. Males are disappearing from the

population because they are dying – specifically killing and being killed by other males more than females (e.g., Matzopoulos, 2004, 2005).

Table 2 Cases of selected categories of crime over two years

Crime category	April to March 2003/2004	April to March 2004/2005
Murder	19 824	18 793
Rape	52 733	55 114
Attempted murder	30 076	24 516
Indecent assault	9 302	10 123
Assault with the intent to inflict grievous bodily harm	260 082	249 369
Common assault	280 942	267 857

Source: Statistics South Africa, 2006

Given this context, it may be that the historical concern with violence against women and the HIV/Aids epidemic has developed a blind spot in relation to boys and men, with its tendency to focus primarily on women's and girls' experience and barriers to protection. While such attention was and remains important in regard to gendered power, it has had some unforeseen and unfortunate results. Over and above the inadvertent 'blaming discourse' and reproduction of traditional gender roles outlined earlier, a further untoward consequence is the clear evidence that the programme and thinking around HIV/Aids and sexual risk, which has worked in other parts of the world, has not been successful in sub-Saharan Africa, with the statistics on the diseases and deaths appearing relentless.

The downside of the heavy focus on females and the concomitant neglect to attend to males was one of the promptings to investigate the role of masculinities in the work to combat the spread of HIV/Aids. Researchers argued that, in the context of the epidemic, young men in particular play a central role in it, and this is seen to be across borders of various kinds – geographic, racial, cultural and economic (Shefer, Ratele, Strebel & Shabalala, 2005). Young men of all groups are the most likely to be involved in activities associated with HIV risk, including drug injection and unsafe sexual practices (Scalway, 2001). Also, two years ago, the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women reiterated the potential and the role of men and boys in attempts to achieve gender equality and in advancing the goal of sharing power and responsibility between females and males (United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women in collaboration with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/Aids/The International Labour Organization/The United Nations Development Programme, 2004).

The roots of this text

In response to our concern related to the issues outlined above, in particular a growing wariness with the endless, interrogative gaze on girls and women and its inadvertent problematic effects, the editors of this text decided to shift their focus to include researching masculinities. It also seemed at that point (four years ago) that there was a lack of local empirical work on boys and men, documenting their experiences and constructions of masculinities and sexualities. Given the multiplicity of difference in the South African context, there is the need to document the contextualisation of gender identities and performances across diversities of place and space.

In 2003 we applied for and received funding from the South Africa–Netherlands Research Programme on Alternatives in Development (SANPAD) to conduct a project on adolescent boys and risk-taking that would encompass both a theoretical and empirical focus.

'The construction of masculinity and risk-taking among young South African men' study was qualitative and sought to be deliberately interventionist in nature. The main question that the study sought to answer was: How do young men construct their masculinity and how does this impact on their risk-taking behaviours with respect to sexuality, and other areas of potential risk, such as substance abuse, women abuse and violence?

The central aim of the project was to gain a deeper understanding of young men's construction and experience of masculinity. This was also done in order to raise their awareness and enhance their problem-solving skills with respect to risk-taking behaviours. Among the key objectives of the project were the following: extending current theoretical understandings of gender-based health issues; exploring young men's masculinity, sexuality and risk-taking behaviour; raising young men's awareness and generating self-understanding; and developing problem-solving and self-reflexive skills among young men towards enhancing health-promoting behaviours.

The project envisaged that the research would contribute to the growing field of studies of masculinities and men, in particular knowledge with respect to young men and the relationship of masculinity to risk-taking behaviours. Furthermore, it was hoped that the research would contribute to the development of models of health promotion interventions with youth, particularly young men. Finally, it was expected that the research findings would have implications for policy development in the area of youth health education, gender-based violence and HIV/Aids. To these ends, we called a conference of researchers and activists at the beginning of 2005.

'From Boys to Men: Masculinities & Risk' was held over two days, 26 and 27 January 2005, at the Two Oceans Aquarium in Cape Town. The conference aimed to provide a focused forum for sharing work that explores current thinking on and interventions in, amongst others, masculinities, male practices and boys' identities across different social,

economic, cultural, linguistic and political locations, with particular reference to the intersection of such practices and identities with risk.

The call for the conference (and subsequently, for this volume) managed to attract a number of highly regarded scholars and activists in the fields of studies of men and masculinities, feminism and gender. While the conference and project were located in South Africa, it was especially welcome to get contributions at the gathering and for this book from Ghana (in particular the work of Akosua Adomako Ampofo, which is included in the volume), and Men Against Aids in Kenya (which is unfortunately not included). The conference also had input from other countries outside of Africa (and here mention might be made of Jeff Hearn from Finland and Britain). In addition, aligned to our objectives was a strong focus on community-based and practical interventions for boys and men by non-governmental and community-based organisations that work in this area. In this regard, a co-hosting partner of the conference with the University of the Western Cape's Women & Gender Studies Programme and Psychology Department was the non-governmental organisation Gender Education and Training Network (GETNET).

>>Editors of the book with some of the authors at the opening of the From Boys to Men conference, UWC, January 2005

This book is largely a result of this collaboration and sharing, and of a decision made at that forum to attempt to publish more texts in the area of critical men's studies in South Africa and on the continent.

Overview of chapters

In chapter 1, entitled 'The problems boys and men create, the problems boys and men experience', Jeff Hearn provides a valuable overview to the focus on boys and men in the context of the complexities of gender power relations. The chapter is a broad sweep of key theoretical developments in understanding the relations between the problems that boys and men create (such as violence against women, children and other boys and men) and the problems that boys and men experience (such as health problems and some forms of social exclusion). The author suggests that any work on boys and men needs to consider several interconnected and sometimes contradictory sets of relations, including boys' power relations to and differences from men; boys' and men's autobiographies, and boys and men in history; more dominating and less (or non-)dominating aspects of boys, men, men's practices and masculinities; boys and men's relations to both gender and other forms of power relations, such as age, class, disability, ethnicity, racialisation, sexuality; boys and men in positions of power; resource accumulation and decision making; boys and men as a collective social category and as diverse and differentiated;

boys and men in a local and national context; and boys and men in a transnational and global context. The chapter argues that, while attention to differences and diversities is certainly needed, this should not be at the expense of losing the focus on the structured asymmetrical relations of power between men and women.

Rob Pattman, in chapter 2, problematises the way in which poor, young, black males are constructed negatively, as hedonistic and dangerous, in contemporary popular and academic Southern African contexts. While the roots of these constructions in apartheid history and other continuing factors like unemployment are not denied, current studies indicate that this dominant discourse on young black males is not the whole story. Rather, the life stories of such boys and men illustrate far more nuanced experiences and practices that are silenced by the dominant pictures. The author suggests that ways of researching and working with black boys/young men should be employed that acknowledge their intelligence and creativity, that address identities they may be invested in but that put them at risk, and that open up spaces for them to critically reflect on the identities they construct and inhabit. In this respect, the author insists that the approach we take in research is central. Drawing on lessons learned in a UNICEF-funded study in which a 'young person centred' approach was used, he shows how powerful research methods are in framing the responses of participants. His chapter demonstrates a project in which boys are addressed as people who actively *construct* their very identities in everyday forms of interaction, and the interviewing process itself is a site in which identities are constructed and negotiated. Such an approach facilitated deeper engagement by both boys and girls that showed how these issues were understood in the context of their lives and relations more generally. Importantly, the chapter foregrounds the centrality of methodology in knowledge production, positing alternative ways of engaging with and understanding boys that facilitate their elaboration on and engagement with alternative constructions of masculinities and their own identities.

Akosua Adomako Ampofo and John Boateng investigate the ways in which hegemonic masculinities structure gender relations in Ghana. One of the key findings in the study on which chapter 3 is based is that the boys attach different meanings to manhood, and also appear to differ in the extent to which they practise or identify with hegemonic masculinities. Importantly, it was clear that gender differences (such as in household tasks) become more defined as they move from boyhood to manhood, and especially in relation to being a married man. As masculinity is clearly recognised as something which has to be achieved in stages and over time, the authors argue that local ideas about hegemonic masculinities need to be altered from within in order to transform the pairing of masculinity and dominant behaviour and to bring about alternative ways to perform masculinity.

Fatherhood, an historically marginalised terrain of gender studies, is receiving increased attention in contemporary South Africa. In chapter 4, Robert Morrell, who has also published a recent text on fatherhood (Richter & Morrell, 2006), discusses

fatherhood as a prism for understanding young masculinities and an important aspect of male identification. He argues that family and fatherhood represent a cultural resource around which township boys are able to construct their masculinity, which involves taking on responsibilities of manhood. In looking at history from the 1970s onwards, the author shows how academic analyses of youth have consistently evolved – for example, post 1975 they were both 'young lions' forming the vanguard of struggle (an adult responsibility indeed) and 'innocent victims of state brutality'. Morrell goes on to show how in contemporary contexts the value of fatherhood and family in constructed masculinity and identity differs for young males who are in different economic positions. Economic positioning affects the way in which family is viewed by the boys, and in turn it affects its value in one's identity. African boys' economic aspirations, although shared with peers from different economic positioning, are tied up with family. Morrell argues that, given their material conditions and the limitations imposed on their life trajectory by many contextual challenges/difficulties, the gendered role of 'provider' becomes important for township boys. It is in this context that valuing of family and the centrality of fatherhood and family in narratives around which African boys' dreams are organised makes sense. For Morrell, aspiring to be a father by these young boys/men is a statement about taking responsibility. This study adds further impetus to the argument made by Pattman that the assumption of a young, poor, black male predisposition to irresponsible practices and violence is problematic.

Chapter 5, by Graham Lindegger and Justin Maxwell, reports on part of a gender analysis of the Targeted Aids Intervention (TAI) project, which is an NGO dedicated to gender-based HIV interventions among adolescent boys and young men. Drawing on data from TAI documentation, as well as from focus groups and interviews with TAI staff and school boys who participated in the project, evidence emerged of the pressures on boys and young men to conform to hegemonic standards of masculinity, as well as of some ambivalence in response to these expectations, thus indicating both complicity and resistance. Interesting too was the private–public divide in notions of masculinity as expressed by young men, as was the 'culture of deception' in their positionings in relation to hegemonic masculinity. The authors identify the TAI project as providing an important opportunity for young men to engage constructively with notions of masculinity, as well as HIV intervention programmes.

Kopano Ratele and his co-authors present some of the work emerging out of a larger study on adolescent boys and risk-taking. Chapter 6 is concerned with exploring different contexts of becoming a man, in particular those affected by the history of racialised inequalities and socio-economic position. The diversity between experiences of adolescent masculinity in the different communities represented by participants was a key finding of the study. On the other hand, there were also commonalities emerging, a key one being the centrality of the imperative to differentiate oneself as a boy/man from girls/

women. In this respect, being heterosexual and 'othering' gay identity was a key factor in the construction of successful masculinity. The authors argue that any challenges to hegemonic forms of masculinity necessarily have to address hegemonic constructions of femininity (given the relationality of masculinity) and address the imperative to oppose what is thought of as feminine (and emerges as homophobia and 'othering' practices towards those identified as moffies).

Current theoretical developments in SA (as elsewhere) are clearly beginning to include a focus on masculinities, with much acknowledgement of the ways in which gendered constructions, discourses and practices of male sexuality are articulated with the spread of HIV/Aids and high rates of gender-based violence. But Diana Gibson and Marie Rosenkrantz Lindegaard, in chapter 7, suggest that theorising has not gone far enough in articulating the lived experiences of males. The authors suggest that masculinity/ies need to be viewed with sensitivity to the processes of subjectivity and context, and that new approaches also need to give attention to the body, to ways in which people 'do gender', and to bodily signs as tools in processes of subjectivity. Furthermore, while not negating the importance of historically important issues such as race and gender, they suggest a need for analysis that moves beyond a mere focus on structural dimensions and which also considers how these structures inform practice in various contexts in which young males live. They argue that new forms of identity construction are emerging in which race, gender and class are re-articulated in new and dynamic ways (thus the meaning of 'blackness' is negotiated in changing ways in differing contexts). Using data from interviews with boys from different social groups (across race, gender and class), the chapter explores how identities in SA are constructed in ways that go beyond dominant analytic tools (for example, how meaning/identity is constructed through ways in which the body is used). An important finding of the study is that not all boys and young men buy into the violent construction and practices of masculinity.

Chapter 8, by Pumla Dineo Gqola, provides an analytical account of the contested and problematised responses, public and private, to debates, definitions, and opinions about *ulwaluko*, the traditional rite of passage into 'manhood'. First, the cluster of rituals that mark transition from 'boyhood to manhood', *ulwaluko,* a process that refers to a change from one form of young masculinity to another, cannot be reduced to penile foreskin cutting, though the two tend to be too often conflated in South African media. Second, the public debates and media coverage of 'botched circumcision' or/and *ulwaluko* turns partly, and crucially, and goes awry on terms of reference, words and translation. Third, *ulwaluko* is too often a deeply masculinist discursive terrain in which the question of who can speak to the issue of 'botched circumcision' or authentic black masculinities is highly regulated. These are the grounds from which Gqola offers her chapter on the annual and growing interest in black masculinity, seen especially in the media coverage and public debate on *ulwaluko*. It is true that studies of masculinities that look at the complex

connections between gender, sexuality, blackness, health/survival and power, and those that seek to understand the ways in which academic attention has been turned to *ulwaluko* are needed, but, as Gqola says, her interest does not lie in the institution of *ulwaluko* or Xhosa manhood, but rather how and what *ulwaluko* and 'circumcision' come to mean in the public eye. She asks what is at stake and to what ends discourses of risk and rescue are deployed in talking black masculinities, disrupting the assumption that negotiation and shifting masculinities can only be undertaken against set femininities. As she rightly contends, it is important to ask questions about the visual and discursive representation of the crisis carried by bodies of young black males in pain –and what these mean for the representation of *ulwaluko*, and black masculinity generally. This, as she maintains, is especially so where the media still tend to conflate black masculinity and the penis. Above all, she says, what the representational clusters around black male bodies should remind us of is that much cannot, and will not, be made visible in looking at these bodies.

In Chapter 9, Elaine Salo reports on an ethnographic research project conducted in Manenberg, a working class township near Cape Town inhabited by predominantly Coloured people who were removed from their original locations by the apartheid regime. The explicit aim of this chapter is to explore the cultural construction of 'masculine personhood' in this context, which the author argues is more clearly anchored in local cultural meanings of motherhood than in other contextual factors. Salo argues how gender in Manenberg is intrinsically bound to space and place, illustrating how men, in their roles as streetwise men or *ouens* mark the socio-spatial boundaries within which the women claim their agency as respectable mothers or *ordentlike moeders*.

Chapter 10, by Reshma Sathiparsad, explores how a sample of rural male Zulu youth views sexual relationships with women. The chapter assesses the relative importance of masculinities in shaping participants' perspectives, and examines the linkages between sexuality, masculinities and HIV/Aids. The study reiterates the importance of including men in initiatives to achieve gender equality in the mitigation of the impact of HIV/Aids, as is being recognised in South Africa and in other African countries. The author argues that a key challenge is to replace stereotypes of masculinity, particularly of African men as being irresponsible, with notions of reliability and dependability.

For African men in the liberation struggles of South Africa, the assertion of manhood was a claim for freedom, and the struggle for freedom was a claim for masculinity. In reading African assertions of manhood, Raymond Suttner argues, there is a need to understand it as a challenge not only to a childlike status but also as symbolising wider rejection of overlordship. His chapter argues that the liberation struggle has thrown up distinct models of manhood. Chapter 11 seeks to uncover the precise elements of the formation and manifestations of masculinities within the African National Congress, elements which – though they bear resemblances to those found in other contexts – have specificities that need to be brought into the foreground, specificities that relate to a

past that is in some respects a warrior tradition. Suttner argues that there were, and may even now be, a spectrum of masculinities in the ANC that are subject to extensive qualification and conditionality.

A key element of traditional Zulu masculinity is respect and discipline, according to Mxolisi Mchunu. Moving from this premise, he offers, in chapter 12, a critical analysis of a pair of related incidents that erupted in the KwaShange area of Inadi, in the Vulindlela district of Pietermaritzburg in KwaZulu-Natal. While the media constructed these incidents of violence as part of the conflict between the United Democratic Front and the Inkatha Cultural Movement (later the Inkatha Freedom Party), the chapter argues that there is more of a basis for regarding them as case studies of inter-generational conflict between Zulu 'fathers' and 'sons' – a struggle between younger males and older males possibly emanating from different views on manhood, these differences amplified by political conflict. Mchunu argues that this was a case where 'fathers' sought to restore age-based order over the 'sons', whom they saw to be getting out of control and using the political unrest as cover. In response, he argues, 'the young men' insisted on being treated as men, asserting their claims of manhood against 'the old men' whom they believed were trying to extend their generational subordination.

Postscript

In concluding this overview, we do not claim that this book holds any new theoretical insights, though there are certainly important theoretical arguments that build on what we already know in many of the chapters, and that arguably in some cases generate new conceptual frameworks for researching and studying masculinities. Nor does the book claim to present a comprehensive view of masculinities in South Africa, Africa or elsewhere. Rather, the different chapters hold valuable ethnographic material, including narratives of boys and men themselves, in particular contexts, that arguably assist in filling some of the gaps in our understanding of ways in which masculinities are performed in diversities of place and space. Moreover, whether written in Finland or Ghana or South Africa, whether speaking about experiences in the present or the past, the chapters speak to each other, foregrounding the areas of similarities across the globe and historically, and also clearly sketching the salience and richness of localities in framing masculine identities and the practices of being a boy and a man.

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CHAPTER

The problems boys and men create, the problems boys and men experience

Jeff Hearn

Introduction: Biography and history

How should I start? First, I can recognise my ambivalence writing on 'The problems boys and men create, the problems boys and men experience', being a white European man and with the responsibility 'we' have had for the problems we have created in southern Africa. Personal and collective biography (individual or collective agency, identity, selves, subjectivity), history (historical social structure, nation, colonialism, imperialism, post-colonialism, and so on), and their interrelations, are at the centre of social science (Mills, 1959) and social action. This connection has been part of the expansion of scholarship on men over recent years.

Moreover, the relation of biography, individual and collective, to history is likely to be different for men and for women. For men, being an individual man is experienced from within, and the collectivity of men is a social category to which we belong, more or less; for women, the individual man is experienced from outside, and the collectivity of men is a social category to which they do not belong. Relations of biography and history are important in understanding those studied (i.e. men), the researcher(s) (oneself/ourselves); how studies develop, and relations of social action and research.

For many centuries, men, masculinity and men's powers and practices were generally taken for granted; gender was largely seen as a matter of and for women; men were generally seen as ungendered, 'natural' or naturalised. This is now much less the case than quite recently, with the explicit naming of men as gendered people, and the deconstruction of men in politics and academia, as well as social changes affecting men. In moving between politics and academia, 'men' can be recognised as a critical social and political matter, often problem, not only cultural representations. Interconnections

of practice and theory, activism and research, materiality and discourse are fundamental for changing, researching and theorising men.

Similarly, relations of theory and practice, activism and research, materiality and discourse, also apply in mainstream research; it is just that mainstream practice is usually (wrongly) seen as (gender-)neutral and rarely labelled as 'anti-profeminist' or indeed as 'anything'. The mainstream 'just happens' in roughly male-dominated ways; and mainstream (male-dominated) activism – in the shape of 'plain politics', networking, lobbying, sponsorship, persuasion, pressure, favouritism, sexism, xenophobia, corruption – is not labelled as activism at all.

Contemporary gender relations can be characterised by relatively rapid historical change in some respects, such as rates of separation and divorce, new employment patterns, growth of the sex trade (virtual and real), along with persistent long-term historical structures and practices, such as men's domination of top management, and men's propensity to use violence and commit crime. This can be understood as a combination of contradictory processes of change and no change.

The making of men more gendered, in theory and practice, has meant that previously taken-for-granted powers, authority and social actions of men, and ways of being men can now be considered as much more problematic. They may not yet be much more negotiable, but they are now recognised as more open to debate. Men and masculinities are now more talked about than before, at a time when it is much less clear what and how they are, are to become, should be or should become. Locally and globally, gender injustice has been and remains rife. Gender has been and is a source and site of oppression, discrimination, unfairness, violence, and much more. Men (and particular versions of being men) – as the dominant, though often invisible, social category – were and are the main, though not the only, problem, in most societies, most of the time. This was and is an intolerable situation. It takes many forms: just think of who does most of the world's killing. Imperialism, colonialism, capitalism, fascism have all been led by men.

There are many points of departure in examining this problem, yet they have one element in common – the intertwining of personal, political and theoretical elements. I have been continually stirred by the personal-political sense that the current ways in which gender relations are organised is deeply disturbing; their unfairness is personally painful to me, even if, by virtue of being a man, I benefit from them. Researching, analysing and theorising about men are similarly contradictory. All this demands political action by men, just as much as, say, racist regimes need to be resisted by white people. These political concerns and imperatives are in some ways very clear and simple – male-dominated gender oppression continues. In other ways, they are of course extremely complex. There are many ambiguities, ambivalences, contradictions, multiple interests, and paradoxes in the politics of men, just as there are in other politics. Similarly, research and theories about men have shown some repeated patterns around men, men's power and men's

social interests as well as the extreme complexity of men, masculinities and men's practices (Hearn, 2003).

In this chapter I discuss boys and men in the context of the complexities of gender power relations. I focus on the relations between the problems that boys and men create and the problems that boys and men experience. The problems that boys and men create may include violence against women, children and other boys and men; the problems that boys and men experience may include health problems and some forms of social exclusion. While attention to diversities is certainly needed, this should not be at the expense of highlighting the structured asymmetrical relations of power between men and women. Thus, contradictions need to be understood together with no dilution of attention to women's and girls' practices, power and experiences.

Studies on men and masculinities

Studying men and boys is not new; nor is it necessarily radical. The history of academia is largely the history of 'men's studies'. Until relatively recently, masculinity was usually understood in the singular – in practice often meaning USA or Western cultural norms or values, acquired by social learning from agents of socialisation such as family, school and mass media. Under the influence of women's liberation, gay liberation and even 'men's liberation', the 'male sex role' was subject to sharp substantive criticism (Pleck & Sawyer, 1974). In the social sciences, the concept has also been critiqued as ethnocentric, lacking in power perspective, and positivistic. Instead, broader social constructionist perspectives highlighting social power have emerged, along with critiques of the dominance of heterosexuality, heterosexism and homophobia. Two major sets of power relations have been addressed: the power of men over women (heterosocial power relations), and the power of some men over other men (homosocial power relations). These two themes inform current inquiries into the construction of masculinities (Kimmel et al., 2005).

The construction of men and masculinities can be explored with many different emphases: global and regional iterations; institutional forms; practices and interactions with women, children and other men, expressing, challenging, and reproducing gender inequalities; and individual men's performances. Gender is as much a structure of relations within institutions as a property of individual identity. The use of the concept of masculinities in the plural has been extremely important in widening the analysis of men and masculinities within gender orders (Carrigan et al., 1985). A crucial issue is the relation of diversity of men and masculinities, and unities amongst men and masculinities. At the same time, there is growing critical debate on the concepts of masculinities and hegemonic masculinity from various positions, including historical, materialist, and post-structuralist – leading to an argument for moving focus from hegemonic masculinity to the hegemony of men (Hearn, 2004).

In scholarship and popular discussion on men, there has been growing emphasis on difference, diversity, fragmentation, fracturing and intersectionality. Seen from my location in the North, an important trend in critical research on men has been away from the Western world, towards the South, and development and postcolonial studies. There is growing recognition of the importance of boys and men in gendered development. Postcolonial perspectives deconstruct the unified, coherent, individual and collective male subject; 'men' are to be understood in relation to the problematising and deconstruction of the self, culture, organisation, nation and globalisation (Hearn, 1996a).

Critical Studies on Men (CSM) focus critically on men and boys, as explicitly gendered, and involve women and men as researchers, separately and collaboratively (Hearn, 1997). Importantly, feminist research has always been partly about men (Hanmer, 1990); good quality research on boys and men is not to be done by men alone. Studies on men are not owned by men; women have been extremely important in developing this field. CSM are part of a vibrant international development of Women's Studies and Gender Research. While not wishing to play down debates and differences between traditions, the broad, critical approach to men and masculinities that has developed in recent years can be characterised in a number of ways, by:

- a *specific*, rather than an implicit or incidental, *focus* on men, masculinities and men's practices;
- taking account of *feminist, gay, and other critical gender scholarship;*
- recognising men, masculinities and men's practices as *explicitly gendered* rather than nongendered;
- understanding men, masculinities and men's practices as *socially constructed, produced, and reproduced* rather than as somehow just 'naturally' one way or another;
- seeing men, masculinities and men's practices as *variable and changing* across time (history) and space (culture), within societies, and through life courses and biographies;
- emphasising men's relations, albeit differentially, to *gendered power;*
- spanning both the material and the discursive in analysis;
- interrogating the *intersecting of the gender with other social divisions* in the construction of men, masculinities and men's practices.

There are increasingly complex concerns within CSM, with, for example, the place of diverse masculinities and men's practices within patriarchies; the 'post-turn', including queer theory; processes of transnationalisation; and rethinking research methods and methodologies. Doing CSM implies drastic rewritings of academic disciplines, and their usual ignoring that their 'science' has been predominantly done by men, for men, about

men. Many men social scientists still forget that their objects of study – economy, state, international relations, globalisation, crime, culture, and also biography, identity, location, positionality – are difficult to understand without analysis of men and gender relations. This involves rewriting politics and history; taken-for-granted histories and politics often mean men's histories and men's politics.

There is the silence in most social science about the gendered reflexivity of the author and the constitution of theory (Hearn, 1998a). Changing this involves problematising silences that persist on both the category of men and men's practices of theorising. It involves opening up not just our intellects and minds but our whole selves, bodies and political commitment to 'seeing' the gendering of men, gender power relations that benefit men, and the need to change men – in other words, to see the world differently. It involves denaturalising, critiquing and deconstructing boys and men.

Boys and men: Risks and problems

Patriarchy, or patriarchies, is not only bad news for women, but also in different ways for many boys and men. Women suffer directly under patriarchy; men suffer from other men; and boys have to be made into men. Patriarchy creates risks and problems for women, children and men too. While most contemporary societies can be characterised as patriarchies or male-dominated gender orders, or by patriarchal social relations or patriarchal gender contracts, this does not mean that men are all powerful therein. These relations often intertwine with capitalist, imperialist, racist and other oppressive social relations. Men's dominance includes variable, diverse relations of gendered individual men to gendered structured relations, and maintenance of gendered hierarchies of men over women by way of differentiation between men.

It is within this context that I approach the question of boys, men and risk. This immediately raises the question of risk to whom? Risk is double-edged. It involves: recognising *risk to others* – women, children, other men – and it also involves *risk to the self*, men ourselves/themselves, individually or more collectively. These two forms of risk are interrelated. When we say 'risk', it is usually risk in a negative sense: that is, the risk of a problem. Risk implies the risk of difficulty, failure, harm, violence, damage and so on. But risk can also be a means to gain power, money, profit. Thus risk and risk-taking behaviour are not one thing; they can refer to adventure, irresponsibility, confronting danger, uncaringness, instant gratification, and so on. Thus, although there is often a focus on sexuality and potential violence to the self (as in 'accidents'), in discussing risk-taking, I locate risk within a wider framework. Sexual risk-taking and accident risk-taking do not arise out of context; they link with other forms of men's practices. Indeed risk-taking can at times be a form of violence.

This chapter draws on the work conducted over the last five years by the Critical Research on Men in Europe (CROME) network, focusing on both the *problems that men create and the problems that men experience* (Hearn et al., 2002a, 2002b, 2002c, 2003; Pringle, 2006; Pringle et al., 2006; Hearn & Pringle, 2006). The former include men's violence against women and children, and reproduction of power and domination more generally; the latter include health problems and some exclusion of some men. The network brings together women and men researchers researching men and masculinities in *an explicitly gendered way*. Such a meeting point for women researchers and men researchers is necessary in developing good-quality research on men in Europe. Four main themes have been addressed: men's relations to home and work; men's relations to social exclusion; men's violences; and men's health[1].

The network has examined two closely related gendered questions: the specific, gendered social problem of men and certain masculinities; and the more general, gendered societal problematisation of men and certain masculinities. The association of the gendered social problem of men and masculinities and the gendered problematisation of men and masculinities is complex. At the very least, it is necessary to acknowledge the ways in which the more general gendered problematisations of men and masculinities both facilitate and derive from more particular recognitions of certain men and masculinities as social problems. Social problem perspectives interlink with processes of problematisation of men. The construction of men as gendered social problems applies in academic and political analysis, men's own lives and experiences, and, in different ways, at the societal level.

Not only are men now increasingly recognised as gendered, but some men are recognised as a gendered social problem to which welfare systems may, or may not, respond. This can apply in terms of violence, crime, drug and alcohol abuse, buying sex, accidents, driving, and so on, and indeed the denial of such problems as sexual violence. All these activities are social in nature, with both immediate and long-term negative effects on others, friends, family and strangers. Some men suffer from adversity, such as from ill-health, violence, poverty; the vulnerabilities of men and masculinities are perhaps best illustrated by the numbers of men taking their own lives. In some countries, the problematisation of men and masculinities may appear in public, policy and media concern around young men, crime, and relatively low educational attainments; in others, it takes the form of anxieties around the family, fatherhood, and relations with children; elsewhere, the specific links between boyhood, fathering and men may be emphasised; or men's ill-health, HIV/Aids status, alcohol and drug use, depression, loneliness, and low life expectancy; or problems of reconciling home and work, with the pressure towards long working hours; or men's violence to women and children; or men's participation in and domination of political and economic institutions; or changing men's sexualities.

To understand how problems and risks relate to each other involves attending to men's relations to power. The problems that men create often stem very much from men's accumulations and practices of power – from both men's risky behaviour towards others, and men's risky behaviour to men themselves. Similarly, the problems that men experience also arise partly from both men's risky behaviour towards themselves and towards others. This is clearest with the experiences of men who are marginalised in relation to power, usually by other men. I now turn specifically to some of the problems that men create, before examining the problems that men experience, and then some of their interconnections.

The problems men create

The most obvious form of problem that men create is men's violence against women, children and also other men. Less obvious are the problems that men create from being in *formal organisational positions of power.* To investigate this involves naming men in power, including men in management, business, political and other forms of formal positions of power and leadership. They may in turn be strongly involved in transnational contacts and social relations, and have allegiances away from specific localities and local communities. Both violence and formal power positions create problems and risks for women and children, as well as men. Indeed they are not necessarily separate. These are of course not the only social processes of problem creation. For example, men more generally benefit from the control of sexuality, gender wage gap and avoidance of childcare.

Men's violences

Violence is a form of power and control. Men's violence is evident at every level of our world – between individuals, within and among groups, and in the actions of social institutions. And it ranges from the most lethal weaponry ever invented, imperialism, bombing, ethnic cleansing and terrorism, to the callous indifference of business and government leaders who allow poverty, starvation and illness to destroy the lives of millions. It has been estimated by the UN that, while about $1 000 billion is spent every year on arms, about $50–60 billion is spent on poverty aid (de Vylders, 2004, pp. 63–4). Overall, estimates of killings worldwide are about 830 000 in total, of which 310 000 are war-related (WHO, 2002). Levels of violence are also extremely variable worldwide, defying natural or biological explanations of men's violences.

Table 1.1 Crime rates 1985–1995 (number of crimes per 100 000 people, rounded figures)

Region	Major robberies	Intentional homicide
Africa	36	5
Asia	13	5
Latin America and Caribbean	201	14
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	28	7
Western Europe	54	4
United States	249	7

Source: Bourguignon (1999, p. 201)

The *Ending Gender-Based Violence* report (Ferguson et al., 2004, p. 9) begins as follows:

> Men's violence demands urgent action – from the perspective of women, of children, and of men themselves:
>
> First, men's violence is a problem for women. Stopping violence against women has been increasingly recognised as an international priority – in the UN, by the EU, and by UNICEF, and by many national governments.
>
> Second, men's violence undermines children's rights. Progress on the mandate of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the work of UNICEF involves ending men's violence both to children, and to women and men, that directly and indirectly violates children.
>
> Third, men's violence is a problem for men. … There is increasing recognition that men have the responsibility to end men's violence, and, indeed, have much to gain thereby.

Men's violence is a major form of risk-creating and problem-creating behaviour. It clearly creates problems and risks for women, children, other men, and for men themselves/ourselves. Problems created and problems experienced come together. There is no doubt about the disastrous effects of violence and the risk to life. Violence is bad for your health!

Moreover, men's violences include specifically sexual violence, as well as linking closely with some constructions of men's possessive, coercive and pressurising sexualities more generally. This link has been extensively studied in the UK (Kelly, 1988), and increasingly in South Africa too. For example, Ratele (2001) has linked young middle class men's sexuality with possession of women: 'having a girl'. Though levels of violence that may be found among poorer, marginalised black men are not a persistent feature of their relationships, power over women is fundamental in their constructions of masculinity. Sexuality can also be understood as a form of risk-taking, sometimes with

violating effects and implications upon women, children and other men, perhaps most obviously in terms of HIV/Aids and other STDs.

There are many ways to explain men's violences. A simple but useful framework distinguishes explanations that focus on (a) the individual, (b) socialisation and learning within the family (both of origin and present), and (c) broader socio-cultural relations of power, such as analyses of patriarchy. These theories start from different assumptions on violence. Explanations need to be multi-level and multi-layered, combining individual, learning and structural explanations (Gondolf, 1985; Dankwort, 1992–93). There are dangers in using certain explanations, especially narrowly psychological explanations, in isolation; this can divert policy and practice away from socio-political concerns (Hearn, 1998b). The societal conditions that produce and sustain men's violence against women need to be challenged and changed at all levels. This includes broad questions of gender power relations and societal constructions of masculinity, as well as impacts of poverty and inequalities upon men's violence.

Men's violence, including sexual violence, against known women is a major problem. In the UK, between a quarter and a third of victims of homicide are killed by a partner or ex-partner (CJS, 2002, p. 131). Walby and Myhill (2001), drawing on the British Crime Survey and international research, summarised risk factors of 'domestic violence' as follows: previous domestic assault; minor violence predicting escalation to major violence; separation (women separating from their partner are at much greater risk than other marital statuses); gender inequality in relationships, including men's patriarchal attitudes and marital inequalities; poverty and social exclusion; women's employment status; pregnancy; ill-health and disability; violence in family of origin/witnessing of violence/criminal career; co-occurrence of child abuse; youth.

There is much research on the impact of lower household income, financial difficulties of households, women's and children's poverty, and women's lower employment status upon men's domestic violence. To chart such risks clearly does not mean that such violence is committed only by men with less financial resources; the abuse of power is spread across all sectors and classes of society. Nor does it suggest excuses or justifications, or simple causes and effects. However, it does point to the interlinking of men's violence with economic and material circumstances, and issues of social inclusion and exclusion.

Interestingly, in the UK no significant differences were found by ethnicity, though '... women from ethnic minorities may have greater difficulties in accessing support services because of racism among service providers, language difficulties and cultural differences' (Walby & Myhill, 2000, p. 2). Of special interest is the recent finding from US research that women's predictions of risk of violence from their partners substantially improved with risk factors, and that they were by themselves better

predictors than several established psychological risk measures (Gondolf & Heckert, 2003; Heckert & Gondolf, 2004).

More generally, there is the question of how men's violence is organised in very different ways in different societies. I return to this issue later in the chapter.

Men who are the formally most powerful

Men are in formal power in business, politics, government, the military, religious organisations, and so on. Men are dominant in ownership and control of resources, resource accumulation, and the reproduction of socio-economic inequalities. Mainstream organisations are places where risks may be taken, often with consequent risks and problems for others; risky managerial behaviour may have negative effects on others: women, children and other men. Mainstream risk-taking includes entrepreneurialism – taking risks for potential gain, with consequent effects on others – as well as political and economic adventurism in imperialism and colonialism.

Mainstream organisations are the main political economic arenas by which some men maintain particular power in the public worlds, and the main means of accumulation of many men's resources in the public worlds (Hearn, 2000). This applies in all the major parts of the public worlds, especially to men's accumulation of resources in business and government. Different groups of men, such as owners, managers, supervisors, workers, professionals and entrepreneurs, are set in different gendered occupational and class relations to women and each other. Mainstream business organisations are typically intensely gendered, by management, formal and informal hierarchies, divisions of labour, sexual structuring and the structuring of sexuality, relation to the 'private' and 'domestic' worlds, and constructions of relations of centre and margins. Organisations may also be structured by the gendered use and control of violence and abuse, especially so if business is placed in its global context with the production of violently exploitative and gendered labour processes in poorer regions, where labour counts for less (Hearn & Parkin, 2001).

Men continue to dominate management, especially in business management, and at the very top and more highly paid levels. Men comprise as much as 98 per cent of the very 'top managers'. Men managers are more likely than women managers to be better paid, to be in more secure employment, to be on higher grades, to be less stressed, to be older at each responsibility level, and to have not experienced prejudice and sexual discrimination. Management and effective management, especially what is often understood as effective business management, have often been assumed to be consistent with characteristics traditionally valued in men (Alimo-Metcalfe, 1993).

While gender segregation in organisations and management has generally been understood in relation to occupational and organisational divisions, it also reproduces and

is reproduced through patterns of homosociality. This provides a different way of viewing gender segregation. Indeed it is interesting how these two topics are not usually considered as part of the same set of gendered processes. Much of men's activity at work is strongly homosocial, in terms of men's homosocial preference for men. In some cases, homosocial processes link with men's general social networks more generally, including occupational groups, sporting organisations, and religious affiliations. It is important to ask: why do so many, apparently heterosexual, men seem to prefer men, and their company? Is this a complicit acceptance of dominant systems of social power and status, which then accrue reciprocally to men by dint of association, or is it a much more socio-emotional or even socio-sexual process (Roper, 1996)? These processes certainly create problems for 'others'.

The problems boys and men experience

There is a range of problems that may be experienced by boys and men, most obviously various forms of social marginalisation, but also poor health, and then also boyhood itself.

Social exclusion, marginalisation and lack of socio-economic opportunities

'Poverty is the worst form of violence', wrote Mahatma Gandhi. Some boys and men are marginalised, subordinated and socially excluded by poverty. The scale of poverty is difficult to appreciate. The GNP per capita in Mozambique is $80 per year, compared with a top figure for Luxembourg of $45 360. Other marginalisations occur to men who are subject to racism, who are not national citizens, who are members of minority ethnic groups, or who are recent or potential migrants and involved in other transnational movement in other ways. And they occur to men who are marginalised by poverty, lack of socio-economic opportunities and development, unemployment, poor educational outcomes, imprisonment, and as welfare subjects, for example as 'dangerous' fathers.

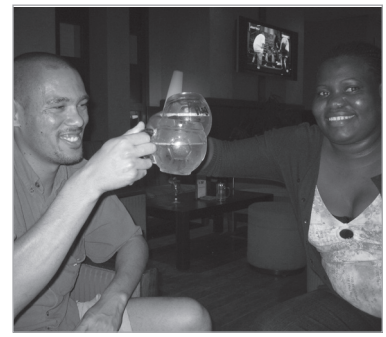
Social exclusion may appear at first to be an arena where some men lack power. On the other hand, social exclusion is better understood as a social process involving men in different and complex ways, as both social exclusion of certain men and also social exclusion *created by* some men. Part of the way in which men's structural and more immediate dominance is produced and reproduced is by the domination, oppression, violence, abuse, deprivation and damage of some men by other men. This may be clearest in the oppression of and violence to gay men or men of colour, but it also applies more generally in the dispensability of some men, especially working-class men, minority ethnic men, and men of colour in the military and in wartime. Individual men, even by millions, may be socially excluded and suffer, but men's collective structural power

may be undiminished, even reinforced. Individual enactment of violence reaffirms men's class/ethnic power typically in war, especially wars of imperialism. Thus individual men may, sometimes in large numbers, perform individual acts that are not in their own immediate interests, perhaps *even including their own death*, but which maintain the structured relation of men's collective power over women (Hearn, 1987, pp. 96–97). The social exclusion of some men can contribute to the reproduction of men's power.

The relations of marginalised men to women may be more complex in some ways. Women-in-contact, as colleagues, partners, family members and others are likely to be adversely affected by the marginalisation of those men with whom they are in contact. The actions of marginalised men also have implications for women-not-in-contact, such as in competition for funds, when marginalised men may stake their claims in ways that negatively impact on marginalised women, or in terms of violence and abuse against women, such as racism of white 'underclass' men or the social violence of minority ethnic men.

Men's health

In the southern African context, HIV/Aids appears to have been the dominant perspective on men's health. Africa has the highest rates of infection of men, with women having still higher positive rates than men. The impact of HIV/Aids clearly operates unevenly throughout the world as a huge health problem. The rate of increase in infection is especially high in the former Soviet Baltic countries.



>> Traditional masculinity may be hazardous to boys' and mens' health.

In European research and policy on men's health, two contradictory elements have been highlighted: (a) men's relatively low life expectancy, poor health, accidents, suicide, morbidity; and (b) the marked increases in men's life expectancy and thus men's ageing since the beginning of the 20th century, and the decreasing differences in mortality between men and women. Men suffer and die more and at a younger age from cardiovascular diseases, cancer, respiratory diseases, accidents and violence than women. Socio-economic factors, qualifications, social status, lifestyle, diet, smoking and drinking, and hereditary factors, as well as occupational hazards, can all be important for morbidity and mortality (Hearn & Kolga, 2006). As Meryn and Jadad (2001, p. 1013) note, 'Despite having had most of the social determinants of **health** in their favour, men have higher mortality rates for all 15 leading causes of death and a life expectancy about seven years shorter than women's' (bold in original).

The problem is especially acute in East Europe, and particularly so in the Russian Federation, where the gap in life expectancy between women and men is close to 10 years. Rieder and Meryn (2001) comment that:

In 2000, the WHO report suggested a 77% increased risk of premature death for Russian men between 1987 and 1994. With life expectancy, the gap between the sexes generally decreases as average life expectancy increases. Russia has one of the lowest life expectancies and, therefore, the widest gaps between sexes in healthy life expectancy in the world (66.4 vs 56.1 years for men compared with women).

Men are a high-risk group for premature death in this population.

Some studies see traditional masculinity as hazardous to health and, one could add, women's and children's health too. For some men at least, their 'masculinity' is characterised by risk-taking, especially for younger men – in terms of smoking, alcohol and drug taking, unsafe sexual practices, road accidents, lack of awareness of risk, and an ignorance of their bodies. Men constitute the majority of drug abusers and are greater consumers of alcohol than women, though the gap is decreasing among young people in several countries. In many countries, men's suicide rates are about three to five-and-a-half times those for women. Evidence suggests that men generally neglect their health, in terms of both lifestyles and attention to healthcare practices, both in preventive health and in using healthcare facilities. Many men show a reluctance to seek medical intervention for suspected health problems.

There is a strong need both to improve men's health and to focus on the negative effects of men's health problems upon women and children. Policies and practice to improve men's health should clearly not mean reducing resources for women's and children's health.

Boyhood

In many countries there has been much talked about recently (over the last ten years or more) on boys and young men 'losing out'; there are lots of worries about boys and young men – poor education, poor job prospects, criminality, uncertainties about what to do or be. The debate on boys' educational attainment has been especially popular in the media. One wonders why media people were not so interested when girls were performing less well than now! However, educational performance must be put in context. Some boys have always done 'badly', and especially those disadvantaged by classism and racism. Many girls do not do so well. Also, many boys do well at school; indeed, in the UK, the social class gap is larger than the gender gap in young people's achievement.

In assessing this kind of problematisation, we need to recognise the variety of forms of being boys and young men – 'macho', academic achievers, new enterprisers, middle class, conformists, innovators, retreatists – rejecting school, subversive not aggressive, rebels (Mac an Ghaill, 1994). Ann Phoenix, Stephen Frosh and Rob Pattman (2002) have done great research looking at the complexities and ambiguities of boys' and young men's lives, which involved a combination of power, separation from the feminine and

the gay, and yet contingent uncertainty. We need to recognise the dominant forms of being boys and young men, and we need also to deconstruct those dominants! Indeed the dominant can include relative uncertainty, 'fragility' in some respects, fear of failure, etc. It is not monolithic.

So, what are the continuities and discontinuities between 'boys', 'young men' and 'men'? Many of the debates and tensions around boys and young men are very similar to those around men. While these may be compared with the debates on adult men/masculinity/ masculinities/men's practices, there are several differences. For a start, boys are younger and less powerful. I would go so far as to argue that boys are often oppressed, and may indeed have to be oppressed to make them available to become 'real men'. A significant part of this process is conforming from quite a young age to a hegemonic version of (hetero)sexuality. Such dominant heterosexuality includes the image of active male sexuality, penetrative sex as a goal, pressures to conform on non-heterosexual boys and young men, along with homophobia.

Boys, young men and men are not any one particular thing. These are social categories, not fixed in biology. What does being 'normal' involve for boys, young men and men? Well, there are of course the dominant definitions of toughness, aggressiveness, hardness, sport, ability to come and go as they wish, occupation of space, homophobia – but there are also huge variations. Gay boys, young men and men who are not tough, not hard, not sporty, are still boys, young men and men. It is vital not to equate the stereotype and the dominant. To do so means falling into a mono-analysis and a mono-version of boys, young men and men that reproduces the problem.

Interrelations and intersectionalities

There are many important interrelations between the problems that men create and the problems that men experience. This applies to men's power and domination, and some men's unemployment, social exclusion and ill-health. Men dominate key institutions, such as government, politics, management, trade unions, religion, sport; yet some men suffer considerably more marginalisation than women, as evidenced in higher rates of suicide, some psychiatric illnesses and alcoholism.

Interrelations between social arenas and experience are clear within social exclusion. First, social exclusion is defined in very different ways in different social and societal contexts; it is always social exclusion from *something*. Forms of social exclusion relate to other social positions and experiences – work, home, health, citizenship, education, and so on. Men's social exclusion from home or work is likely to create problems in other arenas. This is likely to have even more impact on the women in that arena – as partners, work colleagues, and so on. Men are also active in assisting and reproducing the social exclusion of both women and men, both at work and home.

The social exclusion of certain men may often be associated with violence. This may be especially popular in media reporting of men's violence. In some situations, social exclusion may indeed follow from violence, as in imprisonment. On the other hand, social exclusion may even be inhibited by some forms of violence, as when men show they are worthy of other men's support by the use or threat of violence. Social exclusion may be seen as one of the causes or correlates of violence, but this explanation may only apply to certain kinds of violence, such as certain kinds of riot. The connections of social exclusion with interpersonal violence to known others are complicated. Deprivation may be associated to some extent and in some localities with some forms of men's violence, such as certain forms of property crime, violence between men, and the use of physical violence to women in marriage and similar partnerships. Such forms of violence are also typically strongly age-related, with their greater performance by younger men. On the other hand, men's violence and abuse of women and children in families crosses class boundaries. There is growing recognition of men and boys as victims of violence, albeit usually from men and boys.

Much violence occurs in the home, in the form of men's violence and sexual violence to known women and men's child abuse, including child sexual abuse. The home is a major site of men's violence. There is increasing recognition of the scale of violence, including bullying and harassment, at work. Violence at home is clearly antagonistic to equality and care at home, and is detrimental to performance at work. Home and work both provide potential social support and networks, both to reproduce and to counter men's violence. More specifically, let us consider the interrelations between fatherhood and men's violences. In most parts of Europe, it seems there is a striking tendency to treat these two topics as separate policy issues. Indeed, one can find countries that both enthusiastically promote fatherhood and, quite separately, address men's violences: but they do not join up the two. There is no contradiction between positively promoting men as carers and at the same time emphasising the prime requirement to protect children from men's violences. What is striking in European research and policy making is how rarely such an integrated dual approach is adopted. Debates around 'intersectionality' and 'mutual constitution' of different forms of power relations have much to offer in this respect, for instance, in exploring the contradictory ways in which gender, age and sexuality are conceptualised together in the promotion of men as carers and the promotion of measures to protect children from men's violences (Pringle, 2005; Hearn & Pringle, 2006).

Social exclusion is generally bad for one's health. Socially excluded men are likely to be adversely affected in terms of their health. Physical and mental health and well-being may in some cases be resources for fighting against social exclusion.

Home and work are sites for increasing or decreasing men's health. Men, especially men in positions of power or with access to power, are able to affect the health of women, children and other men in their realm of power. This can apply to men as

managers in, say, the restructuring of workplaces, and to men as powerful actors in families and communities. Men's health, and indeed life expectancy, is often affected by relative material well-being arising from work, and by dangers and risks in specific occupations. Men's health, individually, nationally and collectively, is not to be seen as an isolated phenomenon, and cannot be understood outside of its social context.

Men's violences and health connect in many ways. Violence is a graphic form of non-caring for others. Some, but only some, forms of ill-health, such as those induced by risk-taking, may also involve non-caring for the self. Risk-taking is especially significant for younger men, in, for example, smoking, alcohol and drug taking, unsafe sexual practices and road accidents. Forms of risky sexual practice have clear implications for the health of men, women and children. Some research finds that men are over-optimistic regarding their own health.

To understand, and to deal with, the health and welfare problems of at least some men, we need to connect those problems to dominant, or even in some cases oppressive, ways of 'being a man'. For instance, risk-taking behaviour may concern the propensity for accidents and injuries, or 'macho' unwillingness to take one's health problems seriously, or in some cases the self-violence that alcohol and drug abuse may represent for some men. Some research on men repeat offenders of violence against women and children has addressed such men's 'anti-social personality disorder/trait' and various forms of social and psychological distress among violent men. Health – especially mental health – agencies are likely to come into contact with men with severe or multiple psychological problems, who have experienced sexual and other violence as children, and who are depressed. Violent men are not happier men; they are more likely to be depressed as well as abusive (Maiuro et al., 1988).

As emphasised, the conceptual separation of 'the social problems which some men create' from 'the social problems which some men experience' is often simplistic, so that there is a need to study these intersections with great care (Pringle, 2003; Hearn & Pringle, 2006). There is a need for focused research on men's practices, power and privilege, in relation to both those men with particular power resources, and hegemonic ways of being men.

Connections and interrelations between gendered positions, impacts and experiences are perhaps most clearly seen at times of rapid social, political and economic change. Many countries have been going through major socio-economic changes. In some cases, social changes have been and continue to be profound, for example, the German unification process and the post-socialist transition in Estonia, Latvia, Poland and the Russian Federation. With the restoration of national statehood, many welfare and social protection measures shifted from the state to local levels, and this meant new forms of dependency for people. The new conditions for property acquisition and upward social mobility have, however, benefited selected men-dominated echelons of power that were

already structured by the vertical gender segregation of the Soviet political, ideological hierarchies and labour market and through access to economic, material resources that were soon to be redistributed. The toll on certain groups of men, including ex-military men, marginalised and poor men, and ethnic minority men has been immense, as shown in worsening health statistics.

Some similarities may be discernible in South Africa, including the effects of HIV/Aids and the presence of large numbers of guns. In the South African context, Xaba (2001) has examined the demobilisation of ANC military units, how some men have failed to find a place in the post-apartheid society, and how this has led to crime, including in some cases armed robbery and rape. One especially urgent change that is necessary is the strict control of men's use of guns and other weapons, and men's militarism and other organised and institutionalised violence more generally.

The social relations between those who are formally most powerful and those who are least powerful need to be highlighted. In some cases, such connections may be direct, as in the activities of powerful men in controlling the lives of the less powerful, in effect as creators of other men's social exclusion. In other cases, the connections may be more indirect, and may even operate at the cultural and symbolic level, through media representations or public political discourses, for example. A further group of men, which is important both analytically and empirically, is the 'intermediate' group of men, who may be described as 'complicit', and may appear to be less directly affected by changing transnational relations.

Impacts upon women are further complicated by transnational considerations. In the case of men in power, these include the association of men in decisions that are transnational in their effects on women; in the case of marginalised men they may include the separation of migrant men from women partners and other family members. In the last decade, new forms of marginalisation have developed, with shifts from traditional industry to more post-industrialised society. Globalising processes may create new forms of work and marginalisation. The increasing neo-liberal, market-oriented climate has brought a more individualist approach to gender. Trends in the 1990s, such as globalisation, restructuring and more intense labour processes, have ensured that absent fathers and lack of men in care-giving remain as key issues. Some men find it difficult to accommodate to these changes in the labour market and changed family structure. Instead of going into the care sector or getting more education, some young men become marginalised from work and family life.

Concluding discussion

This chapter has addressed the problems and risks that men and boys create and the problems and risks that men and boys experience. To understand both these sets of

problems and risks involves considering several interconnected, sometimes contradictory sets of relations. These include:

- boys' power relations to and differences from men;
- boys' and men's biographies, and boys and men in history;
- more dominating and less (or non-)dominating aspects of boys' and men's practices and masculinities;
- boys' and men's relations to both gender and other forms of power relations, such as age, class, disability, ethnicity, racialisation, sexuality;
- boys and men in positions of power, resource accumulation and decision-making, and boys and men not in such positions of power;
- boys and men as a collective social category and as diverse and differentiated;
- boys and men in local and national contexts, and boys and men in transnational and global contexts.

Men's power is partly maintained through commonalities with each other. Typically, men are bound together, not necessarily consciously, by shared interests and meanings, sexuality, socio-economic power, and representational privileging. Men's collective power persists partly through the assumption of hegemonic forms of men and masculinities, often white, heterosexual, able-bodied, as the primary form, to the relative exclusion of subordinated men and masculinities. A focus on multiplicity, multiculturalism and diversity amongst men and masculinities – especially when seen mainly as some men's disadvantage – brings dangers of excluding other social divisions and inequalities. It also fails to appreciate interrelations of these divisions and inequalities. Indeed one of the most fundamental forms of diversity that exists arises from hierarchical power differences, and diversities amongst men in hierarchies.

Moreover, hegemonic, subordinated and diverse masculinities change over time, differ by age, class, ethnicity and other social divisions, and are central in reproducing social divisions. Intersections of age, class, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, language, race and sexuality are vital to analyse. Yet, an emphasis upon multiplicity ought not to degenerate to a pluralism that gives insufficient attention to critiquing structured asymmetrical power relations between men and women. A complex view of power as material and discursive helps to explain lived contradictions within different masculinities, men's practices, and men as sites of power. Contradictions need to be understood together with no dilution of attention to women's and girls' practices, power and experiences.

This discussion may be located within debates on globalisation, postcolonialism, and men's practices (Banerjee & Linstead, 2001). Focusing on men casts some doubt on some of the more ambitious claims of globalisation theses, not only in their frequently non-gendered analysis but also in the implicit convergence often assumed among men

(Hearn & Parkin, 2001). Transnational global studies of men show divergences amongst men, and between women and men. Compare, for example, privileged global businessmen on the one hand, and, on the other hand, non-privileged migrant men with relatively less power. A more structural implication of globalisation and postcolonial perspectives is the growing impact of global Western corporations in creating further forms of 'diversity' and inequality between and within regions, localities and genders. To examine this necessitates deconstructing the dominant at local and global levels (Hearn, 1996a), within transnational patriarchies, or simply transpatriarchies.

The conceptual separation of 'the social problems which some men create' from 'the social problems which some men experience' is often simplistic, and there is a need to study the intersections more carefully – especially in the area of social exclusion. Such a 'splitting' in previous academic studies has been marked. For instance, studies of men's health/ill-health have often ignored the issue of men's violences, and vice versa. This includes, for example, men being victims of other men's power, policies, neglect and violences, and men's experience of physical and mental health problems. In designing policy interventions, one must seek to bridge the central divide that has previously existed in much previous research on men – that is, the splitting of studies that focus on 'problems which some experience' from those that explore 'the problems which some men create'. It is important to recognise that this analysis is based on an 'intersectional' perspective that embraces complexities and contradictions. The challenge is to maintain the focus on difference without neglecting gender and other structural powers.

In *Societies at Peace*, Howell and Willis (1990) posed the question: What can we learn from peaceful societies? They found that the definition of masculinity had a significant impact on the propensity towards violence. In societies in which men were permitted to acknowledge fear, levels of violence were relatively low; in those where masculine bravado, the repression and denial of fear, was a defining feature of masculinity, violence was likely to be relatively high. Societies in which such bravado is prescribed for men are those in which the definitions of masculinity and femininity are very highly differentiated. The less gender differentiation between women and men, the more men are nurturing and caring, and the more women are seen as capable, rational and competent in the public sphere, the less likely is men's violence. To diminish men's violence against women and children involves reducing the violent confrontations that occur in the name of such mythic entities as nation, people, religion or blood (Kimmel, 2001).

Within patriarchal relations, men are surely severely damaged by each other, and sometimes by ourselves. Even though this will mean short-term losses, especially material losses, for particular men and groups of men, it really is in boys' and men's long-term, structural interests to change, and oppose patriarchy.

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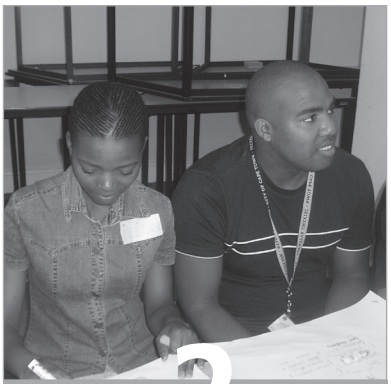
Endnote

1. The Research Network is a multi-nation network of feminist and profeminist researchers working collaboratively on the study of men's practices. The Network has in turn led to the creation of the collective: Critical Research on Men in Europe (CROME) (http://www.cromenet.org). While planning began much earlier, the Network formally began in March 2000, under the title 'The Social Problem and Societal Problematisation of Men and Masculinities', and was funded until 2003 by the European Commission Research Directorate under its Framework 5 Programme. It continues in modified form as part of Concerted Action on Human Rights Violation in EC Framework 6 Programme (http://www.cahrv.uni-osnabrueck.de/). The Network comprises researchers with various academic backgrounds, and from a number of European countries, initially Estonia, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Norway, Poland, Russian Federation, and the UK, subsequently Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, and Sweden, and more recently Spain. The Network's methodological perspectives are: *comparative orientation; gendered approach to research content and research process; use of multiple methods; ethical sensitivity.*



CHAPTER 2

Researching and working with boys and young men in southern Africa in the context of HIV/Aids: A radical approach

Rob Pattman

Introduction: Researching 'problematic' boys and young men

In many Western countries, in recent years, boys have been much criticised for being anti-intellectual, emotionally illiterate, uncommunicative, antisocial and delinquent – characteristics that have been identified as marking them as different from girls. (See, for example, Epstein et al., 1998, for a discussion on the moral panic about boys' 'underachieving' in schools in Britain). Such concerns about boys, and notably black African boys, prevail too in southern Africa, though here the focus is less on intellectual irresponsibility and underachieving and more on sexual irresponsibility and violence.

As a white man who moved to Durban from Britain a few months ago, I have been constantly warned by 'friendly' whites and Indians to be vigilant and careful, and not to go out at dark or venture into certain areas, including the town centre, even during the day. These areas are constructed as black, sometimes even referred to as black, but it is black men and especially poor black young men who are seen as making these dangerous spaces (especially for whites and Indians). In the legion of stories of street muggings and robberies which whites and Indians have told me there was an implicit assumption that the perpetrators were black, young and male. Asking, as I sometimes did, what 'race' or gender the perpetrators were, I elicited surprise and seemed to confirm, in the eyes of the story tellers, my naivety as a new white person from Britain.

Some social commentators, such as Seekings (1996), have argued that much juvenile delinquency in South Africa has its roots in apartheid and is the expression of black African young men whose identities as the 'shock troops or foot soldiers in the struggle for political change' have become redundant in the post-apartheid context. Feelings of estrangement and uncertainty for many young (and older) black South African men have been reinforced, as Walker (2003) has persuasively argued, by unemployment as well as

the emphasis on women's rights in the new Constitution. Violence and sexual violence among young black African men is presented by these writers as a response to such feelings and a way of asserting themselves. Young black African men in southern Africa have been particularly problematised in the context of the HIV/Aids pandemic, with campaigns and literature especially addressing them as people with multiple partners and engaging in forms of sexual harassment and violence.

Recent interview-based research with black boys in South Africa has questioned popular constructions of black boys as bad. For example, Pattman & Bhana (2005), interviewing boys defined as 'bad' by their teachers in a black township school, found the boys to be surprisingly good, speaking about school and work in ways which suggested a high commitment (if not always recognised by the school authorities) to the school's work ethic, as well as displaying conscientiousness and concentration, despite much noise outside during the interview. In individual interviews with black boys who went to black township schools in KwaZulu-Natal, Danckwerts (2005) also found high levels of commitment to the work ethic, even though, as Pattman & Bhana (2005) also found, the boys constructed themselves as less 'studious' than girls. She contrasts this with the much more 'casual approach to academic work' of the relatively affluent white boys she interviewed who went to multi-racial schools, who constructed working hard as 'uncool'. Both studies found that much importance was attached to education by black boys as a means for self-betterment, and, even though the 'bad' boys interviewed by Pattman and Bhana (2005) were pessimistic about the future, they were still strongly invested in school and the school's work ethic. Far from being immature, irresponsible and hedonistic – which is how young men (and notably black young men) in South Africa are problematised – they seemed to be overwhelmed by concerns and anxieties about the future and how they were going to cope.

In a recent in-depth interview-based study with older teenage boys from different 'race' backgrounds in the Durban area, Morrell (2005) also noted how 'responsible' the black boys seemed to be, speaking about a future in which they imagined themselves as breadwinners looking after their families, in contrast to the white boys who were much more hedonistic and individualistic and did not speak at all about family obligations. Such findings contradict, as Morrell argues, the popular myth of black young men as 'bad', and also imply, I suggest, that we should focus on the anxieties that such anticipated responsibilities generate for black young men rather than construct them as tough and as lacking feelings.

I do not want to argue, however, that associations of black boys with 'bad' behaviour are the figments simply of post-apartheid imaginations faced and fixated with prospects of 'racial' 'integration' (though there is no doubt this says a great deal about the paranoia of whites and Indians in contemporary South Africa). In interview and ethnographic studies in schools in the Durban area (see Morrell, 2000; Bhana, 2002), tales of sexual

harassment and sexual violence have featured prominently, with black boys and young men being constructed as the perpetrators (as well as victims).

In this chapter I argue for ways of researching and working with boys in Southern Africa that address the identities in which many of them may be invested – which put them and others at risk of HIV/Aids and violence – without reinforcing constructions of black masculinity as bad. This means treating them as intelligent, creative and caring people and opening up spaces for them to critically reflect on the sorts of identity they routinely construct and inhabit. In proposing this, I draw on a UNICEF-funded study (which I co-ordinated with Fatuma Chege) that investigated how mainly teenage black African girls and boys in seven countries in Southern and Eastern Africa forged their identities.[1] I focus in this chapter on ways in which black South African and Zimbabwean boys from relatively poor urban areas (townships in Durban and high-density suburbs in Harare) presented themselves and their relations with girls in interviews and diaries. These young people were in their mid and late teens and attended mixed-sex and all-black schools.

The UNICEF project

In much social scientific research on young people, and notably in Africa (Davies, 1999), young people's voices have been surprisingly mute, reflecting and also reinforcing their marginal positions and identities (James & Prout, 1999). In contrast to this, the UNICEF project aimed to address the young people participating as *active subjects*, encouraging them to talk about themselves in reflective ways. We wanted to find out from them what it was like being a boy or girl of their age by developing appropriate methodologies and research relations. With this aim in mind, the young people were interviewed about their relations with and attitudes towards people of the same and the opposite sex, parents and teachers, interests and leisure pursuits, pleasures and fears, future projections, and role models. But, within these broad themes, they were encouraged to set the agenda and pursue issues which they deemed significant to them. The interviewers – a large number of men and women from their early 20s to 50s – were trained to respond to issues the young people raised and to try not to be judgmental – for example, not expressing condemnation (verbal or non-verbal) if young people spoke positively about fighting, or not trying to change the subject but sticking with this and asking them questions, in a spirit of curiosity and interest, about their views on fighting.[2] Some of our interviewers engaged the young people in dance and clapping and short ritualistic games prior to conducting the interviews, and this seemed to be very effective in helping them feel at ease with the interviewer.

In some countries, the researchers had not attended workshops that we arranged on 'young-person-centred research methods' (Frosh et al., 2002) outlined above, and it was noticeable that in these the interviews were more tightly structured and much less conversational, and the young people's contributions were shorter and much more

focused on the specific questions asked, than in countries like South Africa, Zimbabwe and Zambia where the researchers had attended such workshops. Where interviews were tightly structured, the young people said little about sexuality, posed few questions and showed little emotional engagement. This was in marked contrast to the interviews conducted by researchers in the above-mentioned countries who were committed to being 'young person centred.' I want to suggest that these researchers established relations with the young people that enabled and encouraged many of them to:

(1) Put questions to the researchers about concerns they had regarding relations with boyfriends and girlfriends and with parents and also HIV/Aids: Clearly they saw the researcher as a figure of authority who was not authoritarian but accessible and interested in them and who wanted to help them.

(2) Talk positively about themselves: This was noticeable when the young people were reflecting on the interviews and were often pleased about how much they had been able to contribute, and also when they were talking about the ways they supported their friends, even when, in the case of some boys, the topic was fighting.

(3) Display powerful emotions, for example loud laughter, notably from boys in mixed groups, raised voices, surprise and disgust.

(4) Raise 'sensitive' issues, for example girls telling the researchers about being sexually harassed by boys and male teachers, and boys communicating fears of violence, being bullied, and being 'rejected' by girls. These were, as we shall see, 'sensitive' issues for boys because they undermined popular constructions of boys as powerful, and were usually expressed in diaries the boys kept.

(5) Introduce sexuality themselves: Sexuality often emerged spontaneously in the interviews even with children as young as eight – without it being introduced by the interviewers – most notably when young people were discussing their relations with contemporaries and adults of the opposite sex. They were often surprised and expressed pleasure at being able to talk openly about gender and sexuality, and also reported being secretive towards adults generally about their sexual feelings and about relationships with contemporaries of the opposite sex.

As well as conducting group interviews of this kind, the researchers gave young people, aged over 13 in South Africa and Zimbabwe, diaries to keep. They were asked to write, at the end of each day for a week, about things that happened during the day to do with events, relations and emotions that they felt were important, and they were encouraged to elaborate their responses with illustrations. They were given open-ended but specific questions to structure their responses, such as 'What, if anything, has made you happy or sad today?' The diaries generated material that was not accessible through group interviews, and which indicated how different young people could be when reflecting upon themselves and their relations with others in different contexts.

The rationale for conducting this research was to collect information from boys and girls about their lives in order to develop relevant sex-educational resources. In response to HIV/Aids, sex education is being introduced in schools in Southern and Eastern Africa (often in the context of 'life orientation' programmes), yet many teachers (as we found in our study) were not sure what to teach or how to teach it, were embarrassed by the subject, and tended to preach about the terrible consequences of engaging in sex (even though in some countries, notably Zimbabwe, UNICEF has produced life skills booklets addressing HIV/Aids and aimed at primary and secondary pupils). As Epstein and Johnson (1998) note, sexuality tends to be constructed as a key marker of adult identity in many societies, with adults wishing 'innocence' on children and imagining them as asexual or as people who *ought* to be asexual. In Zimbabwe, the Ministry of Education refused our researchers permission to interview schoolchildren under 16 about sexuality on the grounds that this might *make* them sexual. In the chapter I try to demonstrate how the methods we adopted and the relations we established with our young participants (with the focus on boys in South Africa and Zimbabwe) may serve as models for good pedagogic practices in sex education, which must engage, as Epstein and Johnson argue, with the (sexual *and* non-sexual) cultures and identities young people develop themselves. I argue that those who work with boys (and girls) in sex and HIV/Aids education should tap into the multiple identities of the young people and aim to be self-reflexive, as we tried to do and to be in our research.

In this chapter I shall be reporting on some key themes that emerged in the research with the boys who participated – notably misogyny and also idealisation of girls, constructions of boys as powerful, and anxieties about lacking power. While these emerged as contradictory accounts with most boys who were interviewed in groups and who kept diaries, these contradictions seemed most marked with boys, to whom I shall be referring, from low-income urban backgrounds in South Africa and Zimbabwe.

Some assumptions about identities informing boy and young person-centred interviewing

I have argued for research that addresses boys in particular and young people in general as active agents in the sense of encouraging them to reflect and elaborate upon themselves by establishing informal, non-judgemental and friendly relations with them. But they also need to be addressed in research as active agents in a more fundamental sense – that is, as people who actively *construct* their very identities in everyday forms of interaction, through talk (Foucault, 1979) and the kinds of everyday *performance* (Butler, 1990) that come to be associated with and give substance to particular identities. Identities are not fixed, even if they appear to be – even if it seems to many, for example, that emotional inarticulacy or loudness are fundamental personality characteristics

pertaining to most boys at all times. They are not things we *have* but things we *do* or *perform* and *negotiate* in relation to others, and they are multiple.

This way of conceptualising identities has important implications for conducting research and what to focus on as findings. Rather than seeing interviews as a means for eliciting the truth of who our interviewees are – as if they possess an essence that can be brought to the surface (by skilful interviewing) and which the interviewees, if willing and able, simply describe – interviews (and other forms of research) should themselves be seen as sites in which identities are constructed and negotiated. This means focusing not just on what boys say in interviews but on their performances, which include what they say and how they say it, their body language, their emotional tone as conveyed in laughter, silences, interruptions, etc. There are no essences of masculinity that determine the views, feelings and behaviour of boys; versions of masculinity, rather, are always performed and negotiated by boys in interviews in (implicit or explicit) relation to femininities, as we see in the mixed group interview with 16-year-old Zimbabwean boys and girls below.

Constructing gender identities as opposites

The young people our researchers interviewed tended to speak about boys and girls as opposites with nothing in common, not only in regions where gender relations were more formally segregated but where roughly equal numbers of boys and girls attended mixed primary and secondary schools. In Garissa, a predominantly Muslim and rural area in Northern Kenya, where most girls were withdrawn from school as they approached puberty, schoolgirls expressed shock and surprise at even being asked by our researchers if they ever played with boys. This question seemed much less shocking when put to girls and boys in countries and regions where school attendance was more formally mixed, as in the 'black' schools in Durban or Harare. But when asked whether they would like to change sex for a day, young people from these areas, and boys especially, were not at all enamoured with the prospect. For example, teenage boys in Harare expressed horror, constructing boys as active, free and strong and girls as passive, tied to the home and emotionally and physically weak. Girls in Harare also presented boys negatively as 'loud,' 'rough' and 'rude,' though some envied boys their freedom to stay out late and mix with friends, and wanted, for this reason, to change sex. These are not simple descriptions of the gendered Other, but are highly pejorative and convey powerful messages about ways in which boys and girls should act or perform.

Boys in Zimbabwe performing outrageously in relation to girls

Many researchers in the West have observed how these sorts of gendered construction are played out in schools, with boys, for example, monopolising talk in mixed groups as well as being loud, provocative or 'funny', often by being 'naughty' or through various

types of threat to girls. (See, for example, Spender, 1982; Francis, 1998; Connolly, 1998; Gilbert & Gilbert, 1998). We found that these 'performances' characterised some of the interviews we conducted with boys and girls in mixed-sex groups. I want to examine one such interview with 16-year-old girls and boys in a mixed school in a low-income area in Harare, Zimbabwe. Here the boys not only asserted themselves in relation to girls by dominating the conversation, but also by speaking about them in contemptuous and provocative ways. Whether they engaged in the sort of behaviour they described or not, what was clear was that in the interview they were eliciting much laughter from other boys by talking in self-consciously outrageous ways about girls as objects – as things they 'opened' and threw away:

Canaan (B): These days, kids have big bodies, by the time she gets to Form 1 she will be having affairs.

Interviewer: Even those in Grade 4 and 5 [aged 10–11 years]?

Kokayi (B): Eh…yes…those in Grade 4, yes; those are the ones we are jumping for these days (laughter).

Interviewer: Why do you go for such young girls?

Kokayi: You know what, yes, us boys have an oppressive nature, once I sleep with a girl I lose interest in her so usually I want to go for those who still have 'intact-closed presents' (laughter and grumbles).

Interviewer: What presents?

Kokayi: Official opening; when you sleep with a virgin!!

Interviewer: So how do you feel about it?

Kokayi: I feel good it is nice. After the official opening, you can just ditch her.

Interviewer: So if a boy dumps you what do you do?

Daya (G): It depends on how much you loved him. If you really loved him, you will be pained.

Kambo (G): A … I won't feel that way. I will actually look around for a replacement boyfriend and I will show off to the boy who dumped me.

Moyo (B): That's when I will beat you.

Chipiwa (G): Why should you beat me, isn't it you would have dumped me.

Canaan: Yes I will beat her because what she will be doing to me is painful, showing off to me.

Chipiwa: But it is you who would have ditched me.

The boys, here, were forging a common identity as powerful, funny, and hedonistic males by talking outrageously about girls. The presence of girls in the interview, along with the adult (male) interviewer, only served to make them appear, in the eyes of each other, particularly outrageous and funny. It may be that the girls were silent as the boys spoke because they were so uncomfortable and did not want to be humiliated and abused further. However, the interviewer was concerned to give them the opportunity to respond to the boys. Significantly, he had to put questions specifically to the girls to draw them into the conversation, and the effect of this was to generate a gender-polarised and heated exchange in which two girls resisted boys' potential constructions of them as 'used goods' and the boys tried to re-assert themselves. What was apparent in this exchange was how quickly the boys' tone changed from humour to hostility when the girls started challenging them. This and the initial reluctance of the girls to speak no doubt reflected the ubiquity of double sexual standards, whereby boys derived status, and girls were condemned for speaking explicitly about their heterosexual needs and desires.

Group dynamics such as these pose serious ethical dilemmas for teachers committed to a pupil-centred approach. If teachers are to encourage young people to speak openly about sex and sexuality in class, they must work hard, like our interviewers, at developing friendly, non-judgemental relations with learners. Nevertheless, as we see in the example above, one consequence of this may be boys not only dominating talk at the expense of girls but also abusing girls. (I pick up on this dilemma when discussing single-sex and mixed-group work in sex education in the conclusion.)

While these boys joked about their sexual relations with younger girls (undermining projections of 'innocence' by Ministry of Education officials onto children under 16), they expressed much anger, later in the interview, about sugar daddy relations or heterosexual relations between girls and older richer males. This anger was directed not so much at the sugar daddies but at the girls for prostituting themselves and exchanging love for money and status (see also Lindegger, 2005). They were particularly angry with 'salad girls,' so called because of their colourful spaghetti tops, for wearing 'provocative' clothes, violating 'culture,' emulating 'Western' styles and having sexual relations with older richer males. The 'salad girls' were from much more affluent backgrounds than these boys, and they were angry with these girls for putting themselves way out of their reach. While girls were particularly condemned for going after sugar daddies by boys from relatively poor urban areas, this condemnation was commonly made by boys in group interviews, from various social classes. Through their anger with 'sugar daddy' girls and the 'just desserts stories' they told about their getting pregnant, HIV/Aids and dumped, it seemed that many boys were re-assuring and re-asserting themselves as powerful males. Their anger detracted from their vulnerabilities, stemming, ironically, from their apparently powerful identities as initiators and providers in heterosexual relations. They were vulnerable

because there were always older, richer males who were better at doing these, and their anger with 'sugar daddy' girls was undoubtedly fuelled by anxieties about this.

Boys performing in contradictory ways

Longstanding cultural discourses make the acquisition of certain identities for certain groups of people more likely than others. For example, males as loud and spokespeople, females as quiet and spoken for, males as 'proposers' and females as 'proposed' (a particularly popular, and, I shall argue, problematic version of heterosexual relations articulated by the young people). But research which addresses boys as active subjects needs always to ask why boys are so invested in particular kinds of identity (see Hollway,1989), even those, indeed especially those, which are so often taken for granted as essential features of masculinity.

In the UNICEF project, boys seemed to be most invested in constructing and presenting themselves as tough (sexually, physically and emotionally), loud, funny and different from girls in group interviews. They were much more misogynistic and likely to talk about girls in derogatory or impersonal ways when being interviewed in groups rather than when being interviewed individually (cf. with Frosh, Phoenix Pattman, 2002), and especially when writing diaries.

In group interviews, some boys boasted about sleeping with and dumping girls, and, as we saw, often embarrassed girls by this kind of talk in mixed interviews. Yet, in the individual interviews and in their diaries, the same boys were quiet about this. In their diaries, many of the boys – particularly in South Africa – wrote highly romanticised accounts of their girlfriends or potential girlfriends (sometimes accompanied by the kind of idealisation of girls as carers, soft, advice givers, which featured also in individual interviews) as well as heartrending pieces about being dumped by them. These were conspicuous by their absence in the interviews.

Prominent in the diaries of boys, though absent in the group interviews, were anxieties about heterosexual rejection. It was in diaries and not in the interviews that some boys reflected on being initiators of heterosexual relations through 'proposing love', and implied that this was not an easy position to adopt. 'Proposing love', a commonly used phrase in all the countries in our research, was always something that boys did to girls, and encompassed a range of ways of initiating displays of sexual interest, from asking a girl out to calling her 'sweetie' and 'baby'. It has formal connotations, as if heterosexual relations have to be initiated through a specific declaration of interest and intent

>> 'Proposing love', a commonly used phrase in all the countries researched, was always something that boys did to girls

(by the boy) rather than emerge more spontaneously through interaction and friendship. It is, perhaps, precisely because of boys' and girls' investments in identifying in opposition to each other that the expression of heterosexual attraction is constructed in this formalised way. If boys and girls are assumed to have little in common, how else are relationships between them to be conceptualised other than as sexual, and how else are these made possible other than through a specific 'proposal?' While boys talked about 'proposing' to girls in group interviews, this was not presented at all as potentially problematic and little or no mention was made of the girls' reactions, the impression given that boys got their way. In diaries, however, as we see in the following extracts, one where the proposal was successful and the other where it was unsuccessful, proposing love is shown to be a high-risk activity, with success or rejection impacting significantly on the proposer's very sense of identity as a male. Indeed, in the first extract, Israel, a 16-year-old South African boy, presents 'proposing love' not only as something boys do, but as a test of manhood:

> Israel: I decided to take a walk. Immediately I saw a girl that I wanted to talk to. I went to her and greeted her. I talked to her about my love for her. She refused because she said she had another boyfriend. I told myself that I cannot be defeated by this girl. I persuaded her for a long time until she said she is still going to think about it. I also persuaded her until she accepted me. I did not feel anything that day because of excitement. When I went to see my friends, I told them about my new girlfriend. In that afternoon, I saw this new girlfriend in the shop and she told me that she has rejected her old boyfriend and then I was excited. I felt I was in the moon. My friends confronted me that I was really a man …'

Part of the pleasure and excitement that Israel feels derives from telling his friends about his new girlfriend, and his friends affirming that 'I was really a man'. He writes about how he 'cannot be defeated' by this girl, as if, through his persistence, he will conquer her. This suggests that the stakes are high in 'proposing love,' that it carries with it the prospect of 'defeat' – not only in failing to 'win' a girl, but also in failing as a man. As we see in the following extract from the diary of another teenage boy in South Africa, when the girls are white and the boys are black, rejection may take a devastatingly racist form:

> I went to town with my friends. I enjoyed that day very much but there was one thing that broke my heart as we were strolling in town. We saw four white ladies. We stopped them [and] they shouted at us saying we must leave them alone. They called us 'Kaffirs'. We went back very sad, we went back home… we went to check on our girls…

This extract vividly illustrates the importance of addressing how gender intersects with 'race' as an aspect of identity, especially in the context of a black majority society with a legacy of white political and economic domination. We see in this encounter how the

black boys (as powerful boys) stop the girls, and how the girls (as powerful whites) resist their advances by constructing them as an inferior 'race.' Significantly, the boys did not retaliate or assert themselves in the face of such racism. They were clearly not in a position of power in relation to the girls; on the contrary, they became sad and deflated and went home. They then went 'to check on our girls' – 'our' presumably, in this context, referring to black girls.

Fighting (boys fighting boys) was spoken about at length in the interviews, notably by the South African boys in 'black' township schools in KwaZulu-Natal, who also wrote detailed accounts of violence in their diaries. Talk about violence in the group interviews was often robust, humorous, and aggressive, and particular boys with reputations for toughness and violence were described with awe. Sometimes boys in the group – usually big boys – were pointed out, with respect and humour, as people other boys did not challenge. If violence was almost idealised in some of the group interviews with boys, the costs of violence for them featured much more in their diaries.

Not ironing out contradictions

It is important not only for understanding but also for working with boys *not* to iron out these contradictory accounts and performances. Neither the diaries nor the interviews in contrast to each other, provide insights into what boys were *really* like. These radically different ways of presenting themselves by the same boys, in these different modes of research, suggest rather that contemporary young masculinities, in Southern Africa, may be lived and experienced in quite contradictory ways. The view, expressed by some of the girls who were interviewed, that boys can express their real (and unproblematic) selves so long as they are not with other boys clearly sets severe limits on this actually happening (especially given the boys' professed reluctance to mix with girls), and it may *contribute* to boys being troublesome (in groups). Rather than aligning with boys on their own in opposition to boys in groups, the aim in research and education with boys must be on highlighting and encouraging them to explore the contradictory ways in which they position themselves on their own and with others.

What the very different and contradictory accounts of boys in these different modes of research suggested was that boys were *both* powerful and vulnerable. In the group interviews, on the one hand, they seemed to be displaying aspects of what Connell calls 'hegemonic' masculinity – confidence, assertiveness, anger and raucous humour. In the diaries, on the other hand, when talking about a range of themes and issues connected to their interests, identities and relationships, many of the same boys were addressing the kinds of problem for boys and men that are incurred by trying to live up to the unrealistic expectations imposed by these hegemonic ideals and fantasies.

Mixed interviews: Girls challenging boys to address contradictions

In many of the mixed-gender interviews the girls and boys occupied different and opposed positions, both physically, with the boys and girls sitting in same gender groups, and discursively, as illustrated in the extract above from the mixed interview. It was not easy for girls, especially from poorer urban and rural backgrounds to challenge boys in mixed interviews, for fear of being ridiculed and abused. Responding to this, the Zambian research team organised group interviews in two stages. First, same-sex group interviews were held on the topic of problems they and people of the opposite sex experienced. Following this the boys and girls came together to present and discuss their findings. The Zambian researchers found that in some of the mixed plenaries the girls were as outspoken and critical as the boys, and attributed this to the confidence and support they had gained in the single-sex group. And under these conditions the girls challenged the boys to become more reflective and critical, not (just) by attacking them for abusing or insulting them but by drawing their attention to the kind of problems which aspiring to being tough and strong generated for boys. Among these, for example, were boys competing with other boys through fighting, being teased if they had small penises, being blamed by teachers and parents if they failed to outperform girls, being less able to talk about their emotions with and get support from their parents and being expected to smoke and drink and get into trouble. Significantly the boys did not re-assert themselves as tough and strong in response to these 'challenges' but seemed to align with the girls and began to focus critically not only on the negative impact of hegemonic male values for them but also for girls. In these mixed group interviews/discussions many boys, for example, expressed criticisms of sexual harassment of girls.

Straight acting

Boys are not naturally 'tough' but have to work hard, we found, at constructing themselves as this, through *demonstrations* of misogyny and homophobia. (See Nayak and Kehily, 1996) for a graphic account of homophobia as a *performance* in which British boys were engaged.) The former were particularly conspicuous in the interviews themselves, but some boys also made it clear through laughter and shows of disgust that they were not gay. In South Africa and Zimbabwe, in particular, some boys expressed fears about befriending other boys lest they be called 'gay' or 'homosexual'. (Perhaps this reflected the relatively high profile of homosexuality in public and political discourses in these countries.) This was an issue initially raised by the girls – probably because it was too contentious for the boys to be seen to be doing so. Boys also spoke in derogatory terms about 'mama's boys', from whom they differentiated themselves as tough, macho boys. Other recent studies on boys and young men in South Africa. (e.g., Ratele et al., 2005; Salo, 2005b) have also found how invested many boys seem to be in distancing

themselves from other boys they construct as 'moffies' or boys who are perceived as effeminate and weak and not very heterosexual. Such characteristics are linked as features of boys who are seen not to be *proper* boys. The boys' misogynistic and homophobic performances were intended as assertions of power, yet their effect, ironically, was to restrict what boys could do and say. Ratele et al (2005), for example, found that boys who were seen to mix with girls as friends were liable to be denigrated as 'moffies', and, in our study the prospect of being labelled similarly restricted possibilities of boys developing close relations with other boys. I suggest that the idealisation of girls and women by many boys as carers, nurturers, advice givers, is, in part, produced by denying these as identities for (proper) boys. (See Frosh et al., 2002, on the huge costs for boys in general – not just for boys vilified as gay – of British boys' investments in homophobia.)

Conclusion: Some implications for working with boys in sex education

HIV/Aids and sex education in life skills programmes should not be taught in didactic and moralistic ways that problematise young people's sexuality, but should address young people as authorities about their lives. Furthermore, it should not focus exclusively on sex and HIV/Aids, but more generally on what it is like being a young person of their age, addressing young people as active agents. (See Walsh et al., 2003, for an example of this kind of sex education practice in South Africa.) When our researchers adopted this approach in the UNICEF project, our interviewees – both boys and girls – were engaged, reflective and animated, talking a great deal about gender and sexuality but introducing these topics *themselves* and on their *own terms* as they discussed their lives and relations more generally. The boys from the 'black' townships and high-density suburbs in South Africa and Zimbabwe, despite the problematic and stereotypical representations of such boys, were sensitive and emotionally articulate. They also showed no signs of 'HIV/Aids fatigue' – the boredom and frustration induced by the constant stream of images and messages about the horrors of HIV/Aids – which some of the HIV/Aids teachers claimed their pupils showed (Pattman & Chege, 2003a). However, in some mixed-group interviews, the boys asserted themselves in relation to girls – sometimes, as we saw in the example from Zimbabwe, in very misogynistic ways. In these, the non-judgemental and 'young-person-centred' approach of the interviewers seemed to provide a licence for boys to display power and authority by subordinating girls. How to address this when developing 'young-person-centred' pedagogies in HIV/Aids/life skills education is something I discuss below when focusing on single-sex or mixed groups in HIV/Aids/life skills education.

I want to conclude by elaborating further on some of the implications of the UNICEF research for ways of working with boys (and girls) in HIV/Aids/life skills education, with particular emphasis on South Africa.

'Hard sports' as the solution compounds the problem

In Britain, as Griffin (1998) notes, it tends to be working-class and black boys who are problematised as actual or potential delinquents, and sport – and especially football – has been aimed at them as a way of 'burning off' and 're-channelling masculine energies' in supposedly productive ways (e.g., Connolly, 1998; Lloyd, 1990). The British Home Secretary has even advocated 'hard sports' such as boxing and football as potential 'solutions' to the 'problem' of boys (*e.g.,* Muir, 2004).

In South Africa, sport has been promoted by white authorities as a means of controlling black urban families and children (especially young males) deemed unstable and uncontrollable and liable to engaging in political protest. (See Nauright, 1997, pp. 17, 67). Sport conceived in these ways, as a means of re-channelling young (black) masculine energies, works with and helps to sustain a vision of (black) working-class males as hard, bad and in need of control. I want to argue for an approach to working with boys which, in contrast to the emphasis on sport as a panacea, encourages boys to become less invested in constructing themselves in opposition to girls and their versions of femininity.

Like fighting, football was an important medium through which the boys in Durban and Harare positioned themselves in hierarchies with other boys, and as different from and better than girls. This is not to critique HIV/Aids education initiatives going on in amateur football clubs in South Africa; football provides a means of gaining access to many young men and such initiatives are taking advantage of this, though, in the absence of girls, they are likely to be limited (for reasons I explain below). My critique is aimed, rather, at ways of working with boys based on the assumption that boys are very different from girls in being intrinsically tough and active and that 'hard' sports represent safe ways for channelling their energy.

Boys and girls working together researching each other

'Masculinity' must not be reduced to a discrete essence when working with boys; it should rather be addressed in the plural and relationally, and this means not only that girls and femininity must feature as important topics in such work, but also implies (ideally) that working with boys should also include working with girls.

In South Africa there has been a long tradition of single-sex schooling for white children, and, in spite of the state's commitment to mixed schooling, single-sex, state-subsidised and private schools are the norm for white and relatively affluent children of other 'races' who now attend the formerly white schools. However, single-sex schools reinforce assumptions about essential differences between boys and girls, and, of course, make it impossible to work with boys and girls to encourage possibilities of cross-gender friendships and alliances. Partly because both boys and girls in the UNICEF project tended to construct members of the opposite sex as a different species, some of them were

desperately keen to know (when interviewed in single-sex groups) what members of the opposite sex said about them. Sex-educational and other programmes at school should build on this and develop activities that *require* boys and girls to work together to investigate how they think about themselves and each other. For example, boys and girls could alternate between being interviewers and interviewees, asking and responding to the same kinds of open-ended question that generated so much interest and enthusiasm around the themes explored in our studies.[3] Programmes need to be developed where boys and girls see the point of working together, where the input from both is seen as necessary, and not where they are compelled to sit together and do similar tasks. As Holland (2003) and Prendergast and Forrest (1997) note in their research with pupils in their early years and in secondary schools in Britain, *forcing* boys and girls to work together in order to encourage less polarised gender relations may actually succeed in polarising them further.

Single-sex and mixed groups

Our research – in particular the experience of interviewing young people in single-sex and mixed groups in the UNICEF study – suggests, however, that single-sex group work should form an integral part of life skills and HIV/Aids education. In such groups, girls in particular feel more able to participate with confidence and to express their desires and concerns without being labelled in derogatory ways. However, single-sex classes, like single-sex interviews, may reinforce assumptions that boys and girls are essentially different and in opposition to each other. In the mixed-group discussions, boys and girls are in a better position to learn from each other about their problems, concerns and views. For this reason, I would advocate a carefully weighted combination of single-sex and mixed group discussions as part of a comprehensive strategy for HIV/Aids and life skills education (see Pattman, 2002). In Zambia, where girls and boys were interviewed together, *after* being interviewed in single-sex groups, the girls were particularly confident and fluent and able to engage in critical discussion with the boys, and this may provide a model for good practices in HIV/Aids and life skills education.

Addressing different gendered selves in different contexts

Rather than addressing girls and boys as unitary gendered subjects, I want to argue for approaches in HIV/Aids/sex education that explore with girls and boys the different and contradictory ways they present themselves and talk about sexual desire and the opposite sex in different contexts. As in our research, boys and girls could be asked to keep diaries, anonymous extracts from which could be read out and discussed in lessons, taking discussions in directions that are perhaps not normally traversed in class. Drama and role plays improvised and performed by the pupils also offer effective ways in which pupils' multiple and contradictory identities may be addressed in class (see Pattman, 2006).

Not constructing boys as the enemy from whom to protect and separate girls

In research on pupil's experiences of mixed schooling in South Africa, Morrell (2000) found sexual harassment of girls by boys to be a major problem, and argued for the provision of more single-sex schools to provide safe and supportive environments for girls. The problem, however, with separating girls from boys is that it denies possibilities of girls and boys working together to develop less polarised relations with each other, relations that do not entail sexual harassment. For it is precisely because boys and girls construct themselves in opposition to each other, a situation reinforced by their separation , that boy–girl relationships, when they do occur, are likely to be sexualised and marked by 'propositions' initiated by boys and sexual harassment perpetrated by boys against girls. A much better strategy, in my view, would be to focus, with boys and girls together, on the benefits for both of developing more egalitarian sexual and non-sexual cross-gender relationships. As indicated, the kinds of problem arising from popular constructions of males as initiators and providers in heterosexual relations, such as boys risking rejection and a slight on their identities as macho males, and girls having to put up with sexual harassment and being the objects of unwanted proposals, were raised and discussed by boys and girls in mixed groups following single-sex group interviews, without boys and girls taking sides against each other but, on the contrary, appearing to align with each other.

Male teachers conveying unfamiliar models of masculinity

By adopting young-person-centred approaches, the male interviewers conveyed important messages to boys and girls about possibilities of males being caring and sympathetic, for these tended to be constructed by boys (especially in diaries and individual interviews) as qualities residing in girls and women. Some of the boys in Botswana and South Africa idealised women teachers as people they felt able to talk to about problems, precisely because they perceived the men teachers as hostile to them and likely to beat them. Male teachers need to be like our male interviewers and relate to pupils in ways that do not invite these gender-polarised constructions, and which show that males can be caring, sensitive, approachable, non-authoritarian, non-aggressive and pupil centred, and that violence is not synonymous with being male, and something that girls (and boys) have to put up with. Similarly, they can show that males can develop close and caring relations with girls, which are non-sexual and non-harassing. Sexual harassment, not only by boys but also teachers and other men, was a major problem for girls, according to our interviewees.

Sex education must address boys' investments in homophobia as a major problem for them as well as the immediate victims of their homophobia.

There has been a growing research literature on homophobia in relation to the experiences of gays and lesbians in South Africa, an excellent example being the collection of papers, *Defiant Desire*, edited by Gevisser and Cameron (1994). However, our research and other recent studies in South Africa, which I have cited, suggest that we also need to focus on the significance of homophobia in the lives of young men who identify – most rigorously – as straight. In *Defiant Desire* there is an important chapter on 'policing', but this concerns state repression of homosexuality in apartheid South Africa and its impact on the gay and lesbian community. It is important to encourage boys, in sex and HIV/Aids education, to reflect upon the micro and everyday ways in which young boys and men routinely *police themselves* and gender boundaries through homophobia and misogyny, at great costs to themselves as well as to girls and to boys invented and vilified as 'moffies'.

Endnotes

1. We have written up this research in Pattman and Chege (2003a, 2003b, 2003c).
2. This approach to interviewing young people was strongly influenced by the study conducted on boys in London by Frosh, Phoenix and Pattman (2002).
3. Fatuma Chege and I have produced a handbook for training HIV/Aids/life skills education teachers which engages with their identities through various activities framed around extracts from the research material. This is being piloted by UNICEF. (See Pattman & Chege, 2003c)

CHAPTER 3

Multiple meanings of manhood among boys in Ghana

Akosua Adomako Ampofo & John Boateng

Introduction

Since 1995, the first author has taught two graduate courses in African Studies that have been for her among the most satisfying in her career as a university teacher: 'Gender and Culture in African Societies' and 'Gender and Development in Africa'. Although male students normally out-number females in these classes, a function of male/female ratios at the University of Ghana as a whole, in 2004, for the first time, the class on 'Gender and Culture' included only male students. Also, for the first time it focused on 'Men and Masculinities' and was co-taught with a male faculty member from the English Department.[1] The material we used came from the Social Sciences and Humanities and included novels as well as a significant number of works by male authors. Three variables had changed from earlier years – the class composition, the course focus and the sex of the co-instructor – and it seemed that simultaneously so did the level of engagement of the male students with the idea of transformative gender relations. However, what was most enlightening for the instructors was how the link between the shift in focus from (a) gender relations and women's 'oppression' (even though we *do* look at these issues in very concrete ways) to (b) one on *how* masculinity is constructed, and sometimes operates to 'marginalise' women as well as oppress some men, was associated with a much greater level of commitment among the (male) students to the equal treatment of females. In other words, we presented a shift from a typical oppressor/oppressed conceptualisation of gender relations. My colleague and I felt that such a binary construction was overly simplistic and not particularly helpful as it reduced masculinities to 'good' and 'bad' masculinities (Robinson, 2001).[2]

The goal of the Department of Agricultural and Extension Education at The Pennsylvania State University, which is the major home of the second author, is to meet the needs

of citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the United States and the world, by providing comprehensive programmes in resident instruction, research and continuing education in teacher and extension education in the agricultural sciences, youth and family education and related fields. Agricultural and Extension education in Ghana, as in most other sub-Saharan African states, often focuses solely on *agriculture* extension. And yet, although agriculture remains the backbone of most of our economies, the gendered aspects – such as the sexual division of labour, sex differences in access to land and credit, and even marketing of produce – receive little attention and continue to hamper the development of the sector. As a Ghanaian graduate student in the department, the second author came to appreciate and admire some of the programmes, such as the 4H and FFA (Future Farmers of America) programmes, and has seen their positive impacts on the lives of young people, especially in terms of creating a sense of community between boys and girls. He has often thought about how these approaches that involve bringing young people to a better understanding of themselves and each other might be adapted to address some of the problems faced by the youth in the agricultural and other sectors in Ghana and the rest of sub-Saharan Africa.

We are both unabashedly biased in our approach. We feel that men and women, but especially boys and men, must undergo transformations if we are to see more equal gender relations, and that men, especially, must understand how masculinity operates and what it does to women and men. When men are led to intimate perspectives on men, often through the eyes of other men, they are better equipped to recognise so-called hegemonic masculinities and their deleterious effects, not only on women, but also on children and on other men.[3] In this chapter, we seek to open a window on some of the meanings of manhood among boys aged between 11 and 15 in the hope that this will expand our understanding of masculinities and contribute to the development of 'new' men (Morrell, 2002).[4]

Masculinity

Morrell (1998a, also in this volume) points out that over the last three decades increasing numbers of researchers, especially from Europe and North America, have devoted some attention to the study of masculinities. Indeed by the 1990s, Men's Studies had become an accepted discipline and the study of *Masculinities* seemed almost to have become the flavour of the moment.[5] However, feminist researchers have always analysed and categorised practices, attitudes, beliefs, relations and concepts of masculinity and femininity in the context of gender. Indeed, a core focus of feminist theorising and practice has been to examine and address the ways in which being a social *male* impacts on the lives of persons who are *female*. Within population and family planning discourse, a small corps of researchers who focused on the 'male role' in Africa (see, for example, work by

Ezeh and Dodoo, among others, on reproductive decision making in Ghana) also pointed out how influential women's partners were in determining whether, and when, pregnancies would occur, and whether, and which kind of, family planning methods would be used. A 2003 volume titled *Men and Masculinities in Modern* Africa, edited by Lindsay and Miescher is, as far as I know, the first contemporary volume on *Africa* that theorises and problematises masculinity as gender rather than merely describing or valorising the experiences of men (Lindsay & Miescher, 2003).[6] Nonetheless, the idea of studying men and masculinities is still viewed with scepticism, if not outright dismissed, in many academic programmes in Africa. Further, by and large, unlike the case in Europe and North America, it is largely female scholars who have examined these issues.[7]

The term masculinity signifies a collective gender identity and not a natural attribute. It is socially constructed, fluid, resulting in diverse forms across different times and contexts, and mediated by socio-economic position, race, ethnicity, religion, age, geographic location and other local factors,[8] making it more appropriate to refer to *masculinities* (Adomako Ampofo & Prah, forthcoming; Connell, 1998; Morrell, 1998a; Ratele, 2002). Masculinity also defines how boys and men should behave, be treated, dress, appear, what they should succeed at, and what attitudes and qualities they should have (Bhasin, 2004) and this is why there are variations across societal and social groups.

The study of masculinities is an effort to make sense of the relationships between individual males and groups of males as well as between males and females. In many contexts there is an attempt to 'disrupt' so-called dominant or hegemonic masculinities. Our own aim as researchers and teachers is to understand and explain normative as well as marginal or unconventional masculinities, and the tensions within and between them. Morrell (1998a) notes that it is through the investigation of these 'masculine' points of view that a platform for the deconstruction of stereotypical masculinities and the reconstruction of new norms can be formed.

While much work has been done on adolescent sexual behaviours, most of this work has come from a public or reproductive health perspective rather than gender studies, and has focused on young people's so-called risky behaviours. Less attention has been paid to understanding *how* young people construct their gender identities, and how these constructions might be related to sexual and other lifestyle choices. The age structure of Ghana's population is youthful, with 51.4 per cent being under the age of 20 (52.2% of males and 50.4% of females; Republic of Ghana, 2002). There are several reasons why we should be interested, indeed concerned, about the current and future gender orientations of children and youth. Children under 14 represent the so-called window of hope for managing HIV/Aids because generally they have not begun their sexual lives.[9] The Ghana AIDS Commission notes that increased attention to this age group is crucial for the future response to the epidemic.

Much has already been written about the relative 'powerlessness' of girls and women in heterosexual relationships in Africa, and hence the limitations of the ABC approach (Adomako Ampofo, 1998; Dodoo & Adomako Ampofo, 2001). Nonetheless, since the spread of the virus predominantly via heterosexual contact persists, the transformation of gender relations remains critical in stemming the tide of the epidemic.[10] Styles of gender and sexual interaction between males and females are 'rehearsed' during adolescence, and research carried out with and among adolescent boys around the world suggests that viewing women as sexual objects, use of coercion to obtain sex and viewing sex from a performance-oriented perspective often begins in adolescence or even in childhood and may continue into adulthood (Adomako Ampofo, 2001; Jejeebhoy, 1996). At the same time, a handful of studies suggest that this is also the time when boys and young men learn to challenge normative, hegemonic forms of masculinity and to construct less hegemonic notions and expectations (Morrell, 1998a; Yon, Jimenez & Valverde, 1998; Wight, 1996). Understanding these alternative masculinities can help suggest possibilities for transformation of particular kinds of masculinities.

In this chapter, we explore some of the meanings of masculinity, of being a boy or a man, as presented by 30 boys aged between the ages of 11 and 15 from communities in the Eastern Region of Ghana. This data forms part of a larger study in which we conducted in-depth interviews (IDIs) with 58 students, 28 girls and 30 boys, who were selected following preliminary analysis of survey findings from among those categorised as having an 'egalitarian', 'average' or 'male dominant' orientation.[11] In the next section we return to a fuller discussion of the concept of masculinity, focusing heavily on Africa, and point to some of the ways in which constructions of masculinity affect gender relations, girls and women, as well as boys and men. We then go on to discuss three aspects of the meanings of manhood among the interviewed boys: (1) gender roles among children and adults; that is, how do constructions of acceptable tasks change over the transition from *boyhood to manhood*, (2) decision making around reproductive issues, and (3) permission seeking and male-on-female violence. We hope that these insights into boys' perspectives will suggest what they portend for future gender relations. We conclude the chapter by suggesting some ways in which 'new', less hegemonic masculinities might be encouraged.

Understanding masculinities

While there are diversities of masculinities, thus making it difficult to place individual men in separate, seemingly discrete categories, theories of masculinity are important in that they provide opportunities for understanding the social legitimisation among both males and females for the unequal treatment of women (Barker, 2000). Such conceptual arrangements allow us to understand the different kinds of masculinities, make sense of the power aspects of masculinity, and thus to suggest how particular constructions might be used as models to transform more hegemonic forms of masculinities.

Hegemonic masculinity is described as the dominant form of masculinity in a society and pertains to the relations of cultural domination by men. In addition to being oppressive for women, hegemonic masculinity silences other masculinities, placing these in opposition to itself in such a way that the values expressed by these other constructions of masculinity do not have currency or legitimacy, and it presents a version of how men should behave and how putative 'real men' do behave as the cultural ideal (Morrell, 1998a). Boys and men who fail to live up to this form of masculinity are ridiculed and named, in Akan being referred to as *bemaa-basia*, 'female-man' or *Kojo basia*.[12] The concept of hegemonic masculinity therefore provides a way of explaining the fact that, though a number of masculinities coexist, a particular version of masculinity has supremacy and greater legitimacy in society.

Feminist research on decision making between spouses, domestic gender role arrangements, and sexual and reproductive behaviours carried out in Africa over the last couple of decades – the period in which many countries established women's machineries and assumed democratic governance – indicates that male dominance remains pervasive and accepted in Ghana and much of sub-Saharan Africa. Studies on gender-based violence, for example, show not only that male-on-female violence is common, but also that many women seem to accept violence from intimate partners as inherent to the relationship (Coker-Appiah & Cusack, 1999; Adomako Ampofo & Prah, forthcoming). Yet, there are several traditions in Ghana that seek to ensure that women are protected in marriage, albeit often for instrumental reasons such as protecting their reproductive and care-giving roles. Modernisation, liberal feminist and now liberal economic theories have not necessarily brought with them enhanced rights for women, the promised effects of 'development' and 'democratisation'. Indeed, in some instances 'development' has only led to the further marginalisation of (African) women and it would seem that today new hegemonic masculinities are emerging, making it important to understand not only *how* such identities are transmitted intergenerationally, but also how they are (re)invented, or contested.[13]

The stratification of gender roles is often reinforced by traditions that are passed down from one generation to the next. Among the Akan of Ghana, a son does not inherit from his father, but fathers are expected to set up their male children in life through training and the giving of gifts such as land and guns, and to help their sons to 'acquire' their first wife. In the traditional system, this practice involved apprenticing the son to either the father himself or to a master craftsman, an orator or a statesman. In times of war, sons fought alongside their fathers (Awusabo-Asare, 1990). During this apprenticeship process, definitions of appropriate masculinity are transmitted. Male characteristics that are approved or encouraged include virility, strength, authority, power and leadership qualities, the ability to offer protection and sustenance, intelligence and wisdom, and the ability to bear physical and emotional pain. Hence girls are taught to defer to men

and boys as stronger, wiser and more responsible, and boys are accordingly taught to lead and control women.[14] A boy whose lifestyle does not measure up to the prescribed expectations is branded *'bemaa-basia'* meaning 'man-woman'. Conversely, a girl who veers from prescribed feminine roles into the domains prescribed for boys is branded *'bemaa-kokonin'*, meaning 'a woman-cock' or 'male-woman' (Adomako Ampofo, 2001).

Oral literature and proverbs are frequently used to explain and describe, and tend to hold in place stereotypes about women and men. Amoah (1991) and Rattray (1927) cite several proverbs that portray men as brave and those who should remain in charge of events and circumstances. Examples of such proverbs include:

> If the gun lets out its bullets, it is the man who receives them on his chest.
> Even if a woman buys a gun or a drum it leans against a man's hut.
> The hen also knows that it is dawn, but it allows the cock to announce it.

Proverbs such as those above are used in daily discourse to endorse masculine inclinations in boys and reinforce gender positions. This ensures that girls and boys know their appropriate places in the society (Adomako Ampofo, 2001).

How men behave in their families is strongly influenced by expectations about what it means to be a man by their fellow men, the community in which they live and the society at large. When a man does not conform to the norms or behaviours prescribed for men, he is often ridiculed. Paechter (2003) suggests that masculinities and femininities can be considered as local communities of practice. Indeed, children participate in adult communities where constructions are legitimated or punished. Paechter argues that, in order to sustain gender power differentials, society requires children to behave in particular ways and rewards or punishes them for conformity to, or deviance from, the norm.

Nonetheless, while hegemonic forms of masculinity persist, other forms have always existed, and continue to exist. Writing on gender attitudes among young people in urban Jamaica, Boxill (1997) finds little polarisation between the attitudes of urban young men and young women on gender roles. Several other studies point to individual men who contest these hegemonic forms, even despite ridicule or physical threats (see Adomako Ampofo, 2001, 2004; Ramphele, 1997; Narismulu, 2003).

In the next section, we point to some of the ways in which hegemonic masculinities affect girls and women as well as gender relations.

Masculinity, gender relations and the position of women

Women's education and employment

International Women's Year was celebrated in 1975, and the UN Women's Decade from 1975 to 1986.[15] From that time, many African governments, including Ghana's, took up

the notion of women's rights and many important initiatives have sought to empower women and redress gender inequities. The establishment of the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) put the issue of women's human rights in a prominent position, while the many activities to promote women in development went through the twists of 'women in development' (WID), through the turns of 'women and development' (WAD), to 'gender and development' (GAD). As has been noted by some commentators, the shift in language from WID to GAD has not necessarily been paradigmatic, and, for many people, 'gender', has merely replaced 'women' (Kabeer, 1994).[16] Furthermore, like its earlier predecessor WID, GAD has often restricted itself to dealing with women's practical needs, and shown less concern for tackling politics – the unequal gender relations that feed and sustain the subordinate positions of women in many of our communities.[17]

Conformity with certain norms and practices in Ghanaian societies has continued to perpetuate particular masculine tendencies among boys and men. In the economic and social spheres, males are more frequently allotted tasks that involve leaving home, and the emphasis in their training is on public accomplishments while a girl's tasks are home directed (Barry et al., 1979; Nabila, 2001). Accordingly, girls carry the greater burden of domestic work while boys are geared towards more productive work and are permitted more time for recreation and to be away from home. Ghanaian societies, as indicated earlier, have prescriptions for acceptable male and female roles, which are expressed in community norms and values that are often used to maintain social control over women and girls (Nukunya, 1992; Abu, 1991). Thus, in spite of the constitutional and legal guarantees, the reality on the ground does not quite measure up to the equal rights for all provided under the laws. Indeed, although there has been a drive within the Ministry of Education to focus on the 'girl child' since 1997,[18] more boys than girls continue to receive formal education beyond the basic level. The literacy rate for men is pegged at 60 per cent as opposed to 30 per cent for women (Coker-Appiah & Foster, 2002). Although the gap at the primary level between boys and girls is relatively small, and in some places there is even no gap or girls' enrolment rates surpass those of boys, the gap is very wide by the time students reach the tertiary level.[19] An important reason for this situation is that, when families are faced with economic difficulties, they are more inclined to withdraw the girls because their domestic and other services are required, or because it is felt that girls do not need as much education as boys do. In spite of women's long-standing economic contributions, and traditional expectations that they would support their lineages and children, one of the most important societal roles assigned to women is to marry and have children, and therefore the perception is that in the face of limited resources it would be a waste of the family's resources to educate the girl (Prah, 2002).[20]

Girls' drop-out rates as a result of pregnancies have also been cited as an important reason for the attrition rate of girls. Although Ghana Education Service policies do not

discriminate against girls who become pregnant, covert forms of discrimination persist both from school authorities[21] *and* fellow school pupils. Even if this were not the case, a girl often has to leave school to help look after her baby. There are other factors within the educational system itself that do not promote girls' participation in schooling. Prah (2002, p. 9) argues as follows:

> Other barriers to female education are to be found within the educational system. Educational systems are gendered in terms of their culture, rules and outcomes, all of which are based on male values and attitudes. Educational institutions such as schools and universities are important agents of gender role socialization which transmit different patterns of achievement, aspiration and self-evaluation to males and females. The cultures of educational institutions (and the systems that support them) foster gender inequality, so that the attitudes of teachers, the school curriculum, textbooks used, and educational policy are modeled on male perspectives and values.

Because the majority of women and girls do not have higher education or marketable skills, they are unable to obtain the better paying jobs in the formal sector. They do not earn enough in the jobs they do find to allow them to be economically independent, and, having been socialised to seek a husband who will 'support them', they help to reproduce the modern myth of the male provider and breadwinner.

What's sex got to do with it?

Adomako Ampofo (2001) discusses the paradox whereby gender norms tend to expect girls to display little knowledge about sexual matters ('Good girls don't know such things'), while boys, who are permitted some sexual licence and knowledge about sex are rarely provided with the information, counsel or guidance on issues of sexuality that they need. Several studies suggest that boys are actively encouraged by peers and family members to engage in sexual experimentation during their adolescent years (Adomako Ampofo et al., 2007; Kumah et al., 1992; Nzioka, 2001; Zelaya et al., 1997), while girls are expected or encouraged to remain virgins until marriage. At the same time, girls are expected to defer to men and their elders, thus reinforcing the notion that boys pursue and seek out girls, and girls acquiesce, and that boys and men may enjoy a measure of sexual latitude over girls and women. Young men who do not conform to the norms of sexual supremacy are often ridiculed and their masculinity is brought into question. The results are what we see today when a majority of HIV-infected women are from monogamous relationships, often with their first sexual partner (Awusabo-Asare et al., 1993), and sub-Saharan Africa has the unhappy distinction of being the only region in the world in which more women than men are infected with HIV (UNAIDS, 2006b).

When it comes to Aids, there is a growing consensus that the behaviour of some men and boys is largely driving the epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa because in many settings

males have a dominant role in deciding the nature and context of sex, and whether condoms are used (Adomako Ampofo, 2001; Adomako Ampofo et al., 2007; Dodoo, 1998; Rivers & Aggleton, 1999). About half of all people infected with HIV are younger than 25 years, teenage girls in sub-Saharan Africa are five times more likely to be infected than boys, and 62 per cent of young people aged 15 to 24 who are HIV positive live in sub-Saharan Africa (UNAIDS, 2006b). Given the nature of the transition from HIV infection to Aids, the high incidence of Aids among young people in their 20s indicates that many contracted HIV before age 20. The younger that people are when they become sexually active, the more likely they are to have several sexual partners, and thus the greater their likely exposure to STDs, including HIV (McCauley, 1995).

McCauley (1995) further shows that sexually active young men know less about STDs or how to prevent them than young women. Even if they do know about STDs, inexperience or denial as well as cultural pressures can make them take unnecessary risks. For instance, Adomako Ampofo et al. (2007) writing on youth in Ghana, and Morris (1994) on youth in Brazil, Ecuador and Chile, note that almost all the young men surveyed reported that they had heard of HIV/Aids yet, despite this knowledge, most did not think that they faced much risk for HIV infection, even when they were sexually active. Nzioka (2001), writing on the perspectives of adolescent boys aged 15 to 19 attending schools in rural, eastern Kenya, notes that the young men exhibit high-risk behaviour despite a high knowledge of sexual risks, fear of HIV and awareness of the protective value of condoms. They feel the need to conform to social prescriptions of male prowess, early sexual experience and having more than one partner, yet their feelings about this behaviour are ambiguous and contradictory. They consider getting girls pregnant and having had a treatable STD as marks of masculinity, blame girls (and the girls' parents) for the girls' failure to protect themselves, and want to boast about their sexual conquests to their peers. Yet they feel embarrassed and reticent about discussing sexual issues with adults, and are unwilling to get condoms from places where anonymity is not assured as they know their sexual activity is not sanctioned. Weiss et al. (2000) argue that the power imbalance characteristic of sexual relations among adults – with women generally having less access to critical resources than men – has many of its roots in adolescence. Thus, if we are to ensure that the next generation is not condemned to life with Aids, we have to enhance our understanding of youth sexuality and the manner in which dominant norms contribute to the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. Social norms of masculinity are particularly important in this regard, as the manner in which 'normal' men are defined – such as through the acquisition of multiple partners, power over women, and negative attitudes towards condoms – is often in conflict with the true emotional vulnerabilities of young men.

Making decisions and granting permission

Since the late 1990s, a number of significant developments have helped push the issues of masculinity, culture and power to the fore in the public discourse on women's empowerment in Ghana. Since 1998, Ghana has recorded increasing reports of violence against women and children (mostly female) by men in a variety of situations, including brutal serial and spousal killings of women that generated headlines and attention in the public domain from 2000 to 2002. The spousal killings have been 'justified' under various framings of male rights and privilege. Media reports, for example, suggest that the wife killings are frequently related to husbands' constructions of their roles as family heads and providers, or to women's failures to accord men their due respect by seeking permission before embarking on certain ventures, or are related to perceptions about women's sexuality.[22]

There are several studies that attest to the financial autonomy, and even economic might, of Ghanaian women (see Aidoo, 1985; Clark, 1994; Manuh, 1998; Robertson, 1976) and to the fact that women were expected to be diligent and enterprising. When an Asante girl attained puberty, she was given resources, or later cash, to serve as seed capital for her own economic enterprise. Further, women traditionally had their own spheres of power and authority in societies guided by a fair amount of complementarity in sex roles. Nonetheless, the myth induced by colonialism and the Victorian moral principle of the male breadwinner and overall head of household has created a situation where today men feel compelled to 'provide' for their families and experience their masculinity as threatened if they are unable to fulfil this role (Adomako Ampofo, 2000). According to a UNFPA report (2000), attempts to live up to the ideals of masculinity are frequently compromised by harsh and changing realities, especially for men who are poor, uneducated, un(der)employed or marginalised in other ways. Using an example from Kisii in Kenya, the report shows how men's self-esteem can be undermined as they lose control of land and livestock and are reduced to the mercy of women's homestead farming as a result of the increasing cost of living. Agadjanian (2002) describes how male street vendors in Maputo become more overtly 'masculine' in their domestic relationships, presumably to compensate for doing 'women's work'. As most men have not been appropriately socialised to handle such situations, the stress and frustrations often become unbearable and result in violent consequences. According to the studies cited in the UNFPA report (2000), violence was least prevalent in households where spouses communicated and shared responsibility for decisions. In households where no decisions were made jointly, 25 per cent of couples reported that the husband had hit the wife. Where all decisions were made jointly, the incidence of domestic violence was six per cent.

Male on female violence also erupts when women fail to seek permission from their partners before taking 'major' decisions such as going on a journey, engaging in a new

economic activity, or even visiting a friend (Coker-Appiah & Cusack, 1999). A 'real' man also does not tolerate his wife questioning him about his sexual adventures, or, worse, refusing to have sex with him as a result. Sometimes the violence that ensues leads to death. Clearly, although women frequently end up as 'victims' of violence, men are themselves under a great deal of pressure to fit the hegemonic norm of what it means to be a 'man' and frustrations around this are linked to both stress and gender-based violence.

Masculinities and men's well-being

Although in this chapter we are primarily concerned with the potential impact of meanings of manhood on women, a note on masculinity and men's well-being is in order. Boys and men also suffer from hegemonic masculinities. As noted, they are discouraged from showing 'feminine' emotions such as admitting to fear or pain, and are ridiculed for being effeminate if they are not aggressive. Chinua Achebe, best known perhaps for his strong positions when it comes to the state and politics in Nigeria, provides several very important descriptions of manhood, or masculinity, in Igbo society as well as in Nigeria more generally. In *Things Fall Apart* (1958) Achebe's character Okonkwo is the patriot who rules his household with an iron hand. Wives and children, even adult children, are expected to obey his commands. Okonkwo acts this way in part to compensate for his own father's perceived weakness (his father, Unoka, died in debt and humiliation when Okonkwo was very young). Shame for Unoka, and a fear of being a failure, drives Okonkwo to work tirelessly. Nwoye is Okonkwo's son with his first wife, and Okonkwo has high expectations for him. However, Nwoye does not quite fit Okonkwo's expectations of a real man; he is sensitive and thoughtful, preferring the friendlier, more female-oriented stories about the tortoise or the bird Eneke, rather than the masculine stories of violence and bloodshed. Fearing that Nwoye will turn out like Unoka, and since he wants him to grow into a tough young man 'capable of ruling his father's household when he is dead and gone to join the ancestors', Okonkwo is harsh with his son. In Nwoye, Achebe shows us an alternative masculinity, one crushed by Okonkwo's dominance. Achebe shows us that Okonkwo's brand of masculinity and obsession, it seems, with being a 'real' Igbo man, becomes his undoing. His harshness and insensitivity eventually drive his own son away. When Ikemefuna, a young boy given to Okonkwo's village, Umuofia, by a neighbouring village as tribute, is sacrificed to prevent a war, and Okonkwo participates in the boy's death, Nwoye is shaken, for Ikemefuma had become his best friend and brother. Okonkwo's rashness also leads to his exile from his beloved village and home. In Uchendu, Okonkwo's elderly and wise uncle, we see yet another counterpoint to hegemonic masculinity, and we also see in Okonkwo's submission to his uncle's authority the possibility of an alternate, gentler, masculinity.

Camara Laye (1955) provides a poignant description of the anxieties an African boy might go through in his initiation into 'manhood' in his autobiography *The African Child*.

In the account, Laye participates in several rituals and ceremonies and describes the fear that he and his peers felt when they had to go into the forest to encounter they knew not what, on the path to manhood – a fear they were not supposed to name. He also describes the pain of the circumcision itself, and the longing he felt to be with his mother – a longing he dared not verbalise, and which he was not allowed to satisfy. After his transition to 'manhood' Laye moves into a separate hut with other age-mate boys, and describes his longing for the nights spent alone with his mother in her hut. When Laye becomes an adult he accepts the rite of passage as a necessary step in his development as a member of his society; however, we also see him questioning whether the pain and anxiety are a necessary part of the journey to adulthood (manhood).

Men and boys are forced into leadership and breadwinner roles that many cannot live up to. Often the desire or pressure to 'perform' as a man leads boys into high-risk activities such as joining gangs and using drugs. Beyond the physical threats that come with attempts to live up to such constructions, boys and men who cannot live up to the expectations of being strong, aggressive, providers and leaders can be excessively stressed, especially in their relationships.[23] Moreover, men who cannot live up to these expectations that men should be powerful and competent in all things may respond by retreating into passivity and escape through drugs, alcohol, by resorting to violence towards weaker individuals, or by engaging in sheer bravado and risk taking (UNFPA, 2000).

What are men (and boys) *really* like? What do they have in common? In what ways do they differ in their conceptions of manhood? Why are men the way they are? How and when are particular masculinities constructed and used? And perhaps most importantly, how can answers gleaned be used to promote more gender-equitable attitudes between men and women? This chapter presents a small window into the deconstruction of masculinities.

Ghanaian boys and manhood

In this section we discuss issues related to gender roles, reproductive decision making, and permission seeking from the interviews with boys in Ghana. The boys whose responses are discussed below first took part in a survey of all first-year Junior Secondary School students conducted in two towns in the eastern region of Ghana, Mampong and Akropong. The towns share many similarities linguistically and culturally. However, in theory, people from Mampong are patrilineal while those from Akropong are matrilineal. Almost all the students came from one of the two towns, or from a nearby town. Mampong and Akropong can be described as peri-urban towns close enough to the capital Accra to be influenced by it, but retaining a more rural farming character.[24]

Gender roles

Boys' responses show evidence of beginning to form notions and expectations of masculinity around household tasks that differentiate them from girls' tasks, many of which they had been required to perform a few years earlier as a younger child.

> I am a boy so I do not carry rubbish to the dumpster or cook in the kitchen; my sister however, can carry rubbish to the dumpster and she can cook.
>
> They (girls) have to cook for the boys to eat but the boys don't have to cook for the girls to eat.
>
> I'm a poor cook, but it's okay; after all I'm only a boy. I do not need to cook for anybody but myself.

Three areas of domestic work that boys do not, or no longer, partake in emerge as being important markers of the transition to manhood: cooking and kitchen work such as washing dishes, doing laundry and sweeping. Most of the boys are very clear in their minds that kitchen work is a female preserve and their absence from this activity marks them as *not female*; therefore *male*:

> Don't you see that in the house boys don't normally cook so when they cook they will be laughed at and people will say that you like food?
>
> Let's say that when you are born a woman maybe if your mother is cooking you will see that the girl, her daughter rather, is always with her so that she teaches her how to cook, so that it is the woman who has to cook.
>
> It is because sometimes the women, it is their job. Let's say that we know that as for women when it comes to sweeping they know how to sweep.

In fact, cooking is such an important marker of being a (good) woman or wife that one boy noted that if she (a wife) doesn't know how to cook *'you will leave her for another woman.'*

Although boys participate in cleaning the house and sometimes doing laundry, this is typically to 'help' the girls. In the case of doing laundry, they only wash their own clothes, or perhaps those of an older male such as a father or uncle.

> When we are staying on our own like now that we are in our own father's house, we the boys when we finish eating we leave our plates for the girls to wash it and the girls sweep the house and others. Then when there is some weeding then we weed it so that the girls will also rest (pause). And at times Saturday too the boys we wash all our things, if it is cleaning the room then we help the girls and we all do it.
>
> Sometimes the woman, the woman knows she can wash but as for men they can't wash well, but let me say if you are not married then as for your own clothes you can

> wash it, if your are a man. But he will wash his own things only. Sometimes if he says that he is washing he cannot go for lets say his mother's things and wash them.

At the same time there are also boys who reject these clear-cut gendered divisions of labour: *'As for cooking, the girls can do it and we the boys too can do it.'*

Some even provide a more qualified understanding, for example the boy who went into a detailed description of equal division of labour in a scenario where he becomes a doctor and his mother-in-law is visiting. If his wife's mother reprimands her for being lazy, a bad wife, for letting her husband do the kitchen work, he would defend her that *'we are the same'*.

Often, however, this appreciation of learning how to do household chores is guided purely by pragmatic considerations of how an unmarried man would organise his life: *'The work has to be shared that way so that when the boys grow up and they are not yet married, they can do certain basic things like cooking on their own before they marry.'*

One boy talking about what he would teach his children, in this case, sons, explains:

> I will want to teach all of them so that they learn it because maybe some will not marry directly when they grow up. Maybe they will work for sometime before. So since he is working I will want him to stay alone until the time that he himself will feel that he wants to marry. So the time that maybe he wants to live alone, he will not get anybody, he will not get any woman who will come and cook for him or wash his things for him. So if he does not learn those things now he will have problems when it gets there. Because every time he will have to go to town and buy food, sometimes the food will not be good food and it may give him some disease.

Nonetheless, in teaching his son to cook, another boy says he will make sure: *'If he learns, I will not let him learn more than a girl.'*

The lesson is clear, boys can become domesticated, but to become more domesticated than a woman is to become a woman. An interesting feature of male–female relations as perceived by the boys is the changes in domestic chores that a man can avoid (or indeed, should avoid) and a woman must perform, from a pre-marital relationship to a marital one. The respondents agree that marriage is different from a 'dating' relationship in terms of the extent that the two people involved in the union are committed to each other, and thus the kinds of expectation the partners can have of each other. There are roles women are required to perform in the home, such as cooking for her family, which the boys acknowledge may not be insisted upon before marriage, because the man has not (formally) married the woman. While women could choose to perform such domestic roles, their partners (boyfriends, even betrothed) had no power to force them to do so:

> Some people, she may do all their house chores. So if you are free you can tell her to come and wash your things for you because she is your friend. So she too if she wants to come and wash your things for you she can.

Boys understand that the man's responsibility in marriage is to assume responsibility for his household in terms of providing money and other resources to support the woman he has married, and presumably loves. It is not his place to do domestic chores; he should go 'outside' to work, or to the farm, while the wife stays at home and cooks and does her husband's laundry. Inherent in this construction of maleness, or of being a husband, is the notion that the wife will be at home and the husband 'goes out' to work:

'The women would have to do the cooking because it is the men who go to work and bring the money so they shouldn't do the cooking.'

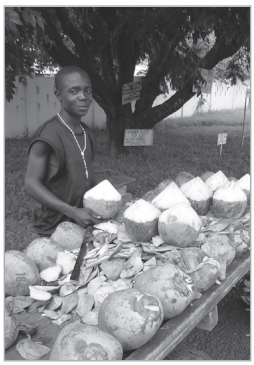
Indeed, some boys are quite clear that a wife's place is to 'serve' her husband:

> Because he is the one that when every thing is at home he makes sure that everything is in place. So some men when they marry, they marry the woman so that she comes to serve them so he should not let the woman sit down and serve her, the woman must rather serve him.

However, a responsible and caring man, boys explain, will 'help'; and not only will this ease the wife's burden, it will save the husband, who, after all, is the head of the home, from disgrace in the event that visitors show up. In response to the interviewer's question whether he will cook for his wife when he grows up, some boys reply: *'Okay if sometimes she is not feeling fine or I come from work and if she is not in I can cook.'*[25]

> Okay, now that the house chores are for the woman that does not mean that you should leave everything to the woman. You should be able to help her. As she does this then you do that so that all the house chores will be perfect. Sometimes when you leave everything on the women, she should do this and that she may not be able to do all. But when people come to the house they will not insult only the woman they will insult all of you so you should be able to help her so that you all work ... It is your duty to help her.
>
> I: So if your son grows and his wife is not sick and is at home, does he have to cook for her?
>
> R: As for that it does not mean that when the woman is at home it is the man who will cook, it is the woman who cooks for the man. Maybe she is tired when she returns from work or the work that she does is a lot then he can help her to cook.
>
> I: And what if she is not tired, she is not sick and is at home?
>
> R: Then he must not cook whilst the woman sits down.

The concept of a male role in housework as one of 'helping', as doing a favour or a kindness to a woman, seems firmly lodged in the ideology of many of the boys.



>> To cool your thirst: boy selling fresh coconuts

Decision making

Respondents asserted the man's position as the head of the household, and therefore as the one responsible for major decision making. Reproductive decision making remains a contentious area for many couples, with disagreements between couples leading to 'unwanted' or 'mistimed' births for many women (Adomako Ampofo, 2004; Dodoo, 1998). We asked boys questions about marital decisions around having children, having more children, ceasing childbirth, contraceptive use and having sex. They displayed a high level of pragmatism, generally according women the final say when it came to having no more children, and according men the final say when it came to having (more) children. This is consistent with the preferences of older men (Adomako Ampofo, 2004), suggesting that ideas about masculinity remain linked to concepts of biological fatherhood: *'The man should be responsible for family planning in the marriage.'*

Some boys rationalise that women who are not willing to 'give' men the children they need can be divorced, or the man can take a second wife:

> If the man insists on having a child and the woman also says no, and if the man gets angry, the man can divorce the woman for another woman.

> Me what I will say to the woman is that if she says she is tired and she does not want to have any more children then she should allow the man to go and marry another woman he can have a son with. If she does not want then she should understand what he is saying.

Additionally, if a woman is being ridiculed for being childless when in fact it is her husband who wants to delay childbearing, the husband should be considerate. Boys recognise the important ways in which biological parenthood is tied to a normal identity. However, when the interviewer linked cessation of childbearing to the male provider role, a man's ability (or not) to take care of more children, then the boys would usually revert the decision-making power to the husband.

> The woman does not have the power ... because that is part of the benefit (children) that you get from the money you provided for performing the customary rites. It is the man who will take care of the children.

And when a caveat was introduced by the interviewer, that the wife had assured her husband that she could 'look after the child', then some boys say it is alright to have another child even though the husband feels financially challenged, and that this in no way diminishes the husband's power:

> I: When you say that, it means that it is the woman who has gotten power over the issue?
>
> R: What I mean is that you have given her the power. You mean that you don't have money to take care of the child if she gives birth again. And she also means that even if you don't have money to take care of the child, she has money that she will use to help you take care of the two children.

There are many boys, even those who had earlier reflected clear gender divisions in terms of household work allocation, who recommend discussion and compromise on matters of reproduction, such as when the woman wants a child and the man is not ready, or who recognise that unwanted pregnancies and children may be experienced by women more profoundly than by men. Here boys recognise that, although the husband has a titular headship position, his wife may have a more valuable, or sensible, position on certain issues which he should acknowledge:

> The woman should be responsible for family planning because if she does not make sure that they have family planning, she can get pregnant.
>
> Maybe, I can tell the woman to be patient a bit and if with time I get some money we can have children.
>
> You are saying that the woman wants a child and the man says no, the man should go and see a doctor or a nurse to discuss the issue (about family planning).

Or, in the reverse case, when the man wants a child but his wife is not ready:

> Maybe it will help both of you (to postpone childbirth) so you will have to be patient with her.
>
> I: So the man, you want to say that he does not have much power in the marriage?
>
> R: He does but sometimes he has to listen to what the woman says. Sometimes what the woman says is also valuable and so he has to listen because it will help both of them.

Very few children had indicated in the survey that they had ever had sex, and even among these some of the experiences had been non-consensual and/or one-time. Thus we pursued questions about sexual activity with a great deal of caution. It may be because the boys are not yet sexually active, and have not begun to engage in peer discourse around actual sexual experiences and on how manhood and sex are linked, that they claim a high

level of respect for a woman's decisions when it comes to sex. Clearly, this presents a unique opportunity to reinforce the notion that men and women have equal rights and desires when it comes to sex.

We asked boys how they would deal with a situation in which a wife did not want to have sex, or turned away from her husband's advances because she was tired. As authors it was heartening to us to find reflected the following thought: *'You have the chance and she also has the chance. So if she says that she is tired you have to respect that.'*

We also presented the reverse scenario when the wife wanted sex and the husband didn't and the boys gave similar responses, none indicating that it was an unlikely scenario.[26]

Permission seeking and violence

Boys agree that wives should seek permission from their husbands before they travel, visit parents, embark on business ventures, or any other plans they may have. It is the status of marriage that confers these rights or power on a man, a power he does not have, and cannot enforce, so long as he has not married a woman. Such expectations do not hold for girlfriends, even if the couple plan to get married:

> Okay since you are friends she can tell you that she is going she will not ask you for permission because since you are not married *she is not under you*. But if you have married then *she is under you* so she can ask you for permission. And you are not her father for her to come and ask you if she can go somewhere or not. But you are friends so she can come and tell you that she is going to see her father. (Authors' emphasis)

> If you say she shouldn't go, she can choose to go and not to go because you have not married her.

> You didn't give birth to her … you have not married her, she is just your friend.

It would seem that boys recognise that marriage transforms a woman's status from 'friend' to that of 'dependent', and that the role of 'guardian' is transferred from her father (or mother) to her husband. This 'guardianship' position comes with the right to grant a wife 'permission' to undertake particular activities. The transformation in status is typically explained by the simple fact that the man 'married' the woman:

> The reason why the man can go without permission is that he *married* the woman and not vice versa so whereas the man can go somewhere with authority, the woman cannot do likewise. (Authors' emphasis)

> She has to ask for permission because now that you have married her she is *under* you. Her parents know that she is under you. (Authors' emphasis)

> If the wife wants to go on a business trip, she needs to ask permission ... because a wife must obey whatever her husband tells her... because it is the man who spent all those monies in marrying her so if the man says something and she doesn't listen he can go and inform her parents.

If a wife fails to seek permission, her husband reserves the right to issue a verbal warning. If she refuses to heed the warning, the man has the right to punish her by doing something else to make her listen, by reporting her to her parents, or, in rare cases, even beating her. While most of the boys reject the idea of the use of violence in relationships, especially in pre-marital relationships, when violence was linked to misdemeanours such as 'disobedience' or failure to seek permission from a spouse, this can sometimes be justified. A boy who had earlier said that a man could not beat a girlfriend, for whom customary rites had not been performed, goes on to justify a beating once the couple are married:

> I: Could I have beaten her if we were married?
>
> R: Please yes.
>
> I: What is the justification?
>
> R: Because you have paid so much for her to be your wife.

Indeed, such violence is justified by a few on the basis of 'love' – much as one would discipline a loved child to keep it from straying.[27] Says another boy:

> R: If she doesn't listen and she goes, you can divorce her.
>
> I: You said formerly too that you could beat her?
>
> R: Yes you can beat her if you love her, you can beat her.
>
> I: You can beat her if you love her?
>
> R: Yes but if you are quick tempered, you will sack her.
>
> I: Aah that means that you will sack her if you don't love her but if you love her, you will beat her?
>
> R: Yes because you may feel sorry for her so you will just get angry and beat her up and there are times too, that when you get too angry, you will divorce her by going to present a drink to her family.

Husbands, on the other hand, are under no compulsion to ask permission from their wives. A considerate and responsible man will, however, 'inform' his wife, or 'discuss' his plans with her: *'You are telling her because you being the man she cannot tell you what to do.'*

Further, although this same boy feels that it is appropriate for a man to show respect towards his wife by sharing his decision with her, he also feels that the man does not

need a woman's permission. So, even if she disapproves about him going somewhere, and requests that he not go, he can still leave and she can neither prevent nor punish him. Indeed, the mere fact that a man tells his partner about a decision he has taken should be taken by his wife as a sign of his respect for her, thus she is not expected to question the decision but to gratefully acknowledge it.

I: I the man (too) must ask permission from her?

R: Yes.

I: If she says no?

R: Then you can leave in anger.

I: When I defy her and go. Can she beat me when I come back?

R: Please no.

I: Why?

R: Because you are a man so if she beats you, you will also beat her back and the whole thing will turn into something else.

Obviously a woman has no right to resort to beating her husband because she did not 'marry' the man: *'She can't beat you up, because you went in to marry her but she did not go to marry the man'*.

Politically correct adults may be more reticent in acknowledging categorically that men have more 'power' than women, even when this power difference is manifested in their relationships in concrete ways, but the interviewed boys are less constrained:

R: In marriage the man has the power.

I: Where does that power come from?

R: Because the woman has to obey the man's rules.

And this 'power' of a husband over a wife is reflected even in the responses of boys who oppose violence. These boys suggest alternatives such as reporting an errant wife to her parents, threatening her, and, ultimately, divorce, but inherent in the discourse is, again, the idea that a wife is a minor, a child who needs to be frightened into obedience by the threat of sanctions or withdrawal of privileges:

I: The question I asked was that is it good that the man beat the wife when the woman has done something he does not like?

R: No even if it is not good (what the woman has done) the man should not beat the woman.

I: If he says something and the woman does not listen and he says it again and the woman does not listen, what can the man do?

R: He should correct her.

I: He corrected her and the woman did not listen.

R: Then the man can frighten her and tell her that if she does not take care he will beat her … that he will beat her and he should get close and insult her then she would be frightened.

I: So he can beat her?

I: No he should not beat her but he should frighten her.

I: She asked for permission and you said don't go and she goes. As for now can I beat her?

R: Okay as for that you can't. You don't have the right to beat her. You have to go and tell her parents what she does.

I: Can't I hit her a few times?

R: There is no need to hit her at all.

I: So what about all the many things I paid to her father?

R: Okay as for that it was paid to show that the woman is with you, the woman is under you. That does not give you the right that does not mean that you should beat her.

The few boys who feel that it is not necessary for a woman to ask permission either link this to a woman's economic autonomy ('after all it is her own money') or note that the idea of seeking 'permission' is really only a courtesy and, once sought, a husband is obliged to 'allow' his wife to go where she needs to go, or to pursue whatever activity she has planned.

Conclusion: Does masculinity matter?

The boys in our study evidence different meanings that they attach to manhood, and they also differ in the extent to which they reflect so-called hegemonic masculinities. What seems clearest to them is that there are distinct differences in gender identity according to household tasks as they move from boyhood to manhood, especially the status of being married. Typical female chores such as cooking, cleaning and laundry must be forsaken, or only performed to 'help' out or if one is (still) single. The boys also seem to recognise that masculinity is something to be achieved (or a place to be arrived at) in stages, and over time, and that it must be won and defended. Indeed, as

we note, that transition from being single to being married is a status enhancer for men, a sign that one has taken on more responsibility, while for women it means that one is simply transferring one authority figure, or set of authority figures (parents) for another (husband). This would mean that marriage would be very important for males since it not only frees them from the mundane responsibilities of household management but also confirms manhood in the sense that one moves up from 'female', androgynous or even 'boyish' tasks to manly ones and hence from a more female or genderless state to a masculine one.

These responsibilities of manhood (in marriage) include being a provider for wife and children as well as authority over the nuclear family. The authority derives, it seems, not simply from the fact of being a man, but also from the bridewealth payments that are made. This is an area that has received contradictory comment. For example, in India the opposite concept of a dowry paid by the bride's family to that of the groom has been explained as the reason why women as wives are valued less than men. In sub-Saharan Africa where men pay bridewealth some women have argued that the failure to pay bridewealth is evidence that they are disrespected, devalued, and can thus be mistreated by their 'husbands' (see Adomako-Ampofo, 2001). In any case, being the 'husband' accords the man the rights to take major decisions affecting the family, and to dispense with permission for his wife to do or not to do certain things. In rare cases, a wife's 'disobedience' even justifies a beating. Further, the assumed importance of marriage to femininity is implied by the boys when they talk about divorcing a recalcitrant wife, or returning her to her parents – presumably a scenario no woman wants. If boys are conditioned to see marriage as a major step in the trajectory towards manhood, with its attendant privileges relative to women, boys can be expected to seek marriage, and to enforce these gender divisions once they get married.

And yet the fact that some boys do not see marriage as necessarily conferring these rights and privileges on them suggests that alternative models can be introduced and reinforced. This, it seems to us, is particularly hopeful since none of these boys seemed to see this alternative, less dominant form of masculinity as a deviant, or less normative or legitimate form. Whether the Ghanaian boys in our study accept or reject some of the more common notions of masculinity, it is certainly clear that they recognise that such notions are imbued with power, and the boys are in no doubt that men have more power and authority than women.

Feminist theorising and activism has tried to understand and dismantle patriarchy as a social system, and there often has been a backlash from both women and men in society. Working with men to understand and change their behaviours and attitudes has a strong potential for minimising problems brought about by the excesses of masculinity. It is time for men themselves to challenge harmful concepts of masculinity. Commonly

held attitudes of men and boys that harm the welfare of girls and women, as well as other males, should be targeted for change. The way men and boys view risk, as well as the way boys are socialised to become men in society, needs to receive particular attention. Boys need to be 'captured' and socialised appropriately at an early age. Foels and Pappas (2004) indicate that it is possible, through socialisation, to 'learn and unlearn' gender myths through socialisation. They found that the sex difference in social dominance orientation is mediated by gender socialisation (and decreased as a function of feminist identity acquisition).

Barry et al. (1979), surveying certain aspects of socialisation in 110 cultures, found that, while differentiation of the sexes is unimportant from infancy through the first few years of life, by the time children can walk and talk greater pressure is put on girls and boys to fit expected gender roles.

Barry et al. (1979) observe that the best time to capture and socialise boys would be their childhood years when the most pressure is put on boys to fit the expected gender roles. And yet the importance of the home setting in defining gender politics has received insufficient attention compared to the influence of schools and peers. Ongoing analysis of the data from the current study suggests to us that the role of significant adults, either through direct instruction, observation, or through a system of rewards and punishments, can be powerful in setting the stage for the acquisition of particular male identities. Indeed, from a study among African American adolescents, Bryant and Zimmermann (2003) find that, although having paternal role models had the most positive impact on school outcomes, the presence of female role models, in contrast, was associated with psychological well-being such that adolescents with maternal role models reported the least distress. Adolescents, both male and female, without female role models, had the lowest grades and most negative school attitudes. These findings remained when parental support, family conflict, and father presence in the household were controlled, suggesting that role model effects are separate from parenting effects. Thus, it would seem that having someone to look up to is critical for African American youths' development, and thus having significant adults in a young person's life, who do not need to be parents, can be a powerful influence. The importance of having gender-sensitive adults in the community as 'role models', not in the active, formal and public sense normally applied today, but simply as people to live with and observe, is thus important. This means that one cannot bring about transformation without working in the community, letting people see the harmful effects of hegemonic masculinities and the positive effects of alternative forms.

There are many other spaces where boys could be socialised in ways that diffuse the harmful notions of masculinity and help them transform their understanding of the multiple meanings of manhood to a responsible adulthood. These 'safe' spaces, where boys can be boys while learning to unlearn certain attitudes and behaviours, could

include youth camps, religious groups, boys clubs, and even apprenticeship and other societies.[28]

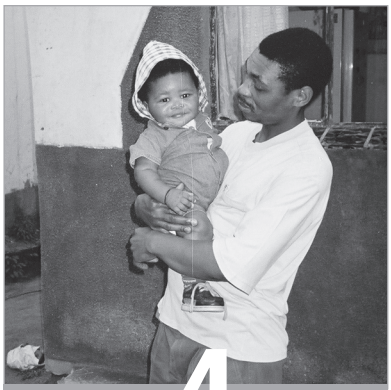
Although a lot has been made about the need to make the school curricula more 'gender sensitive', our own assessment is that both textbooks and teachers remain, by and large, 'gender insensitive'.[29] Formal education should involve the modification or improvement of existing curricula to include topics on masculinity, gender roles, norms, attitudes formation, behaviours and socialisation of boys and girls and problems associated with such formations in the real world. Informal education could borrow from the 4H model widely used by the Co-operative Extension Service of the United States and currently employed by a youth organisation in New Juaben in Ghana.

However, a lot remains to be known as we theorise around the reproduction and contestation of hegemonic masculinities. How, for example, is the socialisation of these boys different and how are gender-equitable women formed? Also, as we pay more attention to men and masculinity, especially within heterosexual contexts, it remains important to understand how feminist girls and women are born, for, in order to change the power dynamics between the sexes so that young women also experience a sense of entitlement to autonomy, both females and males need to experience transformations in their gender politics, and the gender politics of both girls and boys need to be understood.

Endnotes

1. Aloysius Denkabe, University of Ghana.
2. Further, although 'Culture and Gender in African Societies' was but one of several electives offered at the Institute of African Studies in the 2003/2004 academic year, all but one of the students taking the course decided to write their theses in an area of Gender focusing on masculinity.
3. For example, Camara Laye's (1955) descriptions of his initiation and circumcision experience in his book *The African Child* which we describe later, had a profound impact on the students in the 'Men and Masculinities' class – they recognised that a practice intended to serve as a transition from boyhood to manhood can be fraught with anxieties and fear for the initiate.
4. Organisations such as GETNET in South Africa have been working with men and women in organisations to catalyse 'new' masculinities that are caring, supportive, non-violent and responsible.
5. Men and Masculinities is still a fledgling discipline in many African and Third World countries, a notable exception being the Caribbean (see Reddock, 2003, who describes its beginning in the 1980s in the Anglophone Caribbean)
6. The volume includes chapters that take both an historical perspective as well as some that speak to contemporary data. However, what ties them together is an analysis of how 'a cluster of norms, values, and behavioural patterns expressing explicit and implicit expectations of how men should act and represent themselves to others' was and is gendered.
7. A notable exception on the continent is South Africa, where male scholars such as Morrell (1998a, 2002) and Ratele (2002) have written on aspects of the constructions of masculinity.
8. For example, in 19th century America, while some boys were described as 'sissies' by their peers, and sometimes castigated by them, they were still celebrated by their families for being caring and home loving (Grant, 2004). Little boys were considered to be the province of their mothers and not expected to adhere to strict gender boundaries. With transformations in child rearing, peer culture and adult masculinity, the behaviours of little boys began to be more closely monitored for signs of deviance from these new normative masculinities.
9. Although the peak ages of infection in Ghana from the 2003 and 2004 sentinel surveys are 25 to 29 for females and 30 to 34 for males, and the incidence of the virus among those aged under 20 remains low, the infection rate is growing fastest among the population aged 15 to 19 (Ghana National AIDS Control Programme 2004, 2005).
10. Addressing the poor economic situations of many girls and women that enhance this 'powerlessness' is also critical of course. However, economic 'powerlessness' should not be seen as a discrete variable separate from gender relations and cultures that have specific gender contours.
11. The survey was conducted among all first-year Junior Secondary School students in two towns in the Eastern Region of Ghana in 2000. In 2001, the IDIs were conducted among a sub-sample of those who had consented to be re-interviewed as we describe above. The Principal Investigators, Akosua Adomako Ampofo and Francis N. Dodoo, interviewed girls and boys respectively, and also interviewed a sub-sample of mothers and fathers of the children in 2002.

12. Kojo is a male name and basia means female, hence a 'female Kojo'.
13. Colonialism is frequently held particularly culpable for undermining the position of women in African societies by introducing Victorian values with rigid gender ideologies, and for removing certain traditional structures that allowed women considerable autonomy, thereby excluding them from the decision-making and power structures. However, there is evidence that the stratification of gender roles in so-called traditional societies held to hierarchical power structures in which women, as a group, had less authority and power than men. Colonial rule came to reinforce these hierarchies while creating new ones.
14. Of course there are always notable exceptions, and women are generally expected to acquire wisdom, and even supernatural insights (as in priestesses), as they age (the wise old woman). However, men do not necessarily require the characteristics of age or the position of priesthood to attain such influence.
15. This was followed by four world conferences on women: Mexico City 1975, Copenhagen 1980, Nairobi 1985 and Beijing 1990.
16. Many feminists have written about how 'gender', which was birthed in a political commitment to a change in gender relations, has become watered down to make feminist concerns less threatening (see Arnfred, 2001; Tsikata, 2000).
17. A case in point is the Ministry for Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC) in Ghana (2000–2004); the then Minister, Mrs Gladys Asmah, was very committed to providing credit facilities for poor women but was also in contention with gender activists about aspects of a Domestic Violence bill that addressed sexual violence in marriage.
18. In 1997, the government of Ghana established the Girls' Education Unit (GEU) within the Ministry of education, and the president under the Fourth Republic appointed a separate minister for 'Girl Child Education.' The objectives of the GEU were to achieve the following by the year 2005: Increase enrolment of girls in basic education to equal that of boys and develop and maintain strategies aimed at ensuring the continuation of girls into Junior Secondary Schools; Reduce the dropout rate of girls in Primary Schools from 30% to 10% and of girls in Junior Secondary Schools from 21% to 15%; Increase the transition rate of girls from Junior to Senior Secondary Schools by 10% by the end of the FCUBE (Free Compulsory Universal Education) programme; Increase the participation of girls in science, mathematics and technology (SMT) subjects by improving the quality of teaching and enhancing the perception of these subjects.
19. For the period 1998 to 2002, primary school enrolments for boys and girls respectively were 85% and 78%; and for secondary school they were 41% and 34% (UNICEF, 2004). Very few young people make it to the tertiary level but when they do the proportions are highly skewed, with 75% of enrolments being male (Prah, 2002). Female enrolments in the nation's five state universities average between 15% and 40%, varying significantly by faculty and academic institution.
20. Adu-Poku (2001), a self-proclaimed feminist man, points out how in his own family his parents valued his education over that of his sisters, even though he recognised later that they were as smart as he was.
21. For example, pregnant girls are 'encouraged' to go home and have their babies, or to relocate to a new school.
22. In November 2000, the first author joined with other members of women's organisations in Ghana on a demonstration in Accra to protest against the serial killings and the failure of the then government to identify and arrest the perpetrator(s). During the march, some men we met on the way assured us that so long as they were men and we were women they would 'discipline' us if they felt we were out of line.
23. Data from the US show that social stress diseases are much more common among men than women, and are on the increase (Oakley, 2005; Pietila, 1997).
24. According to the 2000 Population and Housing Census, both towns have populations less than 30 000 (Republic of Ghana, 2001).
25. Of interest was the extent to which some of these sentiments about 'helping' mirror the opinions of adult men. In a 2001 paper, Adomako Ampofo quotes a response from an adult male respondent about participation in housework, 'Yes, indeed I do not really see a task that I can differentiate and call a task for men in the house. If there is something that she needs to do and she thinks that she needs a helping hand, if she draws my attention and *I am free* I will definitely extend a hand. In managing the home she *should* be able to share chores among the teenage kids. If there are no children and there is a need for house help, she should suggest the need for it. *But I do not have part of the timetable* – I can help – but to give me an allotment (laughs) I won't accept that one. Like maybe every Sunday, I will do the cooking or something, that one I won't accept.' (Adomako Ampofo, 2001).
26. There was only one boy who, having said that a man who didn't want to have sex (presumably because he linked sex with pregnancy) should go and buy a condom or let his wife use the pill, recommended force to be used if the wife was the unwilling partner: *'Then you may really have to force her so that she might think that when she doesn't yield you might go out and take another woman and leave her.'*
27. In his book *Nine Years at the Gold Coast*, the Reverend Dennis Kemp notes that in a bible class when 'attention was drawn to St Paul's admonition respecting treatment of wives ... it was unmistakably evident that some of the members felt that St Paul was lavish in his gallantry ... and that "a woman will not believe that her husband loves her unless he flogs her occasionally." After all they had learned that "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth" and "do I not love my wife?'" (Kemp, 1898, p. 67).
28. Some calls have been made for the significance of having so-called role models such as popular artists, sports and TV stars talk to children about 'responsible' behaviour. However, this direction must be pursued with caution as children are quick to discern when an individual's message is contrived and at odds with their own life.
29. Take for example the Primary School Two (age 7) textbook for Religious and Moral Education (more like Civic Education), which tells children that the father's role is to go out to work to provide for the family, and the mother's role is to run the home and 'help' the father if necessary (Ghana Education Service, Primary Class Two textbook for Religious and Moral Education).



CHAPTER 4

Do you want to be a father? School-going youth in Durban schools at the turn of the 21st century

Robert Morrell

Introduction

Is it important to be a father? Do young men think about this, and if so, how? These are the questions that inform this chapter.[1] They were questions that I put to schoolboys in interviews conducted in 2003 and 2004 with 21 boys in three public schools in Durban. The interviews were part of a project to map school masculinities.[2] Among the assumptions that informed the study was that race and socio-economic factors would be important for the way that the boys, aged 16 to 21, understood their masculinity.

South Africa is an important site for the study of youth for a number of reasons. Historically, young people have been divided along race lines. These lines have dictated trajectories into the world of work – unskilled labour for black men, professional or protected state jobs for white men. The racial divide has fundamentally shaped school experience too, with a diet of Christian National Education served to white and Bantu Education served to black learners. Yet South Africa is changing. There is now a single, common school curriculum, and racial divisions in the workplace are blurring. However, the socio-economic patterns associated with apartheid are still evident. There remain strong socio-economic inequalities which are still heavily racialised. A study of teenagers in South Africa therefore cannot proceed without taking this history into account. Nevertheless, as time goes by, history has a decreasing hold on the youth. Many young people have little direct experience or knowledge of apartheid, and many show little inclination to become acquainted with that past.

Against this backdrop, this chapter examines what young school-going men think about fatherhood.[3] It argues that attitudes towards fatherhood reveal much about masculinity. It shows that these attitudes differ along socio-economic lines. These attitudes

reflect differing material circumstances, which in turn translate into different life experiences and pressures to take on responsibilities associated with adulthood.

South African perspectives on the youth

The youth have been the centre of research attention since the 1976 Soweto student uprising. The literature that emerged in the two decades thereafter focused on a number of themes. The most important theme was the emergence of the youth as a powerful political constituency (Seekings, 1993). A second literature stressed the brutalisation of children.

In the case of the former literature, it was the agency of the youth that was emphasised. This was the time of the Comrades (Nkosi, 1987), when phrases such as 'foot soldiers of the revolution' and 'young lions' were coined and analysis focused on the politics of youth struggle (e.g., Carter, 1991; Sitas, 1992; Van Kessel, 1993). The legitimacy of the struggle against Bantu Education and the support of many academics for anti-apartheid struggles produced analyses that tended to endorse, though not always uncritically, the militancy of the students and to excuse the violence which attended these struggles as unfortunate but necessary.

The extreme force that the state used to crush the 1976 uprising resulted in the deaths of many young people. In the states of emergency that followed in 1984 and 1985–6, thousands more young people were detained without trial, tortured, and hounded by the security police. Schools were closed; pupils were tear-gassed and assaulted. A literature emerged to expose the extent and severity of this repression and to campaign for an end to violence against children. In this literature, children were generally presented as innocent, passive victims. This fed an existing literature on childhood under apartheid, powerfully analysed by Burman and Reynolds (1986) and by a number of anthropological studies (Ramphele, 1993; Jones, 1993).

The early 1990s was a time of reflection. Studies began to analyse the impact of political violence on the youth (Gultig & Hart, 1990; Nzimande & Thusi, 1991) and social commentators began to worry about 'the lost generation'. The political marginalisation of the youth lay in the future, but the disruption of schooling, high unemployment levels and heightened expectations of radical change focused research on the lives of youth. Unemployment and crime were identified as major problems, though equally they were nothing new (Chisholm, 1993; Everatt & Sisulu, 1992; Seekings, 1993). This was a generation that, according to David Everatt, was 'growing up tough' (1993). Steve Mokwena (1991) noted with horror that growing up tough could lead to extreme expressions of misogynistic violence, including the calculating act of gang rape called 'jackrolling'. Youth were now increasingly viewed as a source of concern rather than as political inspiration, though some studies showed that they were by no means sitting back and waiting for a

job to be given to them or were all collectively involved in crime (Bennell & Manyokolo, 1992; Moller, 1990).

In the late 1990s, a more critical literature began to emerge. Reservations about the violence of the youth, and about anti-social and anarchic actions began more forcefully to be expressed (Freund, 1996). At the same time, South Africa's Constitution was generating a strong children's rights culture that championed the cause of children demanding protection, schooling, and so on. A good example is the local journal, *ChildrenFirst*. The analytical treatment of youth by and large locked them into a range of subject positions as heroes, villains or victims. It was the introduction of a gendered perspective that offered a new way of analysing the youth.

By the late 1990s, the problem of violence was being understood as a problem of masculinity (Niehaus, 2000; Xaba, 2001). 'The myriad youth cultures share one attribute: hostility to adults and their rules, or at best a disregard for the adult way of doing things' (Everatt, 2000, p. 35). Yet it was also obvious that not all youth were manning the barricades of anti-generational struggle. The easiest way to make sense of youth diversity was to use R. W. Connell's concept of multiple masculinities (Connell, 1995). This work has been influential in the study of school-going youth in developed contexts (Mac an Ghaill, 1994; Martino, 1999). These studies have identified a dissident and aggressive youth culture – *laddism* – somewhat similar to recent depictions of black South African youth. In my study, however, the evidence of laddishness and marginalisation is limited. A more complex reality exists where economic disadvantage is not necessarily associated with dissidence, where relatively privileged life does not automatically produce investment in family stability, and where youth of lower income households are not predisposed to irresponsible behaviour and violence.

Methodology

Three public secondary schools were selected to reflect the spread of educational institutions in Durban. One (Dingane Secondary) was a well-managed, reasonably resourced, but historically disadvantaged township school. Another (Gladstone Secondary) was a former co-educational coloured school, centrally located near the city. In the recent past, this school has moved from serving a purely coloured, lower to middle-income community to one that is racially diverse but now has a majority of African students. The third (Oak High) was a single-sex boys' school in the suburbs. It has also undergone major demographic change, though it still has a majority of white students, a culture strongly reflecting socio-economic privilege, and a heavy stress on competitive sport.

A total of 21 students in Grade 10 were selected in 2003 for interviews. They were selected to reflect the diversity of experience in the schools – sport, culture, family background, academic aptitude, race and socio-economic level were used to ensure a spread.

Seven boys from each school were interviewed. The first time was in the second half of 2003, and the second occasion was in the middle of 2004 when the boys were in Grade 11. The age of the boys at the first varied from 15 to 21 years. The first interviews lasted from 60 to 100 minutes. The second round of interviews was shorter, generally half an hour. All interviews were one-on-one except in the township school where I was helped by an isiZulu-speaking research assistant, Mxolisi Mchunu.

The profiles of the student populations at the three schools were quite distinct. The elite school, Oak High,[4] draws its students primarily from multi-racial middle-income communities, though there are some less affluent, mostly African, boys at the school. Gladstone Secondary, the former coloured school, includes many African boys from upwardly mobile families, for example, whose parents are nurses or small-scale business people. There are also some African boys from families of lower income level (under- or unemployment being a feature) and Indian and coloured boys from a wide social spectrum ranging from lower to middle income. Dingane Secondary, the township school, draws its students from the surrounding area which consists of a mix of relatively well-settled households where some members are in permanent jobs and households where it is hard to detect a source of income. The range of family forms (see Appendix 1) reflects the socio-economic circumstances of the respondents. In Oak High, all but one boy live with both parents. At Gladstone, there is a bewildering range of living arrangements, including a boy who lives with neither parent. At Dingane, boys tended to live either with both parents or with their mothers.

In this chapter I have selected the testimonies of six boys. They constitute two groups. Three of the boys (Mandla, Silwane and Nzulu) are from the township school.[5] They are African, isiZulu speakers. I shall refer to them as the township boys. The other three (Jack, Yasien and Lucas) are relatively privileged boys from Oak High and Gladstone Secondary. The group is racially mixed. They live in well-resourced, middle-income, stable family situations and, because their life prospects are quite favourable, I call them the new world boys.

Do you want to be a father?

When I raised the issue of fatherhood with the boys, I received different kinds of answer. All spoke about their own fathers. Some, but not all, spoke about becoming a father themselves. It is in the pattern and content of these responses that different configurations of masculinity are found.

Questions about fatherhood elicit responses that reflect on family structure. Constructions of masculinity are bound up with location in the family. In certain contexts, family can be critically important. Family can be (and often is) the taken-for-granted economic unit that bears the reproduction costs of society. Where the state carries a larger

share of these costs, or where subsistence costs are secured, the value of family may be less important to its members. But in contexts where the family lives close to the breadline, and the state does not provide an adequate safety net, family can be a vital element in life calculations.

When young men talk of fatherhood, they expose the gendered contours of their identities. Family can provide a male with a profound sense of belonging. This observation has been made in metropolitan contexts by Hazel Carby (1982) where, for minorities, family is not so much a place of contestation and patriarchal oppression as a haven. Similarly, in African contexts, genealogical considerations and ethnic belonging ensure that family and broader kinship connections are very important. An African, particularly when he is living in poverty, is likely to weave race, ethnicity, kinship and more immediate family factors into his masculine identity in ways that are quite distinct from non-African or urban middle-income ('new world') males.

Township boys: Three biographies

Mandla is 18 years old.[6] He lives with his mother and father in the local township. He has two younger brothers. There are many members of his extended family living in the same township, and he visits them often. Both parents are unemployed. They used to farm on the South Coast but political violence forced them to move. Members of the family were killed. Some family members have remained and he visits them when he can. He is an avid member of the Apostolic Church. He is an active member of the school debating team at Dingane Secondary. He helps with housework and is dutiful and respectful. He cooks, but his father does not – he looks for work.

Mandla has traditional views about many issues. He believes that corporal punishment is necessary, that chiefs and traditional leaders are important, and that respect is central to good living. 'It is good to respect other people … People will not mourn for you if you do not respect them. It makes you respected when you humble yourself among other people.'

Mandla's memories of his father are dominated by themes of provision and protection. His father farmed but political violence drove them off the land and the family looked to Mandla's father for direction. He decided to move with the family to Umlazi where he secured a house. The theme of Mandla's testimony is survival – the ability of his father to 'do some casual jobs' stood between them and total destitution. Despite, or possibly, because of, the responsibility that his father had for his family, Mandla also wants to be a father. The reason he gives is 'Just to be independent and to take responsibilities of my own family'.

Silwane is 20 years old and lives with his mother and grandmother and siblings in the local township. He attends Dingane Secondary. He is the eldest son of his father's second

marriage. He is estranged from his father. His father left his mother and now lives with another woman. He provides no support for his ex-wife and children. Prior to marrying Silwane's mother, his father had a son by a woman in the rural areas. The father did not support this son and he turned to crime, was caught, and is now in Westville prison. His father also had two children by his first wife and these children have received all of his support. They are both studying in tertiary institutions.

> … in my life my father has never been supportive to us, we live with our mother and granny, so I had to take responsibility to look after my brothers and sister …
>
> I sometimes tell him to support us and I even went to Commercial City to lay a complaint about him, they told me to go to social workers and social workers said that they needed an ID and that is what I am still waiting for right now.

Nzulu is 18 years old and was born in Port Shepstone. His parents separated early in his life and his mother moved to Durban, finding work as a domestic labourer. Nzulu lives with his mother, a sibling, and a stepfather in the township. He has very little to do with his father. His father has not given him anything but did provide financially for his two older siblings. Nzulu is angry about this neglect, especially as his father has a job and, although he lives with a woman, he has had no other children. Nzulu's family is poor and he shares this poverty. He has no bank account or cell phone.

Nzulu's stepfather 'is the one who is playing a fatherly figure in my life and he even pays school fees for me'. On the other hand, Nzulu's biological father is not willing to support him. '[H]e promises to give me some money, but when I go to his place I don't find him and if I happen to find him he becomes aggressive to me.' Consequently, Nzulu only sees his father 'when there is a need … I don't see him often'. In fact, Nzulu has 'decided to tell myself that I don't have a father'. On the other hand, Nzulu is happy with his relationship with his stepfather.

> Nzulu: Though he is not my biological father, but he does good things for me, he treats me like his biological son.
>
> RM: Does he show affection to you?
>
> Nzulu: Yes, because we have never engaged ourselves in an argument.

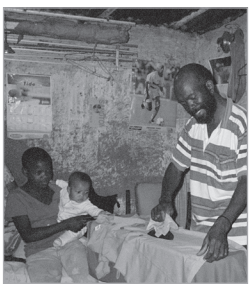
Virtually all the township schoolboys interviewed expressed the importance of family. Some were disappointed by the failure of their biological fathers to be integral members of this family. Mazwi, another boy from Dingane Secondary, sums up the importance of family members: '… they know me better – they provide for me in times of need. They buy me all important things that I need'. He then adds, about his father: 'There is nothing good that I can learn from him. He drinks a lot and when he is drunk he becomes a problem to everyone. He shouts, he makes destructive noise'.

The new world boys: Three biographies

Jack is a white, 16-year-old boy who attends Oak High. He comes from a stable, nuclear family which lives with his maternal grandmother in the suburbs. He has a younger brother. The family has moved between Johannesburg and Durban a number of times. Jack explains this in terms of money. His father moves when better work options in his area of work – 'the sound business' – come along. Despite the fact that the family is stable, there seems to be little interaction. Jack is involved in domestic chores but spends most of his time with his friends. His passion is BMX, and most of his leisure time and his friendships are shaped by his involvement with the bicycle sport. On the weekends he works in a bicycle shop, goes to church, and then spends time with friends watching movies, playing video games and 'hanging out'. There appear to be few family events. He doesn't particularly like Oak High and objects to its emphasis on sport involvement (playing and watching). He expresses no strong feelings about family. Family is a taken-for-granted and dependable resource – his father picks him up from school and from his workplace on Saturday mornings; his uncle will have him to stay if he visits Mauritius.

Jack's father occupies no special place in his life. He admires him (and his mother) because 'they've like paved the way for how I'll grow up. Like my dad never beats my mom, so that's set an example that I must respect women and my dad's always been there so subconsciously it places in your mind that this is how your father behaves so you will behave like the father'. But Jack is quick to reject any idea that his father is a role model. This position is reserved for world champion BMX riders.

Yasien is coloured and 16 years old. He is a devout Muslim and was born in Cape Town. His family is tight knit. Three generations still live in close proximity and keep in daily contact, though, unlike some other respondents, he doesn't have a vast local network of cousins, uncles and distant family. '[P]ractically half of my family' lives in Australia and New Zealand. Yasien in fact spends hours each day looking after his aged grandparents. His mother and father and two older brothers live together. His mother is a nurse and his father a mechanic. Yasien's life is largely spent in the company of his family. He spends time with father (fishing, watching TV, cooking and doing household chores) and a lot of time at home studying. He doesn't have many friends and, though he has ambitions about school recognition at Gladstone Secondary (he wants to be chairperson of the Learners Representative Council), he doesn't spend much time at school after school hours. He seems well-adjusted and is ambitious and clear about his life. He wants to study overseas, Saudi Arabia he thinks. This is a young man who feels mobile, retains an appreciation of family but views it from a transnational perspective.



>> Reversal of roles: A man does the ironing while his wife and children look on

Yasien doesn't have much to say about his father. It is evident that they get on very well and spend time easily together. But he doesn't see his father (or anybody else) as a role model.

> RM: And what would you say about your dad?
>
> Yasien: My dad, ja, I … I'd like to take after him but, you see, my father told me, I mustn't use him as a role model. I must try to be better than him. Because, you see m … my parents are the … they don't want me to end up like them.
>
> RM: Hmm!
>
> Yasien: … they want me to be better than them. Let's say every five minutes I sleep, 'Go study! Go study!'

Lucas is 18 years old, Xhosa speaking and studies at Gladstone Secondary. He is a bit older than his class colleagues. He is one of two children living in a new middle-income area close to the school. His mother, a nurse, works in London earning pounds sterling which convert into a healthy number of South African rands. She has bought a townhouse and Lucas stays here with his younger sibling and grandmother. His life is strongly focused on activities associated with the charismatic church, and he spends most weekends practising and performing for a church dance troupe. Lucas represents the relatively new, emerging African middle-income group; urbanised, economically self-sufficient and forward-looking.

Lucas lives among women who have been abandoned by men – his grandmother, mother and aunt all fall into this category. 'I only got one parent – my mother. I don't know about my father. Since I was born, I never met my father and I'm not looking forward in meeting him because I'm happy to live with my mother.' He values his immediate family and, though he is aware of a broader family network, it is widely dispersed around the country and he has little contact. He has a strong sense of being 'from the Transkei' but is not keen on 'their traditions' and has no sentimental attachment to the past. He has no desire to go through the customary circumcision rituals which induct young men into manhood and affirm an ethnic Xhosa belonging.

Lucas is not thinking about becoming a father. He has little to say about fatherhood or about being the head of a family. His life revolves, in the present, around the church and in the future around his career. When I interviewed him a year later, there had been some changes in his thinking. He had decided that a career in business (rather than accounting) would suit him best. 'I'm thinking of becoming a financial manager.' He worries about his academic marks because he wants to go on to a tertiary institution.

> Okay after matric, I'm planning to go to DIT. To study there for about 2 years then I'm going to overseas. To the United States and find work that side. And I don't know how long I'm going to work that side in a company.

The other major change has been the recent arrival of a girlfriend. He has romantic but chaste views about his (coloured) girlfriend. He believes in the importance of virginity and of marriage. He wants to remain a virgin until he is 25. He isn't sure whether this relationship (only three weeks' old) is the 'right one', but she is also a church-goer and he hopes it will work out.

Dreams of the future, visions of fatherhood

Amongst the township boys, fatherhood is a dream that organises life narratives and dreams. Short-term concerns are dominated by material security, dealing with precarious life circumstances and avoiding risk (such as becoming involved in or a victim of crime). For the new world boys in their relatively privileged, emotionally and economically secure environments, fatherhood is not a priority or an especially esteemed masculine role. Although there are variations among these boys, they are variously concerned with immediate goals (for example, academic or sports recognition in school) or short-term professional goals (frequently involving tertiary education).

Mandla, Silwane and Nzulu are all hopeful about 'making it' after finishing school. Their school, Dingane Secondary, is well regarded in the township. It has good teachers and a strong climate of work discipline and achievement. This is evident in the dreams of the schoolboys. But the boys are realistic about their chances of upward social mobility. For all, money is tight and the future uncertain. All are very mindful of being African, and especially Zulu. These identities are complex and contradictory, though they are, despite political liberation in 1994, predicated on ideas of economic subordination which are at odds with claims about the emancipatory power of globalisation. They all are engaged in reconciling the new democracy, political citizenship and the hegemonic discourse of human rights with traditions that stress ethnic identity, clan loyalty and the spiritual, social and economic importance of family.

Mandla wants to become an accountant. Unlike the dreams of the new world boys, his hopes are tied up with family.

RM: If you become an accountant what do you think will happen in your life?

Mandla: My life will change for better, I will support my family and take care of them – support them financially and otherwise and then I will pay for my younger brothers' education.

RM: Do you think you would like to have a family of your own?

Mandla: Yes.

RM: Do you want to get married?

Mandla: Yes.

RM: Why?

Mandla: I want to do the right thing; getting married is the right thing.

RM: Will you pay lobola?

Mandla: Yes.

RM: What kind of marriage do you want?

Mandla: I want a traditional one.

RM: In order to do that you need to earn money?

Mandla: Yes.

RM: How many children would you like to have?

Mandla: Two will be enough.

RM: Only two, why?

Mandla: That's what I can afford; remember I still have a family to support.

Silwane's life is already filled with family responsibility. He regularly visits his half brother in Westville prison. He lives with his grandparents because, when he was in Grade 6, his mother left him and his siblings to live with another man. Since then he has had the responsibility of supporting himself and his two younger siblings. He works at the taxi rank and as a gardener on the weekends and in the holidays. Silwane wants to be a farmer and, if possible, to study at the local agricultural college. He has already opted to take the newly introduced subject of agriculture at school.

I wish that one day I would own a land through which I can help my family out of the miserable conditions we live under and I do want to be independent because I don't want to leave my family like that I won't do it. Everything will change only after getting my certificate.

But Silwane also realises that there are considerable obstacles in the way. Asked whether he has a plan to help achieve his goal, all he can mournfully conclude is that his plan is a 'dream'. Nevertheless, he intends to build a family once he has his farm.

RM: Would you like to get married?

Silwane: Sometimes.

RM: Would you like to have children?

Silwane: Yes, but only two.

RM: Why two?

Silwane: Many children require a lot of attention and they are expensive and I have seen that it not easy to raise children.

RM: So that means you would like to be a father?

Silwane: Yes.

RM: And when you are a father, what kind of father would you like to be?

Silwane: I don't want to be a strict father who will be feared by children. I want to be able to sit down with them and talk about issues and give them advice if there is a need.

RM: What is the importance of being strict?

Silwane: That teaches children to have respect for other people.

RM: Do you want to be a different kind of father from the one your father has displayed to you?

Silwane: Yes.

RM: Did your father pay ilobolo for your mother?

Silwane: Yes he paid.

RM: And will you?

Silwane: Yes I will, and I hope I will be rich by then.

RM: Why do you think paying ilobolo is important?

Silwane: I think to avoid problems like sickness and when your in-laws want to take their daughter, I would be able to stand and say she is my wife and continue staying with her. Just to formalise things and to agree with ancestors as well.

Nzulu would like to be a businessman. He takes commercial subjects at school and has already started a very small business with his cousin. They sell ice-creams. He relies heavily on the support of his aunt and her daughter for the success of this enterprise. A few years ago, Nzulu got into trouble. He drank heavily and was involved in petty crime and violence. He ended up being arrested.

RM: If you look, Nzulu, into the future, tell me what you think. Would you like a family, a car, a business or a house?

Nzulu: I wish my mother dies after I got a house and I want to marry after my first child is born.

RM: Do you want to be a father?

Nzulu: Yes.

RM: What kind father would you like to be?

> Nzulu: I want to be a good father to my family, supportive and admit when I am wrong and to agree with my family in many things.

Despite in many cases not having supportive or engaged fathers, the township schoolboys unanimously expressed the desire to have a family and be a husband and father. Another Dingiswayo boy, Bigman, says:

> Yes I would love to have a family because of my mother's behaviour and I would like to be a father to a woman who will be just like my mother to my kids and encourage them to do good things and I tell my kids when they are young not to do bad things.

There was also understanding about the importance of family planning. 'I don't want many children .... it is difficult to afford them', said Mazwi. And, like most of the township boys, he added, 'I do not want to cohabit, to stay with a woman not having paid ilobolo'.

For the new world boys, future constructions of masculinity also feature, to a greater or lesser extent, the heterosexual imperative of 'being a father'. Lucas, for example, defines being a man as 'to have a house, a woman and the child and be married. And you also work'. But further questioning establishes work as the central feature of Lucas's understanding of life. To be a man requires 'work'. 'Find work for yourself. If you can't find work for yourself, try and help at home, things like that'. For Jack, the goals are similar. His goal for the future is expressed as follows:

> Making enough money to be able to satisfy your needs and wants. I don't really think I'll have like bundles of money just to waste. I hope that I make enough money to survive and support my family – if I have one – and to satisfy my needs and wants.

'[M]oney plays a great influence in everyone's life'. Jack is aware that money needs to be earned and carefully spent. His calculations about earning money, however, are entirely centred on his own needs. They don't involve any sense of responsibility for caring for his own parents or for saving up for a future as a father:

> Well, normally I need money to go out with my friends but if I get a lot of money now I'm gonna take like twenty per cent of that to going out. I wanna save up for a video camera with a lens 'cos I also wanna get into filming. 'Cos that way if what I'm working on doesn't work out, I can always have something to fall back on. So I'm saving for a video camera and I'm also trying to save up for a new bike. My old bike is old and it's getting trashed.

Jack's worldview is predicated on an autonomous self. He is at the centre of his own world and he is unencumbered with considerations of or responsibility for family. When he finishes school he plans to spend a year in Mauritius and thereafter study information technology or film at university. There is little reason to suppose that he will not be able to do both.

Yasien's view of the future involves travel and the pursuit of his professional dreams. He explains why he wants to leave South Africa, despite enjoying being in the new, non-racial and democratic republic.

> I'm … living in South Africa, yes but I … I like to live here. I like to travel and I like to look at South Africa before I travel the world. But one thing I don't understand about …one thing I don't like about South Africa, it doesn't have uh … job appli …uh…. job eh … facilities here in South Africa. You can finish I … I know people that finished matric and are sitting for four years still waiting to get a job. They've got … matric certificates, they've got diplomas and medical degrees and stuff like that, they're still waiting for jobs. But uh …. now, I don't mean to sound racist, but it seems like the black people are getting the jobs faster than the whites. So, what … that's why I plan on finishing my matric here. I'm going to study in either Australia or Saudi Arabia because here you know once you finish your … your studies, it's easy for you to fall into a job. See, like I'll study and finish over here, one day a chemical engineering I … I could fall into SASOL or ... or I could go and a … apply for a job … apply for the job there, but I prefer to go to Saudi Arabia because, once I finish my studies in Saudi Arabia I can either go to Australia, continue wi … further my studies there or work.

Lucas, Jack and Yasien have a number of important things in common. Their parents (single or married) are financially secure and are prepared to support them. They believe that the education they currently get at Oak High and Gladstone Secondary is preparing them for a professional life and this is a life within reach, even though in the immediate future the challenge of the matriculation exam and the broader system of certification generates anxiety. The three schoolboys aren't interested in politics, and they either feel somewhat alienated by political developments or are uninterested. It is as though their life trajectories will be little affected by national developments though the statutory racialisation of employment practices and work opportunities influences their respective plans. These factors make them confident about the future and their professional ambitions. They have no need to think of supporting their parents or of building a family. Fatherhood is hardly on their radar screens.

The prospects for township boys to escape lives circumscribed by limited resources are not good. Ulrich Beck (1992) describes the challenges of living in what he calls 'the risk society' where uncertainty has displaced the certainties provided by tradition, the state's social security apparatus and institutions like the family. In this new world, the precariousness of life is profound. Fluidity and disruption are constant. If one adds to this situation the unequal effects of globalisation on developing countries such as South Africa, the value given to family, fatherhood and tradition makes sense. Whereas boys of the new middle-income households have some opportunity of joining the global labour market, the township boys are unlikely to gain admission. Their security is better secured

by investing in the family, recreating it if necessary. The masculinity of new world boys can be constructed around work and professional identity. For township boys, identity will most strongly be founded on family and fatherhood.

Analysis

Fatherhood is a prism for understanding youth masculinity that can only be understood by taking account of the uneven impact of globalisation (Connell, 1998). The respective positions of the boys in relation to the economy shape their approaches to fatherhood. The boys attending Dingane Secondary and their parents are confronted daily by poverty or the uncertainty of work. This is a dominant feature of their lives and affects the way they view and act in the world. Livelihoods are precarious, even for those boys whose parents have employment. Boys consider it their responsibility to provide for themselves and members of their family, extended and close. They need to contribute to securing themselves against lean times made more likely by the Aids pandemic. The domestic economy of the household is thus a primary focus of attention. Although patriarchal patterns in the division of labour within the household persist, most of the boys contribute either by working in the household (cooking, cleaning, child minding) or contributing to the overall household income, or both. Globalisation has not spread economic opportunity to the township boys. The fear of poverty is powerful and produces responses that both enforce the gendered role of 'provider' and challenge the household division of labour by spreading domestic jobs to boys (see Latapi, 2003, for Latin American parallels).

Boys of new world households are not exempt from the impact of globalisation. But their experience is not rooted in poverty, even though life has become more uncertain (Gardiner, 2000). For new world boys, having skills and being internationally mobile are priorities. Having families of their own can wait because they impose obligations and limit opportunities of travel and study.

To aspire to be a father is a statement about taking responsibility. Poverty can have the effect of producing alienation and rebellion, and so it is somewhat paradoxical that boys who are the most affected by poverty are those who most aspire to fatherhood. An explanation is to be found in the township boys' understanding of manhood.

Among the boys interviewed, I found differing forms of responsibility. Among the new world boys, for example, there were examples of caring for family members (old and young), making contributions to the domestic regime (cooking, cleaning) and focusing on or/taking responsibility for academic work. Most of the township boys were involved in the lives of other family members, caring and participating. They also, of course, looked after themselves with little support from elsewhere. Leisure time, relative to the new world kids, was limited, and holidays rare or non-existent. In a comparison of the two groups, there is no sense that the new world kids are more responsible than the township kids. In fact, it could be argued the other way around.

There is a well-defined pattern of masculinity among the township boys which is very different from the 'protest masculinity' identified among the politically mobilised youth of the 1970s and the comrades of the 1980s. Their views on fatherhood reflect clarity, realism, optimism and an appreciation of existing support systems. This is intriguing because, in other South African contexts, research has found young men battling to cope with the situation of rapid social change (see Luyt & Foster, 2001).

There are a number of possible explanations. One might be that these young African men are able to vest their masculinities in a new optimism about the prospects of work. The place of work is frequently central to constructions of masculinity, and in South Africa this has also been the case. A century ago, for example, having a job on the mines was the mark of a man (Beinart, 1982). But prospects of work are not good, and this is realised by the boys even as they commit themselves to finding a place in the new economy. Another explanation might be that their parents are particularly influential in their lives, filling them with positive attitudes about the new South Africa. They (and/or their parents) might be devout Christians who get their faith at church. Or they might benefit from the fact that Dingane Secondary is well run and imparts a sense of agency to its learners. In fact, some of these factors are likely to be at work but these factors alone do not explain the importance of fatherhood in the lives of the boys.

The key lies in examining the path from boyhood to manhood. A critical moment that has marked this transition is obtaining a job. For many township boys, such a moment lies uncertainly in the future. For African men across the country, evidence of the way in which joblessness has impacted on men can be found in declining marriage rates with men delaying marriage well into their late 20s or indefinitely (Hunter, 2006). Having a job is intimately associated with marriage because *lobola* payments are still considered necessary among Africans in KwaZulu-Natal – no money, no marriage.

But marriage is not necessary to sustain dreams of fatherhood. Fatherhood is a concept that is located within a family structure. The township boys do not want to be fathers to show that they are men by begetting children. Not one of the respondents made this claim. The township boys understand fatherhood as being associated with manhood. Manhood is a station that requires responsibility and obliges respect. It is associated with the status of the elder (*ubudoda*). 'Ubudoda is to help people. If somebody's children don't have books or school fees or so, then you are going to help those children while the father cannot manage' (Moodie, 1994, quoted in Connell, 2002, 17–18).[7] This is not the only understanding of manhood but, in affirming this as their ideal, the township boys are also preferring one version of masculinity over others. Manhood might also be confirmed by criminal deeds, possession of a firearm and multiple sex partners, and these choices are not mutually exclusive. But there is a significance in the choice of aspiring to the ideal of fatherhood (Cornwall, 2003; Hunter, 2004). In a way, fatherhood is synonymous with manhood and fatherhood is the primary signifier of masculinity because

other signifiers (for example, work) are not immediately available. It is important not to glamorise the aspirations or to read a linear fulfilment into them. The need constantly to affirm one's manhood is a reminder of the gap between aspiration and achievement, which provokes anxiety (Miescher & Lindsay, 2003, p. 8). The most obvious danger is that of not being able to provide (Miescher & Lindsay, 2003, p. 19; Silberschmidt, 2001).

The other explanation for fatherhood having such significance lies in the importance of the household, the home and the family. As I have already argued, the household is the economic space in which life is negotiated. Household is not synonymous with family, which is a broader set of human relations with no specific or necessary location with place. And household is not the same as home. Here it refers to an economic unit that ensures reproduction (in the Marxist sense). For township boys, the household stands between security and stability and a life in a squatter settlement. It is a social organism that needs to be nurtured and sustained, and it is this realisation that generates the involvement of the township boys in economic activities. Household and home are generally coterminous. And in the home, caring for young and old takes place. It is in this social space that fatherhood is performed and in which the responsible discharge of fatherhood duties is necessary. Beyond the immediate confines of the homestead is 'the family'. Family is understood both as a network of support and as an historical connection to the past, an essential part of the claim to being 'Zulu' and 'African'. Family is about the past – the ancestors – and the future, where one's own life becomes meaningful by the production of children who carry the family name. Being a father and exercising the fatherhood role are thus critical elements of being male, African and Zulu.

There is an additional comparative point that explains why township boys wish to be fathers and why the new world boys are not particularly interested. For many township boys, responsibility has come early. In rural communities, herding goats at an early age acquaints boys with work and with their obligation to contribute to household economies. In the urban context of Dingane Secondary learners, the desertion of fathers, joblessness, Aids deaths and general poverty have thrust the responsibility of work (paid and domestic) onto boys. By the time most Dingane Secondary learners are in Grades 10 and 11, childhood is a thing of the past. They have already assumed various responsibilities as, and in some cases for, adults. They are in some senses already men. This is not the case for the new world boys. They have the security of functioning homes and the knowledge of financial stability upon which to build their late school lives. They are all concerned with the future in the sense of the looming matriculation exam and the need to gain admission to tertiary education (or sports academies) thereafter, but they are all still very much engaged with 'playing'. Life

>> An industrial accident may prevent a man from working but he can still bond with his daghter through reading.

is divided between school work (academic and sport), domestic routine and leisure time. Hours outside of school and home duties are spent on the self. This is not to say that the new world boys are selfish or without anxiety. Difficult home circumstances, relational concerns, issues surrounding emerging sexuality and the like ensure that these boys are not fancy free. But their worlds look very different from those of the less privileged kids in the township. Their lives are relatively protected and the challenges of manhood are still in the future.

Against an orthodoxy that argues that the presence of a biological father is necessary for the emotional well-being of a boy and that all sorts of social ills can be attributed to his absence (drug taking, unplanned fatherhood, involvement in crime, poor academic results, crisis of masculinity), this study shows that, despite the abuse, absence and neglect of fathers, township boys aspire to be the fathers that their fathers were not. Despite fairly clear patterns of family structure among the boys in the three different schools (see Appendix 1), there is no clear correlation between family structure (presence or absence of a father) and the experience of one's own father with the desire to take on a fatherhood role. The desire to take on the fatherhood role is, according to US research, an important factor in projecting the transition to adulthood in the direction of becoming socially responsible, redefining home as a place of stability and turning one's back on street life (Gadsden, Wortham & Turner, 2003).

One of the practical implications of this study is for the inclusion of parenting in school curricula (Beardshaw, 2006). In South Africa, the life skills learning area could easily accommodate this inclusion, but currently there is no sign of parenting being included. UK studies are showing that school boys adopt laddishness in order to deflect attention away from good and bad academic performance (which is considered an unmasculine issue) and to ward off homophobic taunts (Jackson, 2002). Where fatherhood becomes an aspirational part of the construction of masculinity, there may be less pressure to take up anti-social forms of masculinity.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have located the question of fatherhood within the material contexts of the boys' lives. I have shown that the responses to the question 'Do you want to be a father?' reflect the specific location of the boys within the triple contexts of national political transformation, ongoing economic inequalities, and globalisation.

I have argued that the aspiration of being a father among black township boys of low-income households needs to be understood in terms of poverty, the precariousness of life and the importance of the family in securing survival. This argument is not simply a matter of material survival; it also involves a deep identity attachment with being African and Zulu and being a man. Aspiring to fill a fatherhood role is a response to globalisation that is specific to socio-economic status.

Appendix 1. Status of fathers in the lives of the 21 school informants

	Living with father and mother	Living with father only	Living with mother only	Living with father and step- or other father	Not living with mother or father	Sees father frequently (< than 2/month)	Seldom sees father (> 4/year)	Doesn't know or never sees father (max 1/yr)
Dingane 1			X				X	
DS 2			X					X Father = dead
DS 3	X							
DS 4	X							
DS 5			X					X
DS 6	X							
DS 7	X							
Gladstone Sec 1			X					X
GS 2					X			
GS 3		X						
GS 4	X							
GS 5			X			X		
GS 6					X With grand-parents			
			X					
GS 7			X				X	
Oak High 1	X							
OH 2				X Boarder				
OH 3	X							
OH 4	X							
OH 5	X							
OH 6	X							
OH 7	X							

Endnotes

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2. An initial grant for the project came from the Social Science and Humanity Research Council of Canada (Blye Frank, University of Dalhousie, was the principal investigator). The research was funded by the Ford Foundation. I express my appreciation and gratitude to both funders.
3. Terminology poses a challenge. Should we refer to male secondary school learners ranging in age (over a two year period) from 16/17 to 20/21 years as boys or young men? I have used the words interchangeably without intending to make any value judgement about levels of maturity which the use of the words sometimes can imply.
4. All the schools have been given pseudonyms.
5. All the interviewees' names are pseudonyms chosen by the boys themselves.
6. The ages of the boys refer to their ages when they were first interviewed in 2003.
7. This reflects the 'big man' vision of manhood elsewhere in Africa (Dover, 2001).

CHAPTER 5

Teenage masculinity: the double bind of conformity to hegemonic standards

Graham Lindegger & Justin Maxwell

Introduction

Adolescent, school-going boys have been the focus of much concern both in South Africa and globally. Among the problems identified in this population have been violence, especially gender-based violence, sexual harrassment and abuse, substance abuse, homophobia and declining educational achievements (Blackbeard, 2005; Caldwell, Cohn-Wood, Schmeelk-Cone, Chavous & Zimmerman, 2004; Frank, Kehler, Lovell & Davison, 2003; Zimmerman & Bingenheimer, 2002). There has also been much concern about the mental health of adolescent boys, with depression, suicide, conduct disorders and substance abuse identified as common problems (Head, 1999; McQueen & Henwood, 2002). Concerns about adolescent boys have also been widely articulated in South Africa, with particular concern about cultures of violence in townships, sexual abuse and harrassment and exploitation of young women (Attwell, 2002; Blackbeard, 2005; Lindegger & Durrheim, 2001; Morrell, 2001a; Morrell, 2001b; Wood & Jewkes, 2001). Together, these concerns suggest that adolescent masculinity could validly be regarded as being in crisis and in need of attention, in order to decrease the prevalence of these problems and build the resilience of adolescent boys against these risks.

The study reported in this chapter is situated within the HIV/Aids pandemic, and the contribution of men and masculinity to this pandemic. HIV/Aids is the largest international health threat, with ever-increasing rates of infection. Not only are the rates of infection for women dramatically increasing, but in many respects women bear the largest portion of the burden of responsibility for HIV/Aids. In the light of this, it is understandable that much of the work on HIV/Aids prevention has been directed at women (Kippax, Crawford & Waldby, 1994). Further, while there has been a growing

realisation of the importance of gender at the centre of the HIV pandemic, gender issues have often been interpreted as women's issues, and many HIV interventions have placed an even greater burden of responsibility on women, with a tendency to overlook the constructive engagement of men (VSO, 2003). As HIV/Aids has been increasingly recognised as a gendered disease, the role played by the construction and performance of masculinity in the HIV/Aids pandemic has been foregrounded. While much HIV intervention to date has focused on women, if there is to be a major change in the current HIV/Aids pandemic, it is the behaviour of men and boys as well as that of women, or even primarily that of men and boys, which must undergo dramatic change. It is estimated that 10% of the world's HIV+ population live in South Africa, with the majority of HIV+ people falling in the 15–35 age range (Le Grange, 2004). Research in South Africa has suggested that gender-based power relations play a major role in putting young men and women at risk of HIV/Aids infection, through endorsing the very risk behaviours that increase the likelihood of HIV infection. Sexual violence, condoning or even encouraging multiple sexual partners, unsafe sex, contractual sex, and use of substances are endorsed as normative vehicles for establishing the manhood of boys and men (Blackbeard, 2005; Khoza, 2002; Le Grange, 2004; Thorpe, 2002). It has been suggested (Lindegger & Durrheim, 2001) that it is not sufficient to initiate intervention campaigns focusing on such risk behaviours to contain the HIV pandemic, but that if such interventions are to be effective and sustainable they need to critically engage the very construction and performance of masculinity that appears to drive and maintain these behaviours. Such engagement should critically problematise the gender-based behaviour of boys and men as well as understand the subjective experience of masculinity and allow the voices of boys and men to be heard and validated (Thorpe, 2002).

Masculinity is not a property of individual men, but a socially constructed phenomenon, an everyday system of beliefs and performances that regulate behaviour between men and women, as well as between men and other men. Individual men's attitudes and behaviour largely emerge as a by-product of the very construction of masculinity in various cultures and contexts. Therefore, if the risk behaviours of men are to undergo substantial modification, these constructions of masculinity itself must be revealed, called into question and challenged. Such critical reflection on masculinity should involve a focus on gender enactment and production in macrosocial institutions, as well as a study of the discursive establishment of gendered identities at a personal, interactional level. Further, alternate performances of masculinity that are not associated with high-risk behaviours need to be identified and highlighted at both the institutional and personal level, as part of the process of facilitating a change in dominant, risky patterns of masculinity.

Connell's (1995) analysis has created one of the most important frameworks for understanding masculinity, especially his notion of 'hegemonic masculinity', which referred to 'a configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted

answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees the dominant position of men and the subordination of women' (1995, p. 77). Connell's theory is built on a hierarchical understanding of gender, in which men position themselves in relation to one another and in relation to hegemonic standards of gender. While his definition says that hegemonic masculinity ensures the dominance and subordination of women, it clearly also applies in relations between men (Wetherell & Edley, 1999). Connell introduced the notion of 'multiple masculinities', which enabled men to position themselves in relation to hegemonic standards, women and other men – complicitous, subordinate and marginal masculinities. These are all defined in relation to the dominant hegemonic masculinity, with the first being defined by its identification with the hegemonic standard, and the other two by their distance or disidentification with hegemonic standards. Hegemonic masculinity provides the dominant standards or versions of acceptable masculinity into which boys and men are normatively socialised, and to which they are expected to conform in order to be acceptable as 'real' men and boys. While Connell argues that most men are unlikely to attain, embody or live a hegemonic masculinity, and that it is more an aspirational standard, hegemonic masculinity and its norms play an important role in the regulation of the behaviour of men and boys: 'they support it, are regulated by it and use it to judge other men's conduct' (Wetherell & Edley, 1999, p. 351). Indeed, it is probably these very hegemonic standards, and this very process, which predominantly contribute to the development of gendered risks of HIV/Aids. In this regard, women play as important a role as men in maintaining and endorsing these hegemonic versions of masculinity. Among the norms of hegemonic masculinity which have been described, and which bear particular significance for HIV risk, is the phenomenon of 'non-relational sexuality' (Korobov & Bamberg, 2004). This refers to the performance of sex as 'sport', with a tendency to construe girls as sexual objects as part of 'trophyism' for the enhancement of masculinity. Interestingly, sport has also always played a central role in the enactment of hegemonic masculinity, especially during adolescence, with Connell (1995) commenting that sport is fast becoming 'the leading definer of masculinity', and Edwards (2003, p. 143) saying that different versions of masculinity are 'fought over in the playing, spectating and consumption of sport'. Particular versions of masculinity have been identified with certain sporting codes, with black masculinity in South Africa stereotypically being identified with soccer and white masculinity with rugby. The emergence of popular new sporting codes such as basketball opens new vistas for the negotiation of other forms of masculinity which are not necessarily based on racial divides.

Individual boys and men in the process of socialisation and development, especially during adolescence and early adulthood, take up particular subject positions in relation to these dominant, hegemonic standards, with some boys submitting to the pressure of conformity to these hegemonic standards than others. Connell (1995) presents some of the possible positions that boys may adopt in their socialisation into adult masculinity.

One of the most interesting issues in this regard is how boys may establish a gendered identity as an acceptable and effective boy or man, without fully identifying with the hegemonic position. Is it possible for individual boys to have a subjective identity as a competent man/boy, while occupying complicitous, subordinate and marginal masculinities? Frosh, Phoenix & Pattman (2002) in their remarkable study of this process in British schoolboys, describe some of the strategies that boys use to position themselves in relation to these hegemonic standards. For example, boys may be fully aware of these hegemonic requirements and see themselves as 'exceptions to the masculine norm' (p.10), but provide justification for these exceptions, in order to still qualify as acceptable by standards of masculinity.

While Connell's analysis of various positions of masculinity, especially hegemonic masculinity, has been widely accepted, there have been reservations. Frosh (1994) suggests that one of the limitations of the concept of hegemonic masculinity is that it does not take account of the possibility of both conscious and unconscious subjectivities. Others have been more concerned with the micro-context of masculine subjectivity. For example, Wetherell & Edley (1999) have two reservations about Connell's work: first, they argue that Connell's work does not provide an adequate understanding of how boys/men negotiate masculine identities and identity strategies; second, they take issue with the idea that boys either align themselves with hegemonic standards or are marginalised from them. They are interested in how men/boys position themselves in relation to conventional notions of the masculine, and how they take on the social identity of 'being a man'. They use the notions of 'imaginary positions' and 'psychodiscursive practices' to account for the way in which individual boys and men develop a masculine identity and position themselves in relation to hegemonic norms. They describe these psychodiscursive practices as employing mechanisms of fantasy, projection and identification, which contribute to the variety of identity positions that may be adopted within a group or within individuals.

Of particular interest in Wetherell and Edley's work is the idea that boys/men may vary their gendered positions, or maintain multiple, opposed positions simultaneously in their lived experience. They also describe some of the discrepancies in self-positioning, between boys' descriptions of themselves in public versus private space. This is exactly parallel to the findings from Frosh, Phoenix and Pattman's (2002) study of adolescent boys, as well as their description of the way in which boys attempt to provide acceptable rationales for their being exceptions from hegemonic standards. Lasser and Thoringer (2003) have coined the term 'visibility management' to describe the process by which sexual minority youth handle the perception of sexual orientation, so as to give the appearance of acceptable heterosexual orientation in peer groups while coming out in relationships of trust. The idea of multiple subject positions has opened up a number of new areas of investigation of adolescent masculinity (Blackbeard, 2005; Epstein &

Johnson, 1998; Epstein, O'Flynn & Telford, 2001; Kehily, 2001; McQueen & Henwood, 2002; Redman, 2000; Redman, 2001).

As researchers in the field of masculinity, and teenage masculinity in particular, we have been especially interested in the emergence of alternate versions of masculinity, or alternate ways of boys' positioning themselves in relation to hegemonic versions of masculinity. We have been especially interested in the way in which boys may develop alternate masculine identities and performances, and yet still retain a sense of themselves as acceptable men/boys by conventional standards of masculinity, parallel to the findings of Frosh et al. (2002). This has especially been of interest to us because of the implications for changing patterns of risk behaviour for HIV/Aids. The invitation to conduct the present study provided us with an ideal opportunity to investigate some of these issues.

HIV/Aids interventions among boys and young men

The study that is reported in this chapter originated in an invitation from Oxfam (Australia) to undertake a gender analysis of the Targeted Aids Intervention (TAI) project, an NGO dedicated to gender-based HIV interventions among adolescent boys and young men.

TAI was initially set up to facilitate the empowerment of women to protect themselves against HIV/Aids infection. However, it was soon realised that, despite the training provided, they were left disempowered to make any significant change in their HIV risk, by reason of their relationships with men. This realisation motivated the shift exclusively to men. It is interesting that this shift was synchronous with the international realisation of the need for gendered Aids interventions to have a greater focus on men (VSO, 2003). Recognising that men hold positions of power in social interactions, and that women were often passive recipients rather than agents of this power, TAI argued that it is through training men to use their power creatively that men might protect themselves and thus their female partners. This realisation led the TAI team to place their primary focus on interventions with men.

To facilitate entry into a network of men in order to carry out their work most effectively, TAI contracted with the South African Football Association (SAFA) and targeted the amateur football league in KwaZulu-Natal as a site through which gender-related HIV intervention might be initiated and developed. This gave birth to the *Shosholoza* Project, an HIV/Aids education campaign operating through the network of soccer players. The campaign attempted to use the language, genre, beliefs and behaviour around soccer as a creative and credible medium for facilitating change in the risk behaviours of men that lead to HIV infection of themselves and their female partners. Initially targeting late adolescent boys and young men, the TAI team came to a growing realisation that boys between the ages of 16 and 24 had already been sexually active for some time, and that these boys were entrenched in the local construction of hegemonic masculinity, which played a major role in enhancing and maintaining many of the

behaviours that put them, and their female partners, at risk of HIV infection. It was from here that a new project was initiated, called *Inkunzi Isematholeni*, focusing on HIV/Aids education among younger boys still attending school, largely through a group of trained peer educators.

Aims and methodology

The aim of the broader study, on which this chapter is based, was to conduct a gender analysis of TAI's various HIV intervention programmes performed among young men in and out of school. The objective of the gender analysis was to come to a deeper understanding of gender-based risks of HIV infection, and to further understand where and how to intervene most appropriately to shift the risks of HIV/Aids that arise from particular performances of masculinity. Gender analysis may be defined as a form of social analysis that considers both the differential impact an intervention may have on women and men and on the relations between men and women (GETNET, 2001). In order to conduct the gender analysis of TAI's HIV work among men, the study effectively used two major sources of data, at the request and suggestion of Oxfam and TAI: the extensive records and documentation of TAI, and a series of interviews and focus groups with TAI staff and field workers, plus boys and teachers involved in the project run by TAI in various schools.

TAI documentation

At the start of the project, TAI made copies of numerous documents and reports available to the research team. These included annual reports, reports on specific projects such as debates and focus groups, copies of programmes for training of peer educators, workshop feedback from peer educators, and reports on informal research projects undertaken by TAI.

Focus groups and interviews

Introductory interviews were conducted with core TAI staff, and far more extensive follow-up interviews were conducted later. Visits were made to a sample of schools that included two township schools, two farm schools, and four rural schools – thereby representing the different geographical areas that participate in the project. Focus group (FG) discussions were held with each of the eight targeted schoolboy groups participating in the project, and interviews were conducted with the teachers (who act as mentors) and principals from these schools. Focus groups and interviews with boys and teachers were tape-recorded with their consent, and later transcribed. Detailed notes and recordings were made of interviews with TAI staff, and were also used as part of the data set. In

total, 111 boys were interviewed in focus groups, and seven teachers and four principals were individually interviewed.

Data analysis

The analysis of the documentation and transcribed interviews was informed by an understanding of gender as a socially constructed phenomenon. The documentation and transcribed material that made up the data set was initially read through by two independent researchers in order to identify gender-related issues and themes. Once an overall sense of the gender-related issues was formed, particular gender-rich parts of the documentation were singled out for more detailed examination and analysis. The interviews with staff, teachers and boys, and focus groups were also carefully analysed for emerging gender-related themes. Based on Connell's notion of multiple positions of masculinity, the analysis attempted to identify the way in which boys construct a personal gendered identity in relation to these various positions. Particular attention was paid to recurring and collectively shared patterns of self-positioning, in the way suggested by Wetherell and Edley (1999). The two data sources, documentation and interviews/focus groups, were constantly compared and contrasted.

Findings and discussion

The overall findings of this study go beyond the scope of this chapter, so only those findings most relevant will be reported here.

Elements of gender construction and of desirable masculinity

Gender construction is the way in which a person, a group of people or a whole society builds an understanding of what it means to be either a man or a woman. The elements of the construction are the discourses, understandings, beliefs and perceptions that form the basis on which gender is developed and enacted. This construction of gender is revealed in the behaviours that men and women engage in, and in the discourses that they use.

Throughout their work, the TAI team have attempted to identify and monitor the explicit and implicit elements of desirable masculinity, as evidenced by both boys/men and girls/women, based on the assumption that these are likely to reflect the social construction of masculinity and to drive HIV risk or protective behaviour. Evidence of elements of desirable masculinity permeated the many documents and reports of TAI's work, as well as the interviews conducted with students and teachers. Interestingly, when asked in focus groups and interviews what the desirable characteristics of a man are, the responses of boys were often first in negative terms. These characteristics were based on their experiences of older men, including their fathers, which gave them a strong

sense of what they do not like in these men, and therefore what they would like to avoid themselves. Some of these behaviours included excessive drinking of alcohol, beating of their wives, physical or emotional abuse of children, and 'going after other wives'; that is, fathers having sexual relations with other women (married or single). There was constant and repeated evidence, especially in focus group discussions, of abusive and violent behaviour by men towards women and children, men having multiple partners, and serial relationships with younger women. The frequency of these responses suggests that these are common patterns of behaviour among men, which are likely to play a major role in initiating and maintaining HIV risk behaviours. The responses of these boys give a strong sense of dominant patterns of masculine performance which are familiar in their lives. These negative reports by boys may be described as typical examples of what Wetherell and Edley (1999, p. 347) call 'rebellious positions ... [through which] ... men define themselves in terms of their unconventionality and the imaginary positions involve the flouting of social expectations'.

The definitions of what a man is were also more positively stated in characteristics that continue to reveal the construction of masculinity: being trustworthy; providing for their families; offering leadership; advising others; being respected by others; and caring. But it was striking that many of these characteristics, while positive and desirable, were expressed in a patronising way, such as providing material possessions to women and children, effectively maintaining men in positions of power. Implicit even in men's 'caring' behaviour is an implicit control of women, as in giving advice, gifts, or material possessions, for example. This is also true of father–son relationships, where there was little indication of bonded father–son relationships, but rather the hierarchical giving of advice and material possessions. The boys also offered insight into aspects of masculinity by reporting on men's typical emotional responses, for instance that men express aggression, but not hurt or weakness.

These findings with regard to ideal characteristics of masculinity are consistent with Cleaver's (2002) suggestion that, even in developing countries, the expectation of males as providers remains a defining element of masculinity. While giving gifts and material possessions is a vital part of this provision, even in the face of economic disadvantage masculinity may still be performed through the provision of advice or care to women and boys. Throughout, these descriptions of ideal masculinity, even while presented in opposition to some of the more familiar, negative, hegemonic aspects described above, have themselves a strongly hegemonic quality. For example, all qualities of these relationships as described by these boys are inherently hierarchical and controlling, even if couched in apparently positive and caring terms. Again this is consistent with Wetherell & Edley's argument that even the very 'rebellious positions' regarding hegemonic masculinity reveal an inherently hegemonic identification.

Gender roles

The data revealed a strong tendency to maintain of traditional, gender-based, social role, which keep women in positions of subservience, as in assigning the care of families and children to women, for example. Men are primarily understood to be providers for their partners and for their families, especially materially, but this extends to providing rules and the making of decisions for the family. Again this is in accordance with the findings of Cleaver (2002) cited above. As described by boys in interviews and focus groups, men automatically assume a position of power in families and consider it important to their manhood to be seen to be in control, as in fathers always having the final say, even when they are wrong. Interestingly, if men see women as responsible for the care of families and children, they also hold them accountable for pregnancy of daughters and for the transmission of HIV, including from mother to child.

Many of the boys interviewed revealed a somewhat ambivalent position in relation to this dominant construction of gender. On the one hand, there was an unquestioning acceptance of the traditional gender roles. But, on the other hand, there was some explicit recognition of the abuses involved in such assignment of roles, with comments such as 'overworking girls is an abuse'. However, there appears to be a failure to recognise that many of these abuses arise from the very gender-based construction of social roles, and the unequal balance of power in the relationships of men and women. In fact, boys often reported that the abuse of women was the fault of the women themselves, as in, for example, the refusal of women to surrender to what is seen as the legitimate power of men, or women's tempting men by wearing short clothes. These findings provide very clear evidence of their strong identification with hegemonic versions of masculinity.

Men's and women's behaviour and HIV

Many comments of boys suggested an ignorance of HIV among men, as well as an attitude that men do not see it as their responsibility to protect themselves or their children from HIV. In fact, men hold their wives responsible for HIV infection of children, and also responsible for sexually transmitted diseases. Unsafe sexual practices, in particular having many sexual partners, were justified through metaphors around risk behaviours of men, for example 'we cannot only eat one kind of food', which reveal clear evidence for the double standard of sexuality, and which sanction multiple sexual partners for men but not for women.

One of the common constructions of women in the reports of boys was of women as vectors of disease, so that they need to be avoided for boys' own protection. Examples of these beliefs are seen in many of the extracts from a series of TAI-initiated school debates on 'Are women to be blamed for the spread of HIV/Aids?' The following were among the comments made by boys in these debates: women choose to be commercial sex workers

(CSW) and tempt men; women are promiscuous; HIV-positive women intentionally attempt to infect men.

Intersection of economics and gender

While the data provided clear evidence of gendered aspects of HIV risk, especially related to the construction of masculinity, the findings also reveal considerable evidence of the intersection of gender and economics.

The influence economics has on gender extends beyond simply the financial exchange between commercial sex workers and clients, or other transactional sex. There was pervasive evidence in the focus group discussions of the influence that poverty, economic need and material desire have on relationships between men and women, providing an additional context within which the construction of masculinity puts men and women at risk of HIV infection. Women are especially at risk because of their financial dependence on men, for their own needs and those of their children. Women's expectations of possible material gain they can expect from men plays an important role in making them vulnerable to some risk behaviours of men. The focus group reports revealed that many girls and women look to men to provide them with money, cell phones, clothes, smart cars, and houses. This was a commonly described phenomenon, revealing the clear hierarchical nature of gender relations based on economics. The VSO report 'Engendering AIDS' (2003) described the desire for the '3 C's – cell phones, clothes and cars', that often put women at risk in relation to men. The desirability of men with financial independence, and with the means to pay for outings and to bestow gifts, contributes to the notion of a 'real man' as one who has this capacity. Further, it is the very need or desire for these economic advantages that predisposes women to accept conditions that put their own health at risk, such as unprotected sex, 'trusting' their male partner against their better judgement, or being one of multiple sexual partners.

According to the boys involved in the focus group discussions, girls prefer older men to boys of their own ages because in general they have more money. There was evidence to suggest that, for some women, including younger girls, the reason to partner with an older man who shares his money is to be able to contribute to their own family's survival. The money that they receive because of their sexual affiliation with a particular man is used to purchase food or other household necessities for their home. Older men in turn often prefer younger girls because they are less likely to be HIV infected. In the words of one focus group participant, another reason girls prefer older men is because 'women want the status of being seen to be in love with rich business men driving expensive cars and living in beautiful houses'. There were very strong indications in the focus groups that girls/women find relationships with wealthy men to have many advantages and that they are willing to play their expected roles in return, but often at the risk of their own

health. A patriarchal gendered system is reinforced as women play out the roles expected by men, including one in which men are in control of the sexuality of women.

Sugar daddies

One of the most commonly described phenomena at the intersection of economics and gender was the occurrence of 'sugar daddy' relationships. This refers to relationships between younger girls or women and older men, for whom they perform sexual favours in return for material reward. This phenomenon was widely reported in documents and focus groups. It is apparent that the source of this is largely economic need. It was apparent that sugar daddies play an important role in maintaining skewed gender relations, and maintaining men's control of women through economic resources. This phenomenon appears to have been assimilated into social relations and hence been afforded some acceptance. There was some evidence of the occurrence of 'sugar mommies', but the response to the advance of women to boys, and indeed the notion itself, was very negative, again providing evidence of a double standard of sexual relations.

Many boys reported being very offended by the practice of sugar daddies. Practically, and probably to retain some sense of personal control, the boys seriously consider the option of 'dumping' a girlfriend who has taken up relations with a sugar daddy, in order 'to avoid heartache'. Another rationalisation for leaving these girlfriends was that these girls are seen as providing a serious risk of HIV infection. However, closer inspection of the rationale for opposition to sugar daddies revealed some interesting findings regarding positioning in relation to hegemonic masculinity. While many of the responses of boys reveal an apparent opposition, other responses suggest that boys are not opposed to the practice as such, but rather the fact that they are disadvantaged by their own lack of economic resources.

These findings are also very well explained by the ideas of Wetherell and Edley (1999), and again reveal parallel resistance to and complicity with hegemonic standards of behaviour. While their rebellious position against the practice of sugar daddies was loudly articulated, it soon became apparent that the primary source of their opposition was, in fact, the way in which they were marginalised from belonging to groups of hegemonic men because of their own lack of economic resources.

Sport as a site of gender construction

Research and literature on masculinity suggests that sport occupies a powerful place in the construction and maintenance of a 'masculinist social system' (Burstyn, in GETNET, 2001, p.17), since '[s]port celebrates masculinity because at its core is the ideology that powerful men have the right to control.' Interviews with boys and teachers, as well as reports on TAI interventions, revealed that for most young boys the soccer field was

a very important site of gender socialisation, whether they are players or spectators. Faithful and stout support for a team was considered very important, while playing for a team (local or league) was afforded star status. Being a soccer star, or being associated with these stars, gives one a particular masculine status and desirability; thus girls often present themselves to these men desiring to be in relationship with them. Some of the stories told suggested that soccer stardom is seen as legitimating a variety of forms of sexual abuse of women, including multiple women as sexual partners, and that girls and women are especially likely to accept such abuses from soccer stars.

These findings again showed the importance of sport, especially soccer, as a site for the construction and maintenance of gender beliefs and practices. Much of the talk of boys about soccer and soccer stars reflected the 'heroic position' described by Wetherell and Edley (1999, p. 341), through which men 'construct and draw on a heroic, invested, mostly unreflexive and conventionally masculine self'. In every respect, soccer stars are masculine heroes, embodying many aspects of hegemonic masculinity. One of the most disturbing findings is the way in which sport legitimates especially abusive aspects of the performance of masculinity at the expense of women, especially by heroic stars, and the critical role that women play in the maintenance of these gendered behaviours. The findings also provide evidence of the potential value of sport, especially soccer, as a site for intervention for gender transformation.

Men as victims of the gendered system

The findings of this study clearly confirm that girls and women are victims of a patriarchal gender system. However, alongside this finding, one of the most fascinating findings of this study was that boys and men are also commonly victims of this hierarchical, gendered system, despite the many advantages that they derive from its enactment.

An important assumption about masculinity that clearly victimises boys and men appeared to be the frequently expressed assumption that 'boys and men know everything'. At many points in the interviews and focus groups, variations of this statement were made. This hegemonic assumption, in so far as boys and men identify with it, in turn prevents them from being able to seek the advice of others, or look to appropriate sources of information for their own guidance, well-being and protection. One example of this victimisation was revealed in the common statement that the onset of wet dreams means that boys must now be sexually active, creating a considerable, but unquestioned, pressure on early adolescent boys to conform to this hegemonic standard. Because boys 'know everything', they should know that wet dreams signal the onset of compulsory and compulsive heterosexual performance. Often TAI interventions sought to create a space within which boys could safely voice their own questions and uncertainties about such practices.

Part of the finding around this phenomenon was the interesting discrepancy between the public and private space of masculinity. Publicly, men and boys are expected to know everything, and they therefore pretend to know everything, including about wet dreams; privately, and secretly, they may realise their lack of knowledge, but fear being 'found out'. Therefore they conform rather to expected patterns of behaviour, such as compulsory sexual activity after wet dreams appear.

Lasser & Thoringer's (2003) research, reported in the introduction to this chapter, refers to the practice of 'visibility management' through which sexual minority youth give the impression of acceptable heterosexual orientation in peer groups while coming out in relationships of trust. The findings of this study reveal a very similar phenomenon, although with some differences. The many sources of information that we examined create a clear impression that being a boy/man involves a distinct pattern of visibility management, to borrow Lasser and Thoringer's term, involving the public impression of unquestioning complicity with hegemonic norms of sexual behaviour. This seemed to involve an implicit element of participating in what might be termed 'a culture of deception' around hegemonic masculinity, as, for example, in pretending to be highly sexually active and having multiple girlfriends. So important is it to be seen to be conforming to these rigid gender expectations that boys are pressured to give the impression of conformity at all costs, by reports of multiple girlfriends and considerable sexual experience, for example. Unlike the boys in Lasser & Thoringer's research, the boys in the TAI communities appear to have no alternate relationships of trust in which they can reveal their non-complicity. Ironically, as mutual participants in this system of deception, boys reported being highly suspicious of one another, leading to attempts to check out the validity of claims, such as contacting girls whom boys claim as their girlfriends or sexual partners. This is an interesting manifestation of the way in which boys mercilessly police identities related to hegemonic standards. These findings are reminiscent of Connell's suggestion that few men actually embody hegemonic masculinity, but that they support it, are regulated by it, and use it to judge the behaviour of other men and boys. But the present findings suggest that, of necessity, this involves a shared delusion or culture of deception of which boys themselves are the victims.

Interestingly, in our investigation, there was often some evidence of a discrepancy between reports of personal behaviour in focus groups and reports in individual interviews, such as number of girlfriends or amount of sexual experience. These findings parallel those reported by Frosh et al. (2002). However, these boys did not present themselves as acceptable and justifiable exceptions in the ways described by Frosh, but seemed rather to see these revelations as uncomfortable revelations of their deception, and evidence for their failed masculinity.

Competition and change in gender construction

Much as there were considerable reports of a dominant hegemonic masculinity among young boys, we were also interested in whether there was any evidence of alternate, diverse or hybrid forms of masculinity. An especially important question was whether the TAI interventions aimed at changing HIV risk behaviour are producing any new patterns of masculinity, especially some that are likely to be associated with reduced HIV risk behaviour, and changed patterns of gender relations that might reflect a more even balance of power between boys and girls. Contested versions of masculinity and the emergence of alternative masculinities indicate the potential for change in the gendered system.

Within the TAI documentation studied, there was some evidence of the emergence of competing masculinities. For example, there are many reports of significant reductions among boys involved in the project in their number of sexual partners, as evidence of their move away from conformity to dominant hegemonic standards that required multiple sexual partners. However, the evidence suggests that the source of the change is derived from *outside* gender relations rather than *inside*, meaning that change in gendered behaviour and gender relations was not primarily the result of interventions at changing the gendered system of relationships and behaviour. But this was primarily motivated by an increased awareness of the need to reduce HIV risk. The most common reason given for reduction in number of sexual partners was to reduce personal risks of HIV infection.

There was evidence of a growing awareness among the boys of the unacceptability of certain patterns of behaviour, such as the abuse of women and children or the phenomenon of sugar daddies and older men attracting younger girls with money and gifts, but it is difficult to know whether this is a function of social desirability (the right thing to think and say) or of an emerging alternative construction of masculine behaviour.

Focus group discussions and TAI documentation showed the gradual emergence of certain patterns of behaviour previously regarded as alien to hegemonic forms of masculinity, such as 'caring' as an acceptable and appropriate performance of masculinity. This caring is, however, still shown in very instrumental and paternalistic ways, as in fathers providing money for children's education, although there are also examples of fathers saying 'I love you'. There also appeared to be some emergence of patterns of role behaviour among boys previously defined as the domain of women, such as cooking when mothers are at work or sewing squares with HIV-related messages, representing new performances of masculinity outside of traditional, hegemonic patterns. There were also suggestions that even men who do not drink, who are are quiet at home or who assist their wives in the domestic work can be seen as real men, in opposition to traditional norms of successful masculinity.

In some focus group discussions there was evidence of an emerging group of boys who were choosing to change their sexual behaviour for reasons related to HIV risk. While these boys were responsive to the idea of changing their sexual behaviour, they reported that a problem is that it often leads to consequences such as the loss of their girlfriends, as many of the traditionally masculine behaviours of boys are expected by girls, and in turn reinforced by the girls. Failure to perform in this way renders these boys apparently unsuccessful in their masculinity. This relates directly to findings of Frosh, Phoenix and Pattman (2002), which they describe as 'current contradictions associated with the negotiation of masculine identities'. As they indicate, one of the major challenges to boys is the development of strategies that can foster changes in gendered behaviour without undermining their sense of masculine security and identity for individual boys. Interestingly, these boys describe themselves as 'different' from the others, adding that they no longer experience shame at being different. Such findings are optimistic in so far as they provide evidence of emerging shifts in norms of masculine behaviour and even renegotiations of gendered identity. However, Wetherell and Edley suggest that even 'rebellious positions' regarding non-complicity with hegemonic standards, which appear to be abandoning a macho masculinity, may be operating by 'hegemonic forms of intelligibility' (p. 351), saying 'sometimes one of the most effective ways of being hegemonic, or being a "man", may be to demonstrate one's distance from hegemonic masculinity'.

Gender-based interventions

One of the most important contributions of the TAI intervention programmes seems to have been the creation of a space outside of the gaze of hegemonic masculinity within which to explore the alternate meaning of masculinity. In the section above, it was described that boys and men are often victims of the gendered system, trapped in an unquestioned pattern of deceptive behaviour around hegemonic masculinity. One of the impressions that we formed in this investigation was that the interventions, and especially focus groups, provided a context within which it was possible for boys to begin to safely and honestly reflect on some of the unquestioned hegemonic assumptions about masculinity, as well as on their own behaviour, so opening new possibilities of masculine enactment. Frosh et al. (2002) describe a similar phenomenon when they report that masculine identities are being continually 'reinvented in the accounts they produce as they construct and deconstruct gender and identity' (p. 4). The mere fact that boys are able to report the many stories of abuse of girls and women provides evidence of some emerging gender consciousness within a context where the dominant patterns of masculinity can begin to be renegotiated. The very reporting of dominant patterns of behaviour, and beginning to question these patterns, represents some disidentification with these dominant patterns of gendered behaviour, with the possibility of beginning

to reconstruct the meaning of masculinity. However, we hasten to add, again consistent with the claim of Wetherell and Edley (1999), that these probably represent 'the multiple and inconsistent discursive resources available' in negotiating masculine identity and performance.

Some of the early interventions were to facilitate changes in behaviour associated with risk of HIV infection and transmission, but with these changes representing changes in patterns of behaviour of boys towards incorporating elements of the behaviour stereotypically associated with girls. This may be seen as a typical example of *external* sources of gender change; that is, changes motivated by considerations other than gender. Examples of this include the following: boys being involved in the establishment of vegetable gardens for children who are HIV+ or needy; initiating caring behaviours for pupils who have lost parents or family (e.g. 'comforting those who are affected'); setting up Aids memorial services for people who have died; designing quilts with HIV messages and messages of support for those who have lost family members; sharing pocket money and books; arranging parcels for the needy.

One of the explicit gender-related interventions was the empowering of boys through alternate understandings of various phenomena through education, thus freeing them from victimisation by the gender-based system. An example is the attempt to explain wet dreams so as to free early adolescents from the faulty belief that this means they must immediately become compulsively sexually active.

Some of the findings of this study demonstrate the subtle process for boys involved in renegotiating gender while at the same time maintaining a secure sense of personal masculinity. The potential contradiction between these two processes has been well described in Frosh et al. (2002). The pressures on boys to conform to a hegemonic masculinity are enormous, and this has to be borne in mind in the process of confronting and deconstructing gender issues.

Conclusions

Throughout the findings of this study there was evidence of the pressure on young boys and men to conform to hegemonic standards of masculinity, each element of which has a distinct gendered implication for HIV risk. The findings reveal a range of positions in relation to these hegemonic standards, with the most prevalent being endorsement and conformity by boys to these standards. However, there was evidence of some elements of ambivalence in response to some of these standards, and a recognition that these standards themselves may even play a role in the exacerbation of HIV risk. The findings provide good evidence for Wetherell & Edley's (1999) notion that 'complicity and resistance can be mixed together' (p. 352), rather than Connell's (1995) idea that men adopt consistent positions in relation to hegemonic masculinity. At some points in the

interviews and focus groups, boys provided apparently strong evidence of opposition to manifest elements of hegemonic masculinity, but at many points there is clear evidence of complicity and identification with these norms.

One of the most interesting findings was around the public–private divide in notions of masculinity, and in personal positioning in relation to the hegemonic ideal. There is enormous pressure to conform to public standards of hegemonic masculinity, and to be seen to be conforming. Privately, as revealed in individual interviews, there was some question about the validity and extent of practice of these hegemonic standards, and some evidence that boys not only do not necessarily conform to all of these hegemonic standards, but that they have a strong suspicion that their peers do not actually conform either. The discrepancy between the private and the public is reminiscent of the findings of Frosh et al. (2002) in British public schools, suggesting that it is a not uncommon experience.

The findings around what was termed 'the culture of deception' provided an additional interesting insight into the process by which boys position themselves in relation to hegemonic versions of masculinity. Unlike Frosh et al.'s (2002) boys, most of the boys in our study offered little or no attempt to justify their failure to conform to hegemonic standards. Given the extent of pressure to observe conformity, and the policing and surveillance of this conformity, most of the boys in our study appear to attempt various strategies to participate in the culture of deception, but with a subtle awareness that this is exactly what it is. Peers were mutually involved in participating in the endorsement of hegemonic norms, pressuring peers to conform to these norms, and giving others the impression of personal conformity to these gendered norms as criteria of acceptable masculinity. But the findings also reveal that boys and young men are implicitly aware of the deception around the impressions of conformity to these norms, and hence the dramatic attempts to test the validity of evidence of conformity. This provides the distinct impression of a trap of victimisation for boys and men, which may be considerably more subtle than, but is in some respects as damaging as, the victimisation of women.

The findings can also be examined in terms of the three major positions described by Wetherell and Edley (1999); that is, the heroic position, the rebellious position and the ordinary position. There was considerable evidence of boys either adopting heroic positions or identifying with those who do adopt such positions, such as soccer stars. There was also evidence, albeit weaker, of boys adopting rebellious positions against hegemonic norms, or of alternating between these positions. However, there seemed little or no evidence of boys adopting the ordinary position; that is, a position in which boys/men define themselves as autonomous individuals operating separately from hegemonic norms of behaviour.

In the context of the findings of this study, intervention programmes such as those offered by TAI may play a vital role in providing a safe personal space within which to

test the assumptions underlying this culture of deception. The context provided may also provide a safe space for boys to negotiate and reconstruct new versions of masculinity and gendered behaviour. As Frosh et al. (2002) point out, masculinity is constantly in the process of being renegotiated. The anxiety expressed by boys about changes in gendered behaviour – including risk behaviour – leading to being socially unacceptable to other boys and to girls has to be seriously addressed if there are to be lasting changes in patterns of gendered behaviour.

Numerous recent documents from organisations such as UNAIDS and VSO have highlighted the importance of the constructive engagement of men in HIV prevention and intervention programmes. TAI is one of the best examples of NGO-based responses to this call, and can be seen as a prototype for other programmes and interventions. Through the peer education initiatives that TAI has developed in local soccer leagues and in schools across KwaZulu-Natal, they have set up creative possibilities for gender-based HIV interventions. As has been argued, risky sexual behaviour (the target of HIV/Aids interventions to date) occurs mainly as a result of socially constructed notions of gender. The exploratory work on masculinity that TAI has initiated by focusing on young men and boys has produced both valuable data on local constructions of masculinity and offered a forum for these young men and boys to begin examining the beliefs and attitudes of the dominant masculinity. Further, TAI has created a unique 'developmental space' where, through sharing experiences of being a man, boys are able to reflect on the meaning of masculinity and the various options for enacting masculinity, thus sowing the seeds for sustained change to the current gender system.

Note

This chapter reports on part of a gender analysis of the Targeted AIDS Intervention (TAI) project, which is a NGO dedicated to gender-based HIV interventions among adolescent boys and young men. Drawing on data from TAI documentation, as well as from focus groups and interviews with TAI staff and school boys who participated in the project, evidence emerged of the pressures on boys and young men to conform to hegemonic standards of masculinity, as well as of some ambivalence in response to these expectations; thus both complicity and resistance. Interesting too was the private-public divide in notions of masculinity as expressed by young men, as was the 'culture of deception' in their positionings in relation to hegemonic masculinity. The authors identify the TAI project as providing an important opportunity for young men to engage constructively with notions of masculinity, as well as HIV intervention programmes.

CHAPTER 6

'Moffies, jocks and cool guys': boys' accounts of masculinity and their resistance in context

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Introduction

In this chapter we describe accounts of what 'makes a man' and related matters by groups of boys across different contexts in the Western Cape. It is reasonable to hypothesise that South African social contexts are related to the historical race, gender and socio-economic divides of apartheid. These contexts then shape the accounts – whether of masculine subjectivity, sexuality, or life aspirations – that individuals produce, a contouring of talk that extends perhaps to everything in social and personal life; hence the necessity to talk to boys from differing backgrounds.

The contexts considered important for this study were (a) cultural and/or racial identification (African, coloured or white); (b) religious affiliation (Christian or Muslim); (c) linguistic background (Afrikaans, English or isiXhosa); (d) socio-economic grouping; (e) age. It is important to take note that we were interested in agreement among the boys as much we were in contestations on the elements of masculinities as articulated by participants. Also important was the age of the boys who participated in the study, between 14 to 16 years of age, traditionally constructed as the period of adolescence in the developmental literature. Adolescence has been foregrounded as a volatile period in which the transition from boyhood to manhood is articulated. Psychologists (e.g., Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1980; see also Morrell, 2001c) have of course long indicated that adolescence is as complex a time for boys as it is for girls. While notions of inevitable trauma and upheaval ('storm and stress', cf. Stanley Hall, 1904) have been destabilised by more recent developmental theorists, there is nonetheless much agreement that adolescence is a time of transition and potentially great challenge for young people (Moore & Rosenthal, 1993; see also Shefer, 2005). In the light of contemporary risks related to HIV

and violence, which are more than evident in many places in the world, the volatility of male adolescence, coupled with the powerful associations of masculinity with risk and competition, raises concern for young men through this period of development.

About the study: Some decisions on methodology

The question we sought to answer was 'How do young people talk about manhood or masculinity?' An additional question that we posed was how accounts of masculinity by boys intersect with constructions of risk – primarily sexual risk but extending to substance abuse and violence. However, in this chapter we will concern ourselves less with risk and more with the boys' constructions of masculinity.

The study participants were groups of 14- to 16-year-old school-going boys from seven schools in the Western Cape[1]. Two to three focus groups of one hour in duration were held with each group of participants, amounting to a total of 19 hours of focus group talk. A senior male researcher was primary facilitator or co-facilitator in most of the groups, and the discussions were in the language of choice of participants. Music videos were used to generate discussions, and the discussions were guided by a semi-structured interview schedule. The focus group discussions were recorded with audio-recorders and videoed once consent was gained from all participants.

The music videos were played at the start of each focus group session, and intended to underscore a different aspect of masculine practice. In the first session, we showed the popular rap artist 50 Cent's music video, *In Da Club*, which depicts men exercising and then clubbing with women dressed in lingerie or sleep wear. In the second session, we showed the less popular *Gangsta* from the same artist, this one showing men armed with pistols, fighting, drinking and smoking. In the third and last session, we played the also hugely popular *Sorry Miss Jackson* by the group Outkast, a video selected to illustrate some alternative ways of being a young man.

Both the verbatim transcripts and the video tapes were utilised to conduct the data analysis. A discourse analysis, focusing on the language used and attempting to deconstruct the text in the light of understandings of the normative and hegemonic meanings of masculinity/ies was carried out. We further viewed and re-viewed the videos, focusing on traditional categories such as body language, tone of voice and eye movements, to attempt to gain a deeper understanding of ways in which masculinities are performed through both language and body.

'If you are a man'

A theme of the constructionism-inspired literature on masculinities is that there is not a single masculinity, but rather competing masculinities during any historical period or in any cultural situation (see Kimmel, Hearn & Connell, 2005). At the same time, there is

the research finding that there is always an unblushing male, as it were, in any situation or during any time – the embodiment of R. W. Connell's (1995) hegemonic masculinity – against whom all other males and male practices are measured. This masculine male, not to put too fine a point on it, is the individual whom, as the colloquialism goes, women want and other men want to be. The unblushing male is the imagined type against whom any individual male is measured by others, including females.

In other words, it is commonly agreed that masculinity (singular) can be viewed as the commonly taken attribute implicating individual male-bodied persons in gendered social relations, qualities marking a male as a man in a given society (see Hearn, 1996b). In similar ways to femininity, masculinity thus signals socio-cultural discursive practices, otherwise ruling conceptions of identification, while simultaneously refracting the contests around identities (see Connell, 1995; Skelton, 1997).

Some of the characteristics thought by many males, and females, as defining an adult man include responsibility for a family, heading a household, the privilege of a social life outside of the house, heterosexual orientation, breadwinning for the family, and a need for sex (Epprecht, 1998; Hammond & Mattis, 2005; Hollway, 1989; Pattman, 2005; Pattman & Chege, 2003a; Pyke, 1996; Shefer & Ruiters, 1998). Therefore, it is not surprising that, as we found in the study, school-going boys around the Western Cape hold the same sorts of views about masculinity. Like men, most of the boys we interviewed, across differences of socio-economic level, culture, colour and language, maintain that a male has a duty towards and an authority over females. Boys claim that a male is understood to be born to head a household, and a man must care for his wife:

> R: Men are always considered as the head of the household while women are subordinates to men. Therefore a woman is not allowed to equate her husband when it comes to household decision-making. (School A)

> R: He must take care of his wife. … You get those men who marry a woman but then tomorrow they divorce her, then they leave her maybe with a baby (School B).

> R: When he does his duty towards his wife and his family and his home (School B).

Whence does a 16-year-old learn to say something such as a man is one who '*does his duty towards his wife and his family and his home*'? How and why does a boy acquire such terms as '*head of the household*'; '*decision-making*', '*care of his wife and child*' to speak of masculinity?

There are grounds to conjecture that school boys around the other provinces will use more or less the same terms to talk of masculinity. Surely there is also a basis to extend the hypothesis to the rest of the African continent and other parts of the world (see Silberschmidt, 1999). What is quite fascinating in these accounts is that the basic elements that are supposed to make up the unblushing adult man are known by boys from

differing backgrounds. When a boy claims that a man '*must take care of his wife*', he is, first of all, not being original. In this discursive reproduction, he is not defining manhood or masculinity by referring to the biology of the human male – not primarily. Such biological knowledge is relatively easier to pin down: having a penis, on average relatively bigger sized than females, and perhaps facial hair. Nevertheless, and vitally, human anatomy is a lesson that boys, and girls, do get taught too – a lesson that generally always raises giggles in a class of teenagers such as in this study. When a school boy maintains that masculinity is about a man doing his '*duty towards his wife and his family and his home*', he has the body of a human male at the front of his mind but only as crucial foundation to further associations. Rather, the boy is reporting on social activities which, the argument goes, 'if you are man, you are supposed to engage in and know'.

One rationale for these 'self-evident truths' about being a man is evidenced in the drawing on a covert discourse of tradition to account for masculinity as articulated by one boy. He views *ilobola* as entitling him to expect a female to work for him (do note the contestation however):

> R1: She is obliged to do everything because I have paid ilobola.
>
> R2: Helping each other has nothing to do with ilobola but with love. So if you take ilobola as a priority, it means you do not love you partner.
>
> R1: No, I do love her but ilobola equates chores. (School A)

A more general explanation that can be offered, then, is that social reproduction of power is taking place here. Boys are recalling and replaying in these focus groups *bits* of learning about the structure of society. They are bits of learning, for the lessons being articulated are not, and never even among adult males will be, formal and coherent theories about the relation of males to females. In that structure, men and women are unequal. In that society, it is men's duty to take care of the family. Whether this is in fact what is being represented in their own life situations (where the majority of women earn a living, and many are breadwinners and even heads of households) makes little difference in the light of the power of the discursive reproduction of what they 'know' about what it means, or should mean, to be a man. They are talking of their fathers and uncles and adult brothers who (should) go out to work so that they can take care of their mothers, aunts and sisters. (Interestingly, the term 'care' shows a very narrow but sharply astute deployment, reinforcing patriarchal or masculine power.)

Love, chores, women and gays

We have already signalled contestation. Contestation, or alternatively difference, is a decisive element of the performance of identity. Put differently, without an idea of difference, it would be near impossible to speak of the relation of women and men, girls

and boys. In the earlier extracted discussion among the boys at School A, the meaning of *ilobola* was shown to be contested, and the contest swings between *ilobola* = chores and *ilobola* = love; therefore, love is not equal to chores.

There are in fact two 'differencing' points that generate the greatest discussions about what makes real boys or men, the volume of discussion hypothetically being related to masculine anxiety and/or the politics of desire. Next to that which is regarded by boys and men as female, we have the figure of the 'moffie'. The homosexual male, or simply effeminacy, or liking what is seen as 'girl stuff', is the other pivot around which the real man discourse turns:

> R: Okay I'm not saying like all gays do that, like some gays you can't even tell that they gay, [...] among themselves they don't parade around with it. I don't mind if they're like that, but I mean if they walk around going like 'hello doll' and that little kiss thingy (School D)

In this group, the problem of 'fake males' is found in gestures or posture of gayness. The problem was with 'camp' behaviour, people who enacted 'their gayness openly'. For example, the boys problematised boys and men who 'speak with their hands' (*and the speaker imitated seeming gay behaviour*).

When participants of School D were asked how they relate to a student who was singled out for this behaviour, one of the participants answered, rather wittily, '*we try not to*'. Another said, '*most people put their defences up against people like that.*' Yet another simply said, '*we don't like gays*'. And then one of them took it on himself to say, '*at least we know everyone here is straight*', as though the researchers might mistake one or all of them for moffies.

A discussion of masculinity, gay behaviour, and females is a discussion about gender and sexuality, not only about heterosexuality versus homosexuality. Primarily it reflects the continued and entrenched binarism of masculine and feminine and the imperative to prescribe all human identity and practice within such an understanding. In this way, masculinity is most importantly defined through its opposition to femininity, through the normative gender binarisms of activity versus passivity, dominance versus submission, and so on. Gay is a confusing mix of a masculine body and alleged feminine performance. Heterosexuality, by contrast, underlines the difference between femininity and masculinity and thus reinforces the boundaries of masculinity. Linked to the moffie discourse, then, is the imperative of proving one's heterosexuality, with strong emphasis on what has been well documented nationally and internationally as the 'male sexual drive discourse' (Hollway, 1989). While there was some resistance to talking too blatantly about sexual practices, the imperative to have (hetero)sex emerges in the quote below, where not being sexually active is pathologised:

R: But the problem with abstinence is that you might go crazy, if you are a man. (School A)

Similarly, in the discussion that follows, when asked 'what does it mean to be a man?' the participant responded, 'When you have a girlfriend' (School E).

Not unlike grown-up men, boys also believe that males more than 'just' desire sex. While it is only assumed in the line about abstinence above, the sex a boy desires is with a girl. Apparently males, and not females – or at least males more than females – need sex with females on pain of insanity. The male need for heterosexual sex is a maddening, potent obligation. This compulsion for sexual activity is furthermore seen as the centre point of boy–girl relations.

A true man, in other words, cannot be gay, which is what makes the idea of queer masculinities something of a conundrum (Edwards, 2005), since in most societies around the world an attribute of such a masculinity is 'love' for females. The real man referred to earlier, the unblushing male, is attractive to others for he embodies the accounts the others must learn to produce, or, if they are moffies, which they must fight. In his body, gestures, and speech, this unyielding exemplar life form represents the thing that other males must inhabit, be, fit themselves to, or strain against, not-be, disavow.

Acting yourself

If the problem of the gay is walking around '*going like hello doll and that little kiss thingy*', the solution that suggests itself to the boys is already clear: to be a true man a boy has to watch 'the way he acts', which primarily involves, as mentioned above, resisting feminised practices. Gay people are problematised here because of their differentness; and their differentness is imprinted on and performed through their bodies. 'If he talks normally, he's okay', it was said. However, this suggests that there is a problem if '*he speaks like (more imitation of 'gayness') and he doesn't have a beard*' (a rather intriguing notion). We were told that we have a problem if a boy or man '*puts on a show, like, I'm a gay*', if he '*goes around, puts on a voice, and walks in a particular way*', '*putting on the whole thing, not acting like themselves.*' One of the boys at School D said *'it's alright to be gay, and not show it off'*. The point of all this is that gayness may be alright as long as it is invisible and not openly performed, a rather revealing sentiment about political correctness.

What is or is not a moffie and what gays do or do not do came up in other groups as well. In fact, in the focus group discussions at School A, it came up several times. From the point in the extracted discussion below, the matter would come up two more times. The next time it comes up, in the third session, we were talking about men doing chores and cooking, which turned to some of their thoughts on *ilobola,* then back to chores, specifically washing nappies, before it brought up the question of moffies again.

It is important to note that moffie-ness is not simply about sexual practice, gestures, bodies, identities, or males. When boys, as grown men, call one another moffie, they are above all engaged in an everyday culture struggle, here specifically showing itself in a contest, an interpersonal and psychic contest, about how to be real, reproducing and contesting social categorisation. The resistance to feminised practices is ultimately illustrated in the following example as key to the performance of masculinity, with the threat of the moffie as the punishment for transgressing into female territory. This part of the conversation starts with the interviewer asking a particular respondent who has been most vociferous: '*What exactly do you do at home*?' The participant responds, *'I make up my bed. I can help around the house with other chores but not nappies.'* The interviewer asks why. The respondent says: '*It is a woman's duty, otherwise it will hex you*'. Another respondent answers and simply says: *'It won't*'.

That there are activities or chores which are thought to be naturally women's, such as taking care of children or washing nappies, is commonplace in certain worlds and cultures. But that nappies will 'hex' a boy who washes them is peculiar and intriguing. Like the latter respondent we, and the interviewer, have never known nappies to give you bad luck. The interviewer asks' '*What do you mean by that*?' The respondent who brought it up answers' *'It is something that will make you to get horrible pimples.*' Another boy objects: '*That is just laziness, a baby's faeces does not cause anyone to get pimples.'* 'The interviewer then asks again' *'Why don't you want to wash nappies*?' Respondent: '*I married her so that she can wash nappies.*' But it cannot be. Is it that this boy is putting on an act, for he cannot really believe this stuff? '*Did you marry her to wash nappies?'* the interviewer goes on to ask. An interesting contest among the respondents ensues:

R1: No, but it is one of her duties.

R2: What if your wife is ill?

R1: I can hire someone.

R3: What if you do not have money?

R2: What if you are not employed and the only employed person is your wife? Who is going to do the chores?

R1: My sister.

R2: What if your sister is married?

R1: I think there will be someone who can help me. I still maintain that I would rather do the cleaning than washing nappies (School A).

It is at this point in the heat of the contest that the moffie bogeyman is produced from under the hat, foregrounding in the crudest way the powerful connection between

broader performances of masculinity and the performance of heterosexual normative masculinity:

> R: 'When you look after a child, you also have to put on an apron which makes you look like a moffie' (School A).

Here the moffie emerges clearly as the female boy/man, who is identified as such not because of any sexual orientation or practice, but rather as a consequence of what he wears and does, which mirrors too closely the feminine.

'Who da man'?

Emerging very powerfully in the data is the way in which cultural, ethnic, religious and even local school cultures impact on the representation of masculinity (and femininity). This emerged in the comparison of two schools that were very similar at a socio-economic level, though differing in terms of local school cultures as well as religious frameworks.

School B and School C are both predominantly coloured and represent relatively low-income households, but, from observation and discussions with teachers at the two schools, each has a different teaching and learning ethos. School C is renowned for its merits in sport and academics. The teaching staff and learners are predominantly Muslim, and religion has a significant influence on the school's values. Islam influences the decisions and choices they made as to what was appropriate, acceptable and pleasurable. While there are Muslims at School B, the school does not seem to be as successful at a sports and academic level as the other.

The following extracts are taken from both schools at the point in the discussion on the women in the 50 Cents music video, and they highlight differences in what is acceptable speak on women in the two schools:

> R1: It's like that's emm your body ne, its God's body ne, now you show other people your body.
> R2: Ya because it's sacred and it's a sin.
> R1: The Koran says that a woman should cover her whole body and a man from his knees up.
> R3: Because God gave them that body.
> R1: (B)ecause like women attract men like when they have, have on that short skirts and sweater above their navel. (School C)

> R1: No. The women were lekker.
> Facilitator: Define lekker, explain what is lekker?
> R1: They liked the bikinis and stuff.
> R2: The women are like an attraction, attraction for him.

R3: They're making him, hulle gee hom lus (they're making him lust/desire).
R1: They made him lust after them. (School B)

The young men at School C felt that it was inappropriate for women to dress and act as they do in the 50 Cents music video. They drew on religious beliefs and male violence (not included in the extract but evident later on in the discussion) to object to this, according to them, improper dress and conduct. The young men at School B did not object to the women, even though there were a few Muslims in the group. In fact they articulated unashamedly expressed enjoyment of the visual imagery; it brought them pleasure. (We are aware of the contentious issues in these extracts; however we are not going to address them here.) The power of cultural normative practices in silencing or amplifying certain male speak is evident in these two extracts. Masculinity is again related to a certain behaviour towards, or a view vis à vis women. But the way in which this is worked out is clearly articulated differently in different contexts. In this case, it is the religious/school-based context that filters a different version of masculinity in response (and in opposition) to women.

Another difference between the two schools was the issue of success or being successful:

R: No, I wouldn't say, I wouldn't say that I would like to become like that man or like that man because to become like him is ... that's ... I would like to be my own man I would like to find someone that I can trust, like I told him now if I can trust, that I trust, that I love, that I would like to spend the rest of my life with. And I would like to be successful and things like that. But that, that particular man that you look up to might not have the same issues as you, the same goals in life. He might not like want to. (School C)

Of particular interest in this extract is that participants at School C felt that they could be successful, become something else, something better. In contrast, School B participants felt that they had few opportunities to become successful. The hopelessness expressed by School B learners could be translated as endemic to their context. At School D (predominantly white school, representing households of relative economic privilege), participants did not even speak of success, as though, in the words of Luyt and Foster (2001, p. 9), 'it remained an implicit assumption within their socio-structural location'. Success in this context is implied by the young man as being successful by having a good career and being in an intimate relationship. Another important aspect of the above extract is that the participant expresses a desire to be his 'own man'. By expressing his individuality and autonomy from social forces, even though in a country such as this these reveal the deep capitalist hegemony, he is demonstrating an alternative way of being in that context (Barrett, 2001, 1996). The position taken by the participant here is that of a loving, caring and committed individual. Finding that special person that you can trust and love and

spend the rest of your life with is constructed as success. But he is also aware that, in subscribing to such an image, he is breaking with some of the popular constructions of masculinity in his context – being his 'own man' connotes something other than what is normative for men (and in this case is probably speaking mostly to a resistance against gangsterist sub-cultures that predominate in this community). Thus successful manhood is achieved for him when the man can provide for his family's material needs (successful in work) and if he remains committed to them (successful in relationships) (Hammond & Mattis, 2005).

Participants in both sites had to negotiate, resist and construct a masculinity different from the highly visible alternative that was offered in each context – that of the mini-bus taxi driver and the 'gangster' (Field, 2001; Pinnock, 1984; Salo, 2003).

The taxi driver is known for his apparently many relationships, and children. Even when married or in a relationship, he is known by popular discourse to pursue relationships with school-going girls. There was much talk in the group of how the taxi drivers charmed their young female classmates, reserving the front seat for the girls they fancied, letting the girls not pay the fare, allowing them to request the music they wanted to listen to, having their friends be dropped off where they requested, and able to request and get a detour to one of the more fashionable eating places, while paying customers had to go along for the ride. The taxi drivers were thus seen as a kind of Casanova, leaving us with the impression that these boys simultaneously envied, admired, and raged at these taxi drivers. They seemed to embody an excess of masculinity and to transgress the boundaries of being a man in the opposite direction to the moffie.

Gangsterism on the Cape Flats has been documented as an example of how marginalised men, in relation to class and racial category or masculinities, assert themselves and gain status (GETNET, 2001; Pinnock, 1984; Salo, 2003, 2005a). Such social forces impacted rather negatively on participants at schools in these areas. Boys at both schools related stories of the difficulties and challenges they faced on the way to and from schools, of how they were in constant risk of losing their life and how cheap life is. In the following extract, we were speaking about the perceived status afforded to those young men who joined or belonged to gangs, but we also wished to find out how the young men who participated in the study managed to be free of gangsterism's pressures:

> Facilitator: You don't want to be the man?
>
> R1: You can be the man but without being a gangster you can be the man in you have or with your friends you can be the man ... they can maybe all look up to you maybe want to ... not be like you but want to have you as a friend then you the man ... it doesn't mean if you a gangster then you only the man there are people who are the man but they're not gangsters.
>
> Facilitator: I hear you.

R1: … if you're a gangster you set a very bad example to your family.

Facilitator: Yesterday we spoke about family today you mentioned friends … are there ways to be cool and to keep out of gangs and other risky stuff … are there other ways … like what or things that make you stay away from gangsters?

R1: Go out like maybe to the ice-rink or Zetos like places where you can hang out whole day you can be cool there have fun without being a gangster …

R2: The same way … like … say a gangster wants to be cool obviously if you're cool you have to like have women around you coz it builds up your ego it makes you the man like best … status if you have like a lot of women walking around with you obviously some other guys is going to be jealous of you, you got all the girls … I am going to want to be like you coz you have all the women … (School C)

Asking if there are other things that make you stay away from gangsters, the answer we got was not quite what we were looking for, but proved to be rather insightful. In this group, and in the others, participants mentioned being a bad influence to your family and that your life is over if you joined a gang. In this instance, though, the participant refers to the fact that gangsters, with their distinctive demeanour, could not access certain spaces (see Salo, 2003). These spaces, in other words, are exclusive, possessed of a certain 'cool' status. Only if you are considered 'cool' can you access such places, in turn reinforcing your coolness.

What is very interesting with the use of 'cool' is that, paradoxically, cool here refers to that which is not associated with the figure of the gangster. Being cool is as important for boys as indeed it is for girls (Martino, 1999). Being cool means many things, though, with different signifieds, context-bound, and practised differently. One of the things cool signified in the study is that a boy needs to have girls around him – not as friends, because then you can be seen as a moffie, but as one's 'own girls'. Having girls of one's own is cool. But then participants also related how the gangster gets all the nice girls, or otherwise how girls like the bad guys. So if you are a good guy and you can adopt some of the characteristic signifiers of the gangster, then you can be somewhat of a role model for other good guys. They would want to be like you.

'Respect' in two places

Another way of defining masculinity was through the transgression of boundaries set up by those with power in their schools or communities. For some of the participants, this meant resisting authority in the form of parents/teachers and the privileged male identities in their contexts, while for others it meant resisting the 'authority' of dominant forces such as gangsters in their communities. While boys at School A believe that women cannot drink or smoke and articulated the fact that to get 'respect', as youngsters

would say, one has to have a car and money, the identity that held grudging respect at School D was that of the 'jock'. The jock is a title reserved for those boys who belong to the exclusive group of scholars who excel in sport in particular. At School D, the jocks ruled; they held hegemonic status because they were considered tough, disciplined and competitive and because of associations that rugby elicits, demanding respect.

Researchers of masculinities assert that sports provide men, young and old alike, the opportunity for exercising many of the aspects of hegemonic masculinity, such as competitiveness, discipline, physical strength and courage (see for example Frosh et al., 2002; Majors, 2001; Messner, 1992). And in this country the game of rugby encapsulates these ideals more than any other sport for white boys (Cock, 2001; Morrell, 2001c; Thompson, 2001). In the townships, soccer was traditionally the sport.

The participants in School D, however, distanced themselves from this identity, which was viewed as too close to what is desired by others (mostly adults) for them. In this school, the 'rebel' identity appears to be far more salient as a construction of 'coolness' for boys. Being cool, as Martino (1999) states, is a priority for young men, especially in a context of hierarchical social relations with their peers where there is a constant jostling between hegemonic and marginal masculinities (see also Connell, 1997; Kessler et al., 1985, for example). The participants asserted their masculinity by being disruptive, having girlfriends, swearing, and smoking and drinking. They constructed a different masculinity by taking risks. As Barrett (1996, 2001) and Xaba (2001) have shown, surviving or successfully negotiating a particular risky situation, the risk takers normally receive or are awarded certain accolades from their friends and peers. Where rugby can be seen as sanctioned risk taking, the School D participants take risks that are not sanctioned by the formal school culture and their homes, but which are rather part of a resistant identity, and thus they come across, at least to their friends, as courageous.

The participants in this context were clearly far removed from the violence that played itself out in the townships and coloured neighbourhoods. Violence was only acceptable when it was justifiable, as in protecting your possessions, your family and your life. These young men came across as being particularly disruptive at school, in the classroom and playground, where they constructed a different identity from that of the jock.

We wanted to find out whether there are other dominant identities at the school, and some more about the jock identity:

Facilitator: Okay, so tell me is there other ways of being the man? (Pardon) Are there other ways of being a man?

R1: Well the jocks consider themselves the man.

R2: (Speaks in a deep voice) I scored a try over the weekend (group laughs)

Facilitator: What are jocks though?

R1: They look like rugby players.

R3: Jocks are those guys that play like with rugby balls in the morning. You'll see them like pass the ball.

Facilitator: So they play rugby?

R1: Yea they play rugby, they play rugby after school and they watch rugby, they sleep and they dream about rugby, their pillows … (group laughs). (School D)

So it seems a jock is on one level the unblushing boy at this school, and rugby is the ultimate arena of contest. From the tone of the extract we can sense that there is also resistance to the jock identity, who is too successful in the eyes of the authorities (teachers, parents), and, as only so many boys can make the team – and surely the first 15 of the A-team – an individual must produce an account of 'cool' boy outside of rugby and the jock identity. How is this package of dominant masculinity resisted or negotiated then?

Facilitator: So do you like to play rugby?

R1: Yea I play rugby, but I am not like a jock, I like don't do everything, I like go to practice, do what I have to do there and then play for the school, make this school proud. I am not like, I dream about rugby, play here in the mornings.

R2: All the jocks are like, like against smoking, none of them are like party … I mean like a proper jock they don't even swear they're nothing but academic. (No ...) [...].

Facilitator: Okay let me hear this thing about the jocks at school, what's his status on school.

R1: I am so big. They think that everyone should respect them.

R4 Yea its like (shows his middle finger)

R2: Are there any jocks in this class?

R5: I play rugby broe but I'm not a jock.

R2: Yea we need a Garret or someone like that. (Yea a Garret or Josh) No Josh. (Josh also smokes and drinks; No he only drinks Garret smokes as well).

R3: [...].

R1 No but cigarettes are like whatever worse.

R2: Worse then a bong? (Group laughs). No really hey? (School D)

It is true that a passion for football (and the same can be said of rugby) is characteristic of some dominant masculinities (see Mac an Ghail, 1994; Skelton, 1997). Mimicking wrestling or kissing actions, accompanied by the words '*Yea they play rugby after school*

and they watch rugby, they sleep and they dream about rugby, their pillows ...', is intended to provoke laughter in the group at the display of the jock. The boy here caricatures the jock as someone who does not only play sport but is obsessed with rugby. As psychological discourses go, having an obsession means having a problem. The group's laughter can be translated as identifying with what he is saying and confirming what is being said. Thus, the jock's hegemonic status is challenged and destabilised by problematising them as just not normal. Other than the pathologising discourse, the jock is also undermined as being dull and boring, because they are against smoking and swearing: '... *none of them are like party* ...'

It appears that one boy in this group is a would-be jock, playing rugby at the highest level at school. While he plays rugby, however, he makes sure to articulate very clearly his distance from the jock. He says *'I like don't do everything* ...', meaning he does what is 'normal' and that is practising and playing for the school.

Turning to School A, perhaps it is important at this point to note the fact that this school is situated in a township, meaning a residential space that – because of spatial apartheid – is occupied by Africans, with the attendant implications of such a space: poverty or lower income levels, lower levels of development relative to coloured and white spaces, lower levels of education.

School A boys appear to subscribe more to socially and culturally sanctioned gender role norms. They preferred women who dressed and wore their hair in a feminine manner and who did not drink and smoke. The young men's reference points were cultural and traditional ideals. They held on to such norms and traditions as men do not work in the house and that the man is responsible for the women and children in his household. Showing respect for ones' elders was also held in high regard. In this context, in contrast to other contexts, showing respect was more revered than receiving respect. Having money, a car and a job was the ultimate for most in this context, as having these meant that you had status (for another example of this salience among boys, see Blackbeard, 2005).

The other identity that held hegemonic status at School A was the respectable, informed, older, family-oriented man. At the same time, though, the boys aspired to the status of 'modern' manhood, as evinced in having money and a car. The boys thus seemed to vacillate between the two discourses of the 'new' and the 'traditional' attributes of a man. Ratele et al. (2005) state that being different is one of the most troubling states for males, highlighting the fact that there are several competing narratives that dictate how one ought to be and behave in any particular context. The participants thus drew on some of these competing narratives to construct an identity with which they felt comfortable.

Conclusions

Perhaps what stands out most profoundly in this small local study of constructions of masculinity at seven different schools in the Western Cape is the diversity in what is aspired to – what is viewed as successful masculinity – between and within the schools. It seems the old divides of apartheid continue to reproduce themselves, even when schools are a stone's throw from each other and even within similar communities, such as the two schools on the Cape Flats, where differences in a school or sub-culture/religion may facilitate extreme differences in the meanings that these boys/men make of what they should be as boys/men.

While some of the more traditional constructions of men as breadwinners and controlling women and children, and resisting the performance of traditionally female roles, appear to be salient for most of the groups, there are also clear examples of resistant, alternative masculinities among participants (e.g. the valuing of love and intimacy). Also evident is the way in which some participants are resisting the hegemonic forms of successful manhood in their communities, particularly evident at the schools in gangster-dominated communities, where participants appear to be distancing themselves from this form of manhood, embracing instead TV versions of successful men with jobs and families. And in other schools, participants resisted the successful boy/man image upheld by adults (e.g. the jock at School D), to strive for a more rebellious, risk-taking image of masculinity. Interestingly, there seems to be some correlation between the level of social conservatism versus social dislocation, and the ideal images of masculinity for young men. Thus, in an area of high crime rates and violence (School C), young men resist violent, rebellious constructions of masculinity, while, in more conservative areas (School D), young men resist authoritative, 'squeaky-clean' constructions of masculinity such as the jock and appeal to the 'naughty' rebel who 'breaks the rules' and takes risks.

What all schools appeared to have in common was the imperative to differentiate oneself as a boy/man from girls/women. A key component or strategy for this hinged on the imperative of heteronormativity in the construction of successful masculinity. Thus, the rejection of the moffie was common throughout. Moreover, the performance of moffie-ness (ultimately more feminised masculinity) was what was offensive, rather than gay sexuality *per se* (the ways of talking, the use of hands, etc.), highlighting the centrality of action and appearance in the meaning made of being a boy/man. It seemed important to 'prove' yourself as 'straight' (and therefore a man) through your behaviour and appearance.

Finally, a key thread emerging from this study is the way in which masculinity is fought for and contested, ultimately a continuous struggle to establish one way of being against another. Being a man/boy is 'hard work', it demands endless attention to what one does, what one says, and how one appears to others. Perhaps encouraging

is that, among all the adherence to traditional masculinities, some of these battles do appear to result in resistant, alternative and arguably more positive constructions and performances of being a boy/man. It is also apparent that any challenges to hegemonic forms of masculinity necessarily have to impact on hegemonic constructions of femininity (given the relationality of masculinity) and address the endemic imperative to oppose what is thought of as feminine.

Endnotes

1. The seven schools where data were collected will not be named for ethical reasons. Contextualising descriptions of each are as follows:
   School A: High school in historically black urban area.
   School B: High school in historical coloured urban area.
   School C: High school in historical coloured urban area with a muslim majority.
   School D: High school in historical white, middle income, urban area.
   School E: High school in previous informed settlement in peri-urban area.
   School F: High school in historically black urban area.
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CHAPTER 7

South African boys with plans for the future: why a focus on dominant discourses tells us only a part of the story

Diana Gibson & Marie Rosenkrantz Lindegaard

Introduction

Gendered constructions, discourses and practices of male sexuality and the ways in which they interface with the high incidence of both HIV/Aids and sexual violence have been intensely debated and analysed in post-apartheid South Africa (Campbell, 2001; Morrell, 2001c; Rasool et al., 2002; Vetten & Bhana, 2001; Wood & Jewkes, 1998). In this regard, historical notions of male heterosexuality and masculinity are increasingly being questioned and even destabilised. Masculinity, male sexuality and gendered expectations in relation to individual men, among males as a group, and between men and women are scrutinised and a great deal of research has been done in recent years on representations and practices of masculinity (Campbell, 1997; Cock, 2001; Gear & Ngubeni, 2003; Jewkes et al., 2002; Morrell, 1998b; Niehaus, 2000; Ramphele, 2000; Salo, 2003; Sauls, 2000).

Connell's (1995) concept of hegemonic masculinities has had a strong impact on South African research. Various studies have concluded that both men and women are victims of a dominant gender discourse, which they cannot live up to because their daily lives are influenced by poverty, HIV/Aids, racism and low education levels (Morrell, 2005; Salo, 2005a; Walker, 2005). The hegemonic gender discourse suggests that certain ideals of masculinity and femininity do not correspond with lived lives. The people studied are thus frequently represented as somehow unable to cope with change. Their deeply rooted cultural norms, particular racial divides, and patriarchal gender values are in conflict with requirements emanating from globalisation, modernity, universal human rights and the new South African constitution.

Both academically as well as politically, particular focus has been on the violent aspect of masculine practices. South African women are exposed to gender-based violence

more often than anywhere else in the world (Gibson, 2003); about two per cent of South African women between the ages of 17 and 48 are raped every year (Jewkes & Abrahams, 2002); five women are killed every week by an intimate partner (Vetten, 1995); about 30 per cent of adolescent girls between the ages of 15 and 19 have been forced into sexual initiation (Jewkes & Abrahams, 2002) and about 50 per cent of teenagers' dating relationships include physically violent interaction (Swart et al., 2002). Crime statistics furthermore emphasise that most perpetrators are men; as in other parts of the world, men are also more exposed to violence than women and they, more often than women, die from interpersonal violence (Jensen, 2001).

Based on the above figures, several scholars have suggested that a 'culture of violence' exists in South Africa and that South Africans largely perceive violence as an acceptable form of communication. Many studies have argued that this 'culture of violence' needs to be changed in order to combat various kinds of interpersonal conflict and abuse and to establish personal safety (Abrahams et al., 1999; Jewkes et al., 2002; Shaik, 1998; Swartz, 1999; Wojcicki, 2002). Most of the research has also concluded that norms of violence are embedded in constructions of masculinity. Current theoretical developments in South Africa frequently argue that the racial segregation imposed by apartheid still strongly influences men's living conditions to the extent that it is necessary to draw a somewhat essentialist analytical distinction between white, coloured and black masculinities (Morrell, 2001c; Ratele, 2004). The violent aspects of masculinity are then often explained as the outcome of an identity crisis where men have difficulties being the patriarchs in situations of racial inequality, poverty, unemployment and lack of education. Men are supposedly powerful but lack the means to maintain this privileged position.

Many of the above assumptions are not particular to South Africa but have equally been used to explain high levels of violence and unsafe sexual practices among socially and economically marginalised men in Brazil, the United States, Britain and Canada (Barker, 2000; Messerschmidt, 2000; Totten, 2003; Walker, 2005). Whitehead (2002) argues that such analytical contributions constitute a 'male crisis discourse' but give insufficient attention to lived experience, emic male views and agency.

Thus, masculinity needs to be viewed with sensitivity to processes of subjectivity and context. In the South African context, Pattman (2005) argues that there is a need for new approaches to masculinity where emic views and lived experiences are acknowledged. Rather than focusing only on discourses and general structures, we also need to give attention to the body, to ways in which people *do* gender in everyday practice, and to their bodily signs as a tool in these processes. This does not mean that accumulated experiences such as being disadvantaged as a black and still feeling discriminated against are not relevant for the analysis. Social hierarchies, which make some forms of masculinity more legitimate than others, which privilege some people over others in the 'process of

becoming', are a part of people's everyday experiences but it does not necessarily mean that these hierarchies are always turning them into victims of social transformation.

We interviewed, observed and involved boys and young men in focus group discussions in study sites in Cape Town, including Pinelands, Heideveld, Lavender Hill and Khayelitsha, and increasingly came across youngsters who practise safe sex and who try to refrain from violence. Thus we became interested in how they manage to manifest or position themselves as men in a changing world and in a variety of settings and situations.

This chapter accordingly suggests that attention should also be given to processes of social change and to ways in which boys and young men cope with it, adapt to and are participants in it. To do so, it is necessary for an analytical shift of focus from dominant discourses to social relations and experiences.

Speaking the new 'language of Esperanto'

Negating previous divides

When South African adolescents attend school, go to malls and move around in the city, they are increasingly exposed to people who had previously been classified as racially different from themselves and who live in different residential areas. Most adolescents and young people expect to be exposed to differences; racial diversity is even hip. The South African author K. Sello Duiker describe the fashion of mixing race, class[1], gender and sexuality in new ways in his book *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* (2003):

> When you go out in some places in Cape Town no one really cares that you are black and that your mother sent you to a private school so that you can speak well. No one cares that you're white and that your father abuses his colleagues at work and calls them kaffirs [rude slang for blacks] at home. On the dance floor it doesn't matter which party you voted for in the last election or whether you know how many provinces make up the country. People only care that you can dance and that you look good. They care that you are wearing Soviet jeans with an expensive Gucci shirt and that you have a cute ass. They care that your girlfriend has a pierced tongue and that sometimes on Saturday night she goes to bed with another woman and likes you to watch them. They want to see you wearing Diesel jeans with a retro shirt and Nike tackies. They want to see how creatively you can fuse mall shopping with flea market crawling and still remain stylish. Designer labels are the new Esperanto. Dolce a Gabbana kicks more ass than any bill of rights. In some clubs a person will chat you up because you know what drum & bass is and can dance to it while appearing sexy, not because you match the same race group like some arbitrary prerequisite … They want to live out their Trainspotting odyssey of excess in a culture rapidly blurring the borders between the

> township and the Northern suburbs … It is not that it's fashionable to be seen going out with a person of different colour. For Mmabatho it seems to be about exploring another culture. Some people are just sick of the expected.

Few young people nowadays care as much about certain 'arbitrary prerequisites' as in the past. As seen above, issues like skin colour, concerns with human rights and politics are not necessarily of prime importance anymore. The new 'language of Esperanto', which symbolically refers to young people's new ways of communicating and behaving, requires economic resources more than anything else. Economically, socially and culturally, South African youngsters can increasingly construct identities through designer labels, music, dancing and looking good, as well as by exploring other cultures and experimenting with sexual relationships. However, this process is largely possible for the relatively well-off minority and, as Attree (2004) has argued, it might take place more in literary fiction than in everyday lives.

>> Friends on the train

Racial mixing is more possible for the economically privileged or for those who use their restricted resources for this purpose. Some parents do succeed in paying fees for a school in a more affluent area. Then, for example, a coloured boy living in a two-room apartment with ten family members attends a school in a previously white area; he is in a class with white, coloured and black pupils – coming from residential areas as diverse as squatter camps, apartments, two-room houses and villas with huge gardens and swimming pools. The question is whether such a boy experiences being the same kind of person independently of context? How is it different for boys in townships?

As argued above, present gender theories developed in a South African context suggest that a boy who lives in an area, which was previously defined as coloured, and attends an affluent school in a previously white area, experiences a conflict between what is expected of him as a male in these different settings. Walker (2005) calls this supposed conflict a clash between 'constitutional sexuality' and 'traditional sexuality'. Constitutional sexuality is as formulated in the 1996 Constitution and Bill of Rights, which include ideals of gender equity, sexual freedom, non-violence, being caring fathers, having a job and being able to provide for the family. Boys and young men who speak the language of Esperanto 'like to watch their girlfriends going to bed with another woman'. Having such desires means appreciating sexual 'freedom', and thus tapping into the discourse of the constitutional sexuality. Traditional sexuality includes opposite features of the constitutional sexuality, which have been referred to by other scholars as patriarchal values (Ramphele, 2002; Wood & Jewkes, 2001).

Lindegaard's previous experiences with adolescent boys and girls in Cape Town have been that interaction across race and class is increasing and leads to the development of

new forms of masculinities where race is a form of capital, which is invested differently depending on context (Lindegaard & Henriksen, 2004). Certain situations and forms of interaction emphasise whiteness or blackness, but sometimes other categories such as being female, male, old, young, a classmate, neighbour, dancing partner, etc. take precedence over notions of race. In some situations, blackness or whiteness is powerful and legitimising – sometimes it is stigmatising and excluding.

Thus far, studies done among boys who feel at ease with constitutional sexuality have been limited. Morrell (2005) has studied perceptions of fatherhood across race and socio-economic position, and he concludes that boys of lower income households are more concerned about being good and caring fathers than boys of economically privileged households. Pattman (2005) shows that boys feel vulnerable and uncomfortable with the gender roles in the traditional sexuality, but he does not propose how boys construct new forms of masculinity. Walker (2005) suggests that some men are trying to fulfil the ideals of constitutional sexuality but they have difficulties changing because they are constrained by the expectations of traditional sexuality.

Changing colour

'It's just like my colour changes'. This was how Azir, a coloured boy of 17, described the shift he went through daily when he left Factreton (residential area previously defined as coloured) to attend a former model C school in Pinelands (during apartheid these model C schools were white; now some of them, e.g. Pinelands High, are highly mixed in terms of colour).

> When I'm here [Factreton] it's like I forget my colour. We're all the same here. We know each other. When I'm on that side [Pinelands] it's like my colour becomes visible. There I have to wear a school uniform but they still see it. When I'm here I hide my uniform because otherwise they might think I'm somebody else … I don't really mind. I mean, I don't think about it. It's just like my colour changes and I don't know why.

A girl living in the same area and attending the same class described Azir in the following way:

> I sometimes think he's really fake. I mean, when we sit in class he always plays 'mister smart guy'. Always charming, listening to the girls as if he thought they were boys. But when I see him at home [Factreton] he's different. Then he is really rough to his girlfriend … He's a part of 'the bad boys' [boy gang]. Then he speaks with his hands. In class he knows how to speak [implying Model C school accent].

Azir experiences that his 'colour changes and I don't know why', whereas the girl, who observes the same process, perceives these changes as 'fake'. She emphasises that Azir manoeuvres between different contexts – in class he treats girls as equals and at home

he behaves in a more oppressive way. At school he is one of the 'smart guys' and speaks English with a Model C school accent, while at home he is a gang member who uses the local vernacular ways of expression. Yet these shifts are not particularly disconcerting to Azir, although he indicates that others might perceive him as 'different' at times. Ben, another coloured boy of 17, lives in Pinelands (former white area) and goes to school there. He explains how he experiences these processes:

> We already see a big change. We don't see the colour anymore. It's not a problem for us; the best thing is to make jokes, to laugh about it. For foreigners it maybe sounds strange. I mean when somebody would say: 'Look at that stupid coloured'. Foreigners might be offended, but if you're friends, it is different. My friends, the majority is white. When we go out we make fun about each other's culture that is the best way to get around it.

For Ben and his friends, colour is used in ways that highlight the overlap in South African understandings of race and culture. While referring to race, Ben is talking about culture. At the same time, stereotypical notions of cultural and racial differences are used in joking ways by 'insiders', who understand the new codes of reference and behaviour.

The complex ways in which notions of race and even the experience of blackness shift is described by a young man, Tomela, from Khayelitsha. He had been part of the study while still at school, but at the time of writing this chapter he had completed his schooling, been circumcised and also started working full time as a waiter at a restaurant at the Waterfront.

> In Khayelistha ... there are only Africans, but it was not something important, we did not think about it, I am black, African whatever, you just are … sometimes when I was at the taxi ranks in Cape Town, then you realise, no whites on this bus. Even in the city ... it's not a thing really. Sometimes you feel more black … when a white women walks away quickly when she is alone and there are no other people around and she sees you. Then you realise, she sees you as a black man, a threat … she will not be afraid of a black woman, but I smile, stay far from her ... Here [Khayelitsha] being circumcised is a bigger thing. The guys [different groupings] I work with [at the Waterfront] we are friends, they have the same things to deal with [as I]. With them you do not always know, is he a man? If he takes himself as already a man, we do. We often go out together in the evenings, to nightclubs. There it is all mixed up. Here [at the restaurant] if people are rude it is because you are a waiter, some people are just rude to waiters, black, white, it is the same to them.

It is apparent that new forms of masculinity, where race, class and gender rearticulate in new ways, are developing in racially 'mixed-up' spaces (McClintock, 1995; Motsemme, 2002; Salo, 2004). For Tomela, when at the Waterfront restaurant, the fact that he is a

waiter, a kind of servant, affects the ways in which he, as well as other waiters, experience themselves as well as ways in which others perceive and behave towards them. Here, as in the nightclubs, the issue of race does not seem of particular importance. In his interaction with fellow (white) waiters he awaits an indication as to whether a colleague should be perceived and treated as a man or a boy. Being circumcised and culturally accepted as a man has more influence than his skin colour in some situations, while in others, as in a secluded space, both his skin colour and maleness become relevant.

From materialism to social constructivism

We argue that perceptions of race, class and gender are changing but these changes are not given enough attention due to an analytical preoccupation with discourse. We believe that shifting attention from discourse to lived relations does not necessarily result in empiricism or the privileging of 'experience' for its authenticity. A starting point in lived relations does not exclude an analysis of those power structures, which shape and are shaped by lived relations. We argue that combining social theory, as it is addressed by Pierre Bourdieu (1990, 2000, 2001), with feminist theory as represented particularly by Judith Butler (1989, 1993, 2000), will provide a useful lens to capture the ways in which adolescent boys and young men experience changing practices of race, class and gender in the context of Cape Town.

The key issues in the discussion between social theory and feminism are how to theorise social agency; how to conceptualise social change; how to perceive the body and understand embodiment; how to deal with the paradox of the researcher's intention to dissolve categories on a theoretical level while acknowledging, on the other hand, that these categories are powerful in lived lives.

Bourdieu's approach to gender is occupied with power and reproduction, and many contemporary feminist scholars have characterised it as simplistic and objectivistic due to its lack of any interpretative element (Järvinen, 1999; McNay, 2004). Bourdieu (2000), on the other hand, has criticised constructivist feminists for their 'linguistic universalism', where gender is perceived as a discursive construction with no social or historical specificity: '... it is naïve, even dangerous to suppose and suggest that one only has to "deconstruct" these social artefacts in a purely performative celebration of "resistance" in order to destroy them' (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 108). Bourdieu (2001) approaches gender as a material relationship between the dominant (men) and the dominated (women) and not as a symbolic construction, where the relationship is one of recognition and misrecognition. The discussion between Bourdieu and Butler is a discussion of material and cultural feminism; it is a discussion of Bourdieu's phenomenology and structuralism with elements of Marxism against Butler's social constructivism.

The structural approach, which emphasises economic inequality and dominance, has been central in relation to discussions of apartheid and social change in South Africa. Race, class and gender have been studied as material structure, which have been difficult to change – both during and after apartheid (Cock, 1980; Hansen, 2002; Wolpe, 1988). Present studies on race and class are still highly influenced by this material approach (Maré, 2001; Posel, 2001), whereas the constructivist approach has recently had a stronger impact on gender studies in the sense that most recent research focuses on dominant discourses of gender (Morrell, 2005; Salo, 2005a; Walker, 2005). The conclusion of these studies is that men and women struggle in various ways with fulfilling gender ideals as represented by discourse. The discussion on gender in South Africa has thus moved from one about materialism, class differences and the problem of studying men/women as coherent groups, to a discussion of symbolic constructivism, cultural values and human rights. Previously, South Africans were approached as being oppressed by political and economic structures; now they are more often perceived as being oppressed by their own cultural norms. We argue for a move away from these structural and constructivist approaches by focusing on processes of race, gender, class and violence through social interaction and lived relations.

Lived relations and experience

This approach thus emphasises the phenomenological aspect of Bourdieu's analysis. The essence of social being is not encompassed in experience itself but is revealed through experience situated in a broader context. Zooming in analytically on lived relationships is not to move in a direction of empiricism where experience is a self-explanatory concept that is privileged for its authenticity. Lived relations and experience are discursively constructed, linked to structures of power, which can be analysed through a focus on lived relations. This approach situates discourse in processes of subjectivity. It indirectly criticises Butler's understanding of agency as a property of language conceived as an abstract structure, rather than as a situated type of action or interaction. It brings historical specificity to the process of subjectivity and opens it up for some degree of negotiation in processes of identity construction.

Materially and socially constructed bodies

Focusing on lived relations and experiences is an attempt to move away from dichotomies of structure and agency, culture and action, discourse and practice, mind and body. It is an effort to combine material and cultural feminism and thus acknowledge both the socially constructed body and the material body. It analytically allows race, class and gender to have an impact on lived lives while still perceiving them as socially

constructed. Combining, respectively, Butler's and Bourdieu's approaches to the body brings about such an approach.

In Butler's (1993) writing, the body is a blank surface, which is only ascribed meaning through discourse. Outside discourse the body *is* an object; inside discourse it becomes subjectivised. For example, a boy is not a boy; in certain forms of interaction, the gender discourse invites him to *become* a boy. The body is thus understood as regulated and subjectivised through discourse. The meaning attached to the body thus changes according to discursive constructions. Bourdieu draws on Merleau-Ponty's conception of the lived body as a product/producer of social reality and active repository of past forces (Wacquant, 2004). He approaches the body as a path of access, as loaded with meaning, which is deeply inherent *in* the body. Social categories, which define the body, are material: they cannot be deconstructed and they never disappear. Bourdieu (2001) refers to the embodied version of accumulated experiences (*habitus*) as 'hexis':

> Bodily hexis …is assumed to express the 'deep being', the true 'nature' of the 'person', in accordance with the postulate of the correspondence between the 'physical' and the 'moral' which gives rise to the practical or rationalized knowledge whereby 'psychological' or 'moral' properties are associated with bodily or physiognomic indices. (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 64)

The bodily *hexis* is the way people 'carry' their bodies – the way they walk, talk, eat, run, etc. Thus, as seen above, when a young man 'takes' himself as an adult male, he behaves in such a way that others do the same. Bourdieu's argument is that social categories such as class, sexuality, gender, race and age are expressed through the *hexis*. Bodily hexis is not on the surface of the body; it is deeply grounded in the being and it cannot be manipulated; it is expressed in every single move and cannot be camouflaged. Class, gender, race, etc. are embedded in the body, and to provide an analytical possibility for perceiving social categories as ascribed through discourse, for instance, is to misrecognise the power and impact these categories have on people's lived lives (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). The problem with Bourdieu's approach to the body is similar to the critique of his approach to gender: There is no space for interpretation and negotiation, for people to carry their bodies in different ways depending on context or field. Thus Azir, Ben and Tomela above can never escape from their 'deep being', despite indicating experiences to the contrary.

Søndergaard's (1996) concept of 'bodily signs', which is inspired by linguistic semiotics, emphasises the importance of recognising the material body and at the same time acknowledging its shifting meanings. When whiteness or blackness is ascribed to a body, it has 'real' consequences for ways in which this body can interact in particular situations. Thus, Tomela is viewed by a lone woman as a threat because he is a male and is black. He, in turn, emphasises that he is not a threat by smiling and keeping at a distance.

Azir experiences his bodily signs as one of racial difference when he is in Pinelands. Here his uniform has to legitimise his presence and he speaks and behaves like pupils who live in this neighbourhood. At home, the racial markers are irrelevant, but he behaves in a way that is culturally appropriate in the group he socialises with. Ben, who is also coloured and lives in Pinelands, does not need the uniform. His family has economic resources and he shares similarities in class, dress and verbal and body language with his local friends. Joking about racial and cultural stereotypes confirms membership of the local group of boys.

Søndergaard (1996) perceives the body as marked by signs, but it is not in all contexts that these signs become visible. Studying 'bodily signs' instead of 'bodies' emphasises that having a biologically masculine body, which is usually marked by masculine signs, is not necessarily the same as always being perceived as masculine. If a man, for instance, wears a dress, sways his hips when walking, is controlled by women, does not stand up for his friends, etc., he might be less likely to be defined as masculine. Approaching young male bodies as signs, rather than biological bodies as defined by age, makes it possible to see what kind of behaviour turns a boyish body into a masculine man and vice versa. Becoming an adult therefore involves more than an increase in years. It equally concerns cultural and bodily markers such as circumcision, or of behaviour such as 'taking' oneself as a man, as Tomela indicates above. Bodies with masculine signs aspire to become men but they still have to prove themselves as masculine through their behaviour. As Davied, a young man from Lavender Hill (former coloured area) explained:

> I was seen as a man when I was quite young, 14 … I was tall and strong, my face looked older. People treated me like a man and so I am one … in the city I always wear old stuff … I look like shabby, maybe a builder … it is not so easy to place me (racially) … it does not matter with who I am hanging out, just sometimes a boy joins us, he looks to place me, most just are not interested … I am classy, have no accent, polite, respectful … I can be different if I want. It is how you present yourself.

Bodily signs, such as being thin, fat, tall, muscled, having a black skin, long hair, or bodily hair, physical maturity, walking style and movements, etc., provide different possibilities for 'doing' social categories. Adding the concept of bodily signs thus acknowledges people's own contribution to the process of becoming a subject. Bodily signs are in general difficult to change, as their character is most of the time material, but they can be managed through training, eating or wearing certain clothes, all of which cover or emphasise bodily posture, shape and size. Studying bodily signs instead of bodies provides the possibility to investigate how the power of social categories changes depending not only on context but also on accumulated experiences (*habitus*) brought into certain situations.

Race as a form of capital

Both Tomela and Davied above indicate that black bodily signs are not always equivalent to being perceived as black. This approach to race challenges scholars like Ratele (2005), who argues that race is an ontological category. We believe that while race has real consequences in social life, its power is not equally present in all contexts or forms of interaction.

Motsemme's (2002) research about the fluidity and contextuality of race among adolescents has shown that the discussion of race, socio-economic identity and gender needs to be situated in relation to particular boys and contexts. Different practices influence the ways in which a boy, like Davied above, experiences himself as, or is perceived as, more or less white or black. In some contexts, Tomela's bodily signs of blackness immediately position him as such. In other situations, where differing discourses and practices are more visible, this position might not be offered to or imposed on him. Race is thus a form of capital, which can have both positive and negative consequences.

This links back to the earlier discussion of the deconstruction of categories. In the line of Butler, Motsemme argues that we should study race as something people do and not something they have. Ratele seems to be more inspired by Bourdieu's material approach. Bourdieu does not touch upon issues of race in his writing, but his conceptual framework has been used for that purpose by Skeggs (1997), for instance, who argues that race is embodied as a part of *habitus*. Race is not situated on the surface of the body; it is not ascribed to the body; it is inherent in its very being. Yet our research has suggested that many young people like Ben, Tomela and Davied experience race as changeable and negotiable, as a practice they are able to influence at particular times and in specific spaces (Lindegaard & Henriksen, 2004).

Masculinities in a violent society

Responding to violence

Since the end of apartheid, the theory of 'violence circling violence' has frequently been used as an explanation for the high figures of inter-personal violence (Glanz & Spiegel, 1996; Morrell, 2001c; Ramphele, 2000; Swartz, 1999). Recently, more agency-focused approaches have emphasised that violence is a means of establishing hierarchies of gender and maintaining fantasies of self (Moore, 1994; Ramphele, 2002; Wood & Jewkes, 2001). Approaches to violence have therefore changed from a perception of it as breaking down social relations to interpretations of violence as sustaining and changing relationships (Sørensen, 1998). While the acknowledgement of individual capacities in relation to violent practices is necessary, it is equally important to recognise the influence of communities and the political system on the shaping of violent interactions.

Within psychology, it has been argued that individual intentionality is not a significant factor in relation to violent behaviour; group pressure and social expectations are more likely to be the determinant (Fletcher & Weinstein, 2002). Thus, if societal structures somehow make violence acceptable, it is therefore urgent to evaluate how non-violent men manage to be masculine without being violent. Some situations provide the possibility for *not* being violent, and in other situations violence is experienced as normal sensible behaviour. Violent and non-violent behaviour make certain subject positions available to certain bodies: the consequences of violence differ from one young man to another. For example, coloured and black boys are more likely to be seen as deviant or delinquent when using violence than white boys (Lindegaard & Henriksen, 2005).

The majority of the young men who participated in our research emphasised that they had to deal with the threat of violence at some point in their lives. In the townships, being a young man was complicated – it involved behaving in different ways in various contexts. Young men had to know what it meant to be a man, and how to display conventional masculinities in public areas if possible. But being a man was also about being perceived as one; accordingly, it was fluid and dynamic and was particularly complex when trying to be non-violent and to practise safe sex.

Pinelands boys from nuclear families perceived youngsters who kept close to home and were not interested in girls or sex-talk as being 'soft' – this was slightly derogatory, but if the young man seemed capable of reacting violently (e.g. if he was big and strong), he was still accepted as masculine. Such positions were also available for township boys and young men, but could have different outcomes.

If township boys refused to use violence and stayed indoors, they were more easily perceived as feminised. Unlike 'soft' boys from Pinelands, who were not viewed as potential delinquents if they used violence as a form of self-defence, township boys who stayed at home found it far more difficult to convince others that they were simply 'soft', but not feminine. It was also more problematic for young men and boys in the townships to use violence as self-defence without being perceived as deviant. In Heideveld and Lavender Hill, boys and young men had to balance between being perceived as *moffies* (derogatory for gay, weak man) or *gangsters* (criminals, macho ideal), which will be exemplified by the following two cases:

Yazir is 17 years old and lives in Heideveld [former coloured area]. When asked how he avoids violence in the area he replied in the following way:

> I stay in the house … I find pleasure in studying. I do not have girlfriends. If I study, I stay out of problems … like being killed and that stuff … sometimes, when I walk to the library to do a project or so, I sometimes feel threatened, that is why I always ask someone to walk with me. Walking with someone will not stop the gangsters from killing us, but I will feel safer if I am building up a conversation with someone, so I

> normally walk with someone. And that is mainly during the day. When I walk alone at night, I usually run! I do not walk [laughs]. Because I am afraid of what might happen.

Yazir says that people regard him as a *moffie* (homosexual). However, as a male, his body communicates the potential for violence, and in public, especially when he moves through the area of a particular gang, he is at risk of being involved in violence.

A somewhat similar strategy was used by some young men and boys in Khayelitsha. Xolile, a 17-year-old boy, was initially threatened and eventually robbed by a youth gang that operated in the area around his school and even in the school grounds. Like Yazir, he always walked with a friend to school or elsewhere, while his sister did the same. Yet, as a male, Xolile felt responsible for her safety and protection. He said:

> Boys are supposed to protect girls and when the Bonganis tried to get money from me and my sister when we walked together I knew I had to keep them busy first until she ran away and then I can run away. But if they had tried to hurt her, or say bad things to make her afraid, if she was in danger, if I see she can get hurt, I must defend her even if I get hurt – men must protect girls, that is how it is.

For Xolile, being and acting like a man and being perceived by others as such was related to the expectation that he should be able to be a potential protector of women and of himself. Yet, like Yazir, he tried to avoid being exposed to violence as much as possible – he went home directly after school and was very involved in the activities of his soccer team. Xolile told us:

> I do not sleep with my girlfriend, the boys … call me a sissy … I play soccer and do what I must do to get I want. My sister has a child and my mother has to look after her while she works in Joburg. Her boyfriend thinks he is a man because he has sex with her and he has a child, but what kind of a man is he, he does not even look after his child. I want to keep healthy and plan for the future.

While Xolile's physical prowess and involvement in soccer makes him masculine, his lack of sexual activity can simultaneously be interpreted by others as signs of being a *sissy.* Xolile can also be masculine by having sex or becoming a father, like his sister's boyfriend. He, however, takes a different subject position – as a good soccer player, who stays healthy, plans for the future and does the necessary to achieve what he wants.

Another boy, Guy, 21 years old and living in Heideveld, talked about violence in the following way:

> People respect me in the area. They know who I am. I never need to put myself through. Why should I hit anybody? Being violent is so much apartheid.

Being known and respected provide the possibility for not being violent. Guy perceives violence as something used by young men who are not held in high esteem and thus

have to 'prove' their masculinity in this context. 'Apartheid' refers to behaviour that reinforces or mirrors power structures of the past and is perceived as 'pathetic'. Once more, context plays an important role in the violent or non-violent behaviour of boys and young men.

However, not all adolescent boys and young men have to strategise like Xolile or Guy. In Heideveld, Igshaan, for example, is 19 years old, has left high school recently and is presently doing a diploma at the Cape Technicon.[2] He is the oldest brother of four and lives with his parents in Heideveld. His response to violence is very different from Xolile's:

> I don't really think about it, like I go more or less where I want to during the day and use the car if I need to go out at night. People know me in the area. They know I am a good guy. They would never touch me knowing my family, it's the same with my sisters, not that they walk around alone, but people know us.

Igshaan is a young man with a future – his parents have social status and some wealth. He is a practising Muslim and argues that his faith does not allow him to have extramarital sex. He has a friend who is a gangster but is not worried that gangs will involve or attack him. He can negotiate his non-violent masculinity with greater ease than many other young men in the suburb. He resembles some of the young men living in Pinelands in his ability to express non-violent masculine behaviour and does not express fear of being caught up in gangsterism as Yazir did. Igshaan is differently positioned from Yazir or another friend of his, Ali.

Ali (17), who is a member of the Americans gang in Heideveld, said:

> My brother got killed by the Junky Funkies [gang] by an axe in front of my eyes. They told me that they would do the same to me if I did not start working for them. I did not have a choice. I had to become a member of the Americans [another gang]; otherwise I would have been dead by now.

If somebody in the family is involved in gangsterism, it is difficult for young males to avoid becoming involved. Family ties, and thereby social capital, are decisive for strategies of avoiding violence.

The often contradictory expectations of being a male while also being non-violent and practising safe sex were stressed by the 22-year-old Sipho from Khayelitsha, who had recently been initiated. He already has a four-year-old daughter. This makes him undeniably a man in the eyes of the community. His recent initiation is a further marker of his manhood, and thus he already has a great deal of social capital and does not necessarily need to be violent to be seen as a man. Like all the young men and boys we approached, Sipho nevertheless strategises between local pressure and his need to sustain being a non-violent male who now practises safe sex. In this regard, he finds that expectations of his behaviour as a man had to shift on occasion and were sometimes quite contradictory:

> Being a man in our society means you must do … be able to also do dangerous things. As a boy you must be naughty … I behaved like that, I was member of a group of boys – we used to wait for people coming home alone in the evenings and then we robbed them. It was expected, I also had a child early. I was everything a man should be. But nowadays we know about other things … It is hard to maintain this …When we are in the imbizo, it is time for us men … You really sometimes have to stay calm to not be violent. So you have to play two roles.

Young men, poised between boyhood and initiation, had to actively negotiate social identities that were historically and socially embedded, while also going against the grain. Andile, a 19-year-old man, has just finished his initiation process. He is quite outspoken about the difficulty of negotiating his masculinity in everyday life. He styles his body through gestures and actions, a central part of the performance of convincing masculinity:

> We sometimes have to be like an animal. You must not be afraid, you must be able to protect, you must not be defeated. But I want to keep my life, I must walk what I do, but it difficult. When they talk to me like that I joke, I say, yes I am imofi, I am a girl, just look at me. I have to keep my temper, I turn everything they say into a joke that is my defence. I say, ok, ok, fine, I am whatever you say. They give up, they want someone who will give something back – if you do not respond and ignore them, they get bored. You do not want to get violent, although they know you can.

Living with the threat of violence nevertheless was a far more difficult task for boys in townships than for those in Pinelands, for example. Black males were more exposed to racism, which made it difficult for them to be perceived as both masculine and to be non-violent.

Violence in relationships

Fikile, a 16-year-old boy living in Gugulethu [former black area] and going to school in Pinelands, explained how he felt about violence in his relationship:

> Sometimes I hit her but only when I have to. I mean if she disrespects me in public I have to react immediately. Otherwise people might think I am weak and then they can get away with anything.

For Fikile, the use of violence in his intimate relationship depends on whether he experiences his masculinity as threatened by his girlfriend in public. He seems to adhere to the notion of traditional sexuality as discussed earlier. By immediately hitting his girlfriend, he indicates to others that he is not weak and that they should not try to 'get away with anything'.

'It's when I am respecting my girlfriend that I feel like a man.' This was how Wilson, a young 17-year-old black man living in Pinelands, explains why he never uses violence against his girlfriend. He had once been in a fight during a party when other males provoked and started pushing him. He does not like such situations but thinks they are impossible to avoid.

Another young man from Khayelistha, the 18-year-old Sibayi, stresses that even though he has recently been initiated and is thus culturally perceived as an adult male, being non-violent and practising safe sex often has to be actively sustained in the face of denigration and the societal and peer pressure to be a 'real' man:

> It takes a lot of guts for a man to accept that we should be non-violent, that we must think of women as equal. Actually I do not really think we are equal because you can see everywhere you go that the man can beat her, can get her to have sex, but to think of a woman as equal, to have safe sex, to not be violent takes hard work. You can teach us in school, but in society, in the bush, in the meetings of men we see, boys see things are not like that. It has taken me three years to get there, to accept that I should not expect sex or just respond violently. It is difficult to change if you were raised like that. I never knew much of my father, but the man my mother lives with, he beat her and he beat me. But I have many things I still want to do, I will not stay here forever. Some say to me, no, what is wrong with you, but I have to do this thing, I am out of here.

Ananda, a 19-year-old from Khayelitsha, similarly emphasises the complexity of masculinity when he explains:

> I have a girlfriend, we have sex … we use condoms … I treat her with respect. When I come from school they shout at me and say I am imofi, a sissy. I just ignore them and they lose interest. But they know, I am going to do things, I am planning things. When they try to fight with me, I say, no thank you, I am a sissy. They tell me I am weak but they know, in here, I am stronger than they are.

Conclusions

In this chapter we argued that it is necessary to give attention to construction, experiences and maintenance of particular masculinities from young men's own viewpoint. We tried to highlight some of the circumstances under which race, gender, class and violence become embodied and incorporated into practices of masculinity.

We showed that not all boys and young men are part of the violent construction and practices of masculinity, and that it is influential in different ways and at various levels depending on context. In some situations, violence is experienced as an act of power, for example when a young male defends himself or protects a sister. Under different circumstances, violence is perceived as powerlessness, or as a means to avoid being

disempowered, as when Guy hits his girlfriend to ensure that others do not perceive him as weak and thus not masculine.

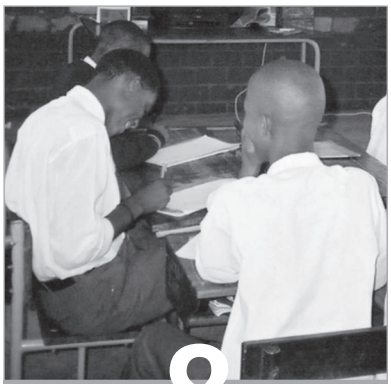
For some boys, being non-violent and still being viewed as very masculine was much easier. Being positioned – as white, for instance – also made it possible for them to respond to violence with violence without necessarily being perceived as being at fault. While such young men stress that they oppose the use of violence, they also emphasise that their immediate response to the threat of violence, for example in the case of burglary or of being robbed, was to respond with some form of counter violence or by communicating their capabilities for reacting to a violent situation (Lindegaardt & Henriksen, 2004).

Some young males manage to manifest themselves without using violence and thereby resist the 'culture of violence'. They do so in the face of a great deal of derision, but manage by focusing on the future. Although this chapter could not do justice to this aspect, it is apparent that the dreams and hopes of boys and young men can contribute to changing masculinities. Non-violent masculinities might be a form of social resistance that challenges dominating perceptions of masculinity, and which might thereby contribute eventually to social change.

The chapter finally indicated that constructions and experiences of masculinities are not distinguished by race but rather by lived experiences such as whether boys are able to negotiate racial boundaries and interact with racially diverse people or whether they rarely get exposed to differences of this kind. The meaning of blackness, for instance, changes and depends on whether a boy or young man socialises with white, coloured and black classmates and colleagues or participates in a family event in the township or neighbourhood where he lives. Instead of only studying the structural distinctions between men, we suggest it is of equal importance to capture the ways in which these structures influence practices depending on the context in which a young man is involved. The differentiation is therefore not only found *between* boys but also internally, *within* boys (Moore, 1994).

Endnotes

1. Class is understood as defined by Bourdieu (1984). Class is relational and defined by power struggle. It is a means for distinction and a way to create groups of 'us' and 'them'. Class positions are defined by economic, social, cultural and symbolic capital. Positions develop over time; they become embodied but shift depending on the hierarchies of power in a particular field. Class is therefore not understood as a Marxist term but as life style position. It is a concept, which recognises for instance the power of education, family relations and taste as comparable to economic resources.
2. The Cape Technicon is a higher learning facility in Cape Town.



CHAPTER 8

'A woman cannot marry a boy': rescue, spectacle and transitional Xhosa masculinities

Pumla Dineo Gqola

> A custom is supposed to heal. A custom is not supposed to kill. *Mamisa Chabula*
>
> All custodians of the custom, traditional leaders and parents are urged to help restore the dignity of circumcision. *Sizwe Kupelo*
>
> It's his democratic right not to go, but he will always be considered a boy, even when he is old and grey. He will scandalise any woman he will marry because a woman cannot marry a boy. *Pathekile Holomisa*
>
> This is one thing we cannot afford to let go. If this dies, what else would we have? *DJ Bad Boy T (Thomas Msengana)*

Ulwaluko, as a complex initiation cluster that marks transition from young to more complex (Xhosa) adult masculinities, took on a heightened visibility when the South African print and electronic media zoomed in on the substantial numbers of bungled circumcisions in the Eastern and Western Cape provinces from about 1995 onwards. The media problematised the unsanitary and dangerous conditions under which some of the circumcisions, one stage of the *ulwaluko* institution, were performed. Discussions about risk clustered around what was seen as endangered, which, depending on the interjector's positioning, could be the boys'/initiands' lives, a way of life, a central tenet of (Xhosa) manhood, 'proper' future African masculine heterosexual self-positioning, secrecy/privacy, and/or 'authentic' markings of African manhood.

In recent years, South African print media and television news have developed an idiom in their coverage of what has come to be known as 'botched circumcisions', a set phraseology that relies on heavily medical language to frame and comment on a masculine crisis of identity. Along with citing statistics which reveal that in excess of '6 000 youths have been hospitalised in provincial hospitals and more than 300 have died

due to botched circumcisions in the province since 1995' (Zuzile, 2005), there have been extensive debates about how to redeem the circumcision stage of the *ulwaluko* ritual into safer forms.

In the print media, the visual representation of this crisis initially took the form of young Black male bodies in pain (labelled as, or assumed to be from the Eastern Cape, and therefore 'automatically' Xhosa), broken young Black male bodies shamed and hospitalised. It is important to ask questions about what currency these images held for launching *ulwaluko* as a topic worthy of public debate. The same needs to be asked of their alternative imagery: *abakhwetha* lying around, Black males successfully 'circumcised', standing around 'idle', which contribute to the larger stereotype of this as an outdated, indulgent ceremony. Jointly, these representational clusters should remind us that much cannot, and will not be made visible.

The media idiom often conflates danger to the immediate life of an initiate, or initiand, and a threat to either individual or collective African manhood. This is clear in headlines that scream 'Manhood sliced away' (Zuzile, 2005) to illustrate what has emerged as the emblematic slippage between the body and the location of manhood. There is increasing interest in the intersections of Black masculinity and risk as they pertain to the status of the circumcision stage of *ulwaluko*, an inquisitiveness that usually assumes prominence in June and July and again from November to January, to coincide with school vacations and therefore the time when boys in high school are available for initiation without disruption to their studies.

When the media began to comment increasingly on the physical and hygienic dangers facing initiands, especially in the Eastern and Western Cape provinces, many public responses contested the meanings of what was reported. Whereas the national media relied on the conflation of masculinity and the penis, the public commentators who wrote and phoned into various media establishments contested what they criticised as the flattening out of the relationship between the cutting of the foreskin and attainment of manhood. The headline of the Sunday newspaper *City Press* (issue of 9 January 2005) illustrates the – by now – emblematic slippage between the body and the location of manhood (Zuzile, 2005). The newspaper's headline declaration of 'Manhood sliced away' indexes both the colloquial references to the penis as manhood and the established expression of equating circumcision with the entire transition to manhood. The opening paragraph of the article is even more revealing:

> When Luvuyo Shute went to the circumcision school in Flagstaff, Eastern Cape, late last November, he did not know that three weeks later he would lose his manhood. … Shute had his penis amputated after a ritual circumcision went wrong and he became one of 77 initiands who have lost their manhood in the province since 1995. … More than 6 000 youths have been hospitalized in provincial hospitals and more than 300 have died due to botched circumcisions in the same period. (2005, p. 1)

Zuzile's reportage here relies on a series of simplifications placed along a line which suggests straightforward causality: botched circumcisions lead to loss of manhood, and large numbers of these mean a crisis of manhood and many deaths. The increasing crisis is articulated through a helplessness around participating in the institution that now sees innocent boys exposed to unnecessary risk by faceless 'botchers', a reading that is further supported by the unnamed medical expert Zuzile quotes as saying, 'I can't understand why this tradition is not modernized because it is killing innocent boys who just want to be men' (2005, p.1).

Zuzile's article also relies on a series of ironies in the relationship between what he calls 'initiation schools', transition to manhood, and loss of control. Several boys enter these schools to become men, but instead leave without their 'manhood'. Manhood, then, is both something that is meant to be taught at the 'schools' and something initiands already have upon admittance by mere virtue of their biological sex.

Zuzile's article is a recent example of what has become the print media's idiom on speaking (about) *ulwaluko*. This representational style, I will argue, is at the heart of the kinds of contestation that have emerged on the pages of these same newspapers. In the past few years, the polemic has been structured in a way that polarises: the majority of commentators position themselves either forcibly in defence of an identity and institution they see as under threat, or in justifying the entire abolition of an outdated ritual that all could do well without. Interestingly, members of the public maintained the status and visibility of the discussion by participating actively in the polemic that soon became about the manner in which *ulwaluko* could (not) be spoken about. This discourse of threat and risk pervaded the qualifications used by participants on all sides of the conversation: *ulwaluko* is something under attack and an entity that, therefore, needs protection and/or defence. What have been contested in these disputes are the specific factors that matter in defining the subjects and clarifying the nature of the risk, the role played by the media in shaping people's commonsense understanding of the risk surrounding them, the boundaries between perception and 'inaccurate' representations and, finally, anxiety around what it might mean to tamper with *ulwaluko* in any way.

Mapping proliferating meanings

This chapter attempts to understand the larger idiom of representation which is indexed in what has become the familiar, hypervisible and shamed initiate-in-pain. The interrupted transition from boyhood to manhood marks the interstitial subject as 'shamed' because he cannot become a 'real' man, and his broken body is presented as unquestionable evidence of this pity-inducing failure. This is the face of 'botched circumcisions', a reminder of collective disappointment, some of which is borne by the interstitial subject and the rest of which should be carried by a larger and somewhat ambiguously defined public.

The chapter unpacks ways in which the shorthand term 'circumcision' has come to work in the place of *ulwaluko* in representations and discussions of 'botched circumcisions'. Through this shorthand formulation, the complex cluster of rituals that mark transition from one form of young masculinity to full manhood is reduced to the stage of penile foreskin cutting, simplifying the process to what I choose to call a 'boys-to-men' moment. The chapter then proceeds to examine the ways in which this highly gendered, and often overtly masculinist, discursive terrain seeks to regulate who can speak to the issue of 'botched circumcision' and *ulwaluko* through the evocation of notions of authentic black masculinities.

Writing of different specifics in his 'Unravelling the silences of Black sexuality', Sanya Osha (2004) has argued that the discursive foregrounding of health and life protection in proximity to African sexuality, which accompanied the onset of the HIV/Aids pandemic, can also mask oppressive regulatory potential parading as greater good. Note for example, how, in the above discussion, the shamed body on display – in other words, the spectacular body of the interstitial subject – is often in a hospital or other medical setting. The journalist's register foregrounds health as that which should be foremost in our minds. But who may come to the aid of these bodies? Who are the appropriate doctors and through what kinds of medicine and terms can they intervene?

These deceptively simple questions permeate the tensions of the 'circumcision' polemic. Thinking through some of these worries through Osha's work is illuminating. So too is analysing this terrain in terms of Patricia McFadden's thinking on sexual pleasure and disquiet. In her 'Sexual pleasure as a feminist choice' (McFadden, 2002), she pointed to the same repressive protectionism as motivated by a socio-sexual anxiety about thinking about African sexualities in unbounded ways.

The warnings in McFadden's and Osha's essays are important for analysing how Black masculinities are framed in the context of *ulwaluko* and its representations in the media. Their work highlights the connections between gender, sexuality, Blackness, health/survival and power. The amount of attention given to discussions of health in relation to *ulwaluko* invites further attention to the specific ways in which discourses of health intersect with gender propriety.

Given the coverage of the *ulwaluko* 'crisis' over the last decade, a comprehensive study of the topic would require an analysis of several newspapers from the provinces worst affected (Eastern and Western Cape), which feature ongoing coverage and commentary on the institution and circumcision that peaks in the longer school holiday periods of each year. Analysis of newspapers such as the English dailies *Eastern Cape Herald*, *Daily Dispatch*, *Cape Argus* and *The Cape Times* would be necessary. So too would a combing of national Sunday papers such as *City Press* and *Sunday Times*, given their constant coverage of the same.

This study would also have to engage with some of the ways in which other academic attention has already been turned to *ulwaluko* in South Africa. Lumka Funani's (1990) book, *Circumcision among the amaXhosa: A medical investigation* would be an interesting starting point. Another area for investigation is the growing body of work by artists, art historians and art scholars, such as Thembinkosi Goniwe, Mgcineni 'Pro' Sobopha, Sipho Hlathi and Churchill Madikida, who interrogate creatively as well as in scholarly format the gendered implications that adhere to the ritual and the current public fascination with it in South Africa. Their work foregrounds the identitiary work performed by *ulwaluko* and the contestations over it.

This chapter is *not* that study, but an attempt to think through some of the considerations that would inform a comprehensive analysis of the terrain; such an investigation is necessary, but it is beyond the scope of this chapter.

The messiness of language

My interest does not lie in the institution of *ulwaluko per se*, or Xhosa manhood as a category – whatever that might mean. I am instead intrigued by how and what *ulwaluko* and 'circumcision' come to mean in the public eye, and in launching an analysis of the discursive constructions of this facet of Black masculinity in the South African public domain. Issues concerned with the protection of the secret and sacred rituals which form part of this complicated ritual process are also beyond the scope of this chapter. In order to arrive at some language with which to frame my analysis, however, I offer the following working definitions, one of which is mine, and the other borrowed:

> In a simplified way, ulwaluko refers to circumcision, an initiation ritual performed to transform boys to men, a means to gain adult status and acceptance to preside over sacred and ceremonial activities. This ritual serves a spiritual function to establish links with the ancestor. It is a gaining of knowledge … instilment of moral values and social values recognised by the Xhosa commune … These traditional beliefs serve to construct masculinity cultivating the self-conscious attitude of identifying with the voice of authority: man is to be the head of the house, the decision-maker, the provider for and protector of the family. (Goniwe, 2004, p. 5)

The above definition is as useful, for my purposes here, as much for what it clarifies as it is for what it refuses to explain. This is a definition made easier than other possible explanations: it is a working, academic characterisation, and obviously admits to leaving much out. What it does illustrate, however, is how *ulwaluko* uses physical performance and metamorphosis in the interest of social, political and religious meaning-making. It is a ritual that inculcates and affirms certain patriarchal ways of being a man-in-the-world.

Another definition posits *ulwaluko* as:

> … a series of ceremonies which mark multiple transitions from a young masculinity (boyhood) through various stages as the status of the initiands moves from being amakhwenkwe to abakhwetha to amakrwala to abafana to amadoda.(Gqola, 2004, p. 3)

The second definition stresses the processual dimension of what is meant by *ulwaluko*, thereby underscoring that it cannot be thought of as a moment except in the most generous definitions of what constitutes 'a moment'. My preference for these two definitions is due to the way that they underscore the manner in which *ulwaluko* is a ritual, and therefore like all ritual entails more than a focus on the body. Rather, the body is an instrument or vehicle through which sets of meaning and ways of being in the world are negotiated. It is a complex socio-political and religious moment, with definitions of the sacred, protected information and gate-keeping during which masculinities are reshaped in the service of larger communal and patriarchal ends.

The clarification of my terms of discussion is more pressing than academic protocol here; in this instance, it is crucial given that language works so well to mystify and complicate discussions around *ulwaluko* in the public imagination. What is under discussion is not just circumcision but the meanings of the long institution, Zuzile's 'school', which the circumcision forms part of. My earlier definitions begin to illustrate some of the impasses of the 'circumcision' polemic, and indeed a facet of South African translation politics.
Since translation is never an exact equitable transfer of meaning, often a word is translated so that it simultaneously means something very precise and encapsulates a much larger cosmology. Here, then, 'circumcision' is used at the same time to refer to the actual physical cutting of the foreskin, and to reference *ulwaluko* more broadly. Seldom are both meanings used by the same participant in the polemic. In what appears to be the same debate, the terms of reference differ so as to convolute the actual discussion since different participants evoke highly divergent referents. There is a familiar epistemological impasse: although this is a hotly contested issue, it is not the same discussion.

Indeed, 'circumcision' is not the only illustration of this. In South Africa people often use a variety of words such as 'culture' to evoke both narrow ethnicist protectionism and broader and more fluid human activity. Witness how the use of 'nation' to refer to the Griqua or Xhosa nation, or even Black nation (*isizwe*), always means something self-evidently different from the state, the geo-political entity, South Africa (*ilizwe*). Similarly, although many of us use the word 'ethnic', none of us can fix its meanings since it is used every day to denote 'nation' (*isizwe*), 'race', the misnomer 'tribe', and something in between, which perhaps explains how there can be so many committed 'nationalists' considered dangerous to state interest. Most South Africans who participate in English language discussions on these topics understand the necessity to move between these

meanings because the point at which these ambiguities around 'nation', 'culture' and 'ethnicity' were absent from public discussion is a vague memory.

It is not so with newer words like 'circumcision'. Its route into the South African public consciousness and the contestations I allude to above has relied on somewhat peculiar ellipses. The first of these is the simplification of *ulwaluko* in order to discuss it as a moment; in other words the conflation of an elaborate religious/social ceremonial process composed of weeks of rituals and stages into a tidy sound bite/moment: boys to men. This requires the flattening out of an elaborate ceremonial process composed of performances and re-definitions of Black masculinities that take the form of various rituals, smaller transitions, symbolic and physical locations, periods of seclusion and contact, and so forth, into 'circumcision', a misnomer that is supposed to mark the quick moment of transition from boys to men.

The second elision requires that 'circumcision', having been reduced to an instant, be unyoked from its symbolic, spiritual and social meanings and made to stand in purely for the physical and (un)hygienic. Once complete, this abbreviation allows discussion of a tabled series of 'pros and cons' on the usefulness of the custom.

The final elision relies on the ascription of any discussion of gender in relation to *ulwaluko*, or even 'circumcision', to the (non)involvement of women as commentators on the topic. Within this ambit, men are not themselves gendered, so that it is only upon the entry or 'intrusion' by women commentators that gender emerges as an explicit discussion topic in relation to *ulwaluko*.

The stress on *ulwaluko* as that which is steeped in disaster and risk elicits defensive stances which offer correctives about how many times *iingcibi*, the Xhosa traditional surgeons, successfully perform the cutting. It occludes more nuanced discussion about the symbolism of the institution and the work it does, whether successful or not. There are direct implications here for reading the terms under which constructions of Black masculinities are made, and for debates on who can contribute and when. My examples are drawn from the heated debates staged on regional and national print media. I have chosen to highlight specific sites within this polemic: positions adopted in relation to a decision to skip *ukwaluka* and ways in which discourses of health and general welfare are introduced as a way to negotiate proprieties of speech and speaking positions.

From elision to hypervisibility

In the earlier quotation from Sizwe Kupelo, the spokesperson for the Eastern Cape Provincial Health Department, and perhaps one of the most regularly cited individuals in both radio and print media on this issue, he positions *ulwaluko* by using the 'circumcision' shorthand to demonstrate, through his choice of words, that the topic is not one which is open to all participation. For Kupelo, only those who are deemed to fall into the

category of 'cultural custodians, traditional leaders and parents' can come to the rescue of *ulwaluko*. He therefore challenges the media's positioning of 'botched circumcisions' and *ulwaluko* generally as a matter of general public interest.

The quotations (at the beginning of the chapter) from Dr Mamisa Chabula, Pathekile Holomisa and DJ Bad Boy T, although different in tone and positioning, point to the manner in which what is under discussion is more complex than Kupelo's 'circumcision'. Chabula refers to 'a custom' and the role this category might play. In coupling healing and the work of customs, Chabula points to a nuance that is often missing in the polemic: what is at issue is how the custom sometimes performs its work and whether this can be remedied in order to restore the ritual's rightful place as healing site.

Holomisa's intervention suggests that the meanings that ensue from a decision (not) to participate are socially immense and impact directly on all future intimate relationships (presumed heterosexual), while Bad Boy T's comments are most vehemently protective. Indeed, the Yfm DJ sounds the alarm bell by pointing to how desperate this situation really is: it is the last of a series of endangered rituals of self-making and it needs to be protected at all costs.

But how is it possible for male circumcision suddenly to mean so much? Perhaps it is because what is under discussion is not circumcision, though often discussed as though it is. The extracts quoted are responses to the furore over the implications that 'botched circumcisions', leading to the hospitalisation, and sometimes death of initiands, may have for the future prospects of *ulwaluko*.

When the shorthand 'circumcision' is used, comments like that made by Bad Boy T on the threat to yet another identity marker seem nonsensical. Surely his '[t]his is one thing we cannot afford to let go. If this dies, what else do we have', when faced with the possible modification, discussion and elimination of 'circumcision', seems like an over-reaction. After all, circumcision is simply the removal of the penile foreskin: it is the physical moment. However, upon closer inspection it emerges quite clearly that Bad Boy T is *not* indexing circumcision as physical moment here, but rather *ulwaluko*.

There are other positions, and it is to the letters pages of several newspapers that I now turn. Entering into this complex fray, Makhaya Mani (2004) frames his perspective as an informed and necessary intervention into more recent controversy and concern over the dismissal and 'improper' perspective that permeates what he calls 'the public in the Western Cape' after the Litha Ntshoza controversy of 'forced *ulwaluko*' and flight. Mani's title is telling: 'A tradition is there to be followed'. He adds:

> For as long as we live, it has to be accepted that men like myself had to go through circumcision as a passage to manhood. This norm has never been challenged even by the apartheid regime.

> It seems that, the Westernised way of living has caught us out in present day society. (Mani, 2004, n.p.)

He offers the corrective which declares that manhood is open for different kinds of signification, and therefore is not replaceable, even if it can be supplemented by other identities. It is a mistake to be 'under the impression that, by converting to these lifestyles, you surrender your tribal [sic] identity' (Mani, 2004, n.p.).

Fleeing, or refusing to participate in *ulwaluko* is seen as troublesome and shameful to the young man's family. It is also an action that bodes ill for both the young man's immediate future and beyond.

Mani's interjection here highlights the manner in which *ulwaluko* is neither criminal nor immoral; he speaks out against what he reads as its demonisation as unhealthy, thereby critiquing its simplification: 'the tragic terms' of its debate. He is at pains to point to the manner in which an institution that has survived attempts at erasure during the long colonial onslaught that ended with apartheid should die out under a democracy.

This is a particularly interesting intervention, given the very real ways in which the apartheid state had interfered with self-constructions of Black masculinities. Raymond Suttner's work (2004d) has offered highly nuanced readings of the ways that colonialism and apartheid denied African manhood, as well as a sensitive reading of the politics of the ways in which this was contested. Moving away from the formulaic assumption that any assertion of African manhood is misogynist, Suttner carefully analyses varied historical contexts to uncover a range of expressions and implications as attendant to assertions of Black masculinities. He also forces us to rethink whether participating in (reshaped) initiation rituals can carry varying meanings under conditions in which manhood is denied, as in the minoritisation of adult African men as boys under apartheid.

In a letter to the *Daily Dispatch* (Qhonono, 2000), another commentator offers an alternative route that may be taken for the salvation of the institution under threat. Diliz'intaba Qhonono (2000) argues for the reinstatement of 'proper' Xhosa traditional courts as instruments of conflict resolution. The initial conflict resolution phase would require mediation and discussion in a court of elders, then a higher court, the sub-headman's court, known as *Inkundla ka Bhodi*, and ultimately the chief/king's court if both lower courts fail to find resolution (Qhonono, 2000). For Qhonono, this patriarchal judicial system is preferable to 'outside' legal intervention in the form of governmental or other intrusion, and would be particularly effective if these traditional men's courts were granted the same status and powers as magistrates' courts.

His argument betrays an anxiety over an institution overwhelmed by problems, but it also highlights contested notions of ownership. For Qhonono, then, while there is a problem to be addressed, there are 'proper' and 'authentic' routes to solution. His concern clusters around experience and interpretation of these shifts as well as the boundaries

between a self-constituted, knowledgeable collective and a threatening intrusive gaze. In his foregrounding of the manner in which the problems can be addressed, Qhonono's input resonates with Sizwe Kupelo's invitation to '[a]ll custodians of the custom, traditional leaders and parents ... to help restore the dignity of circumcision' (DDR, 2003, n.p.).

However, most notably, Qhonono's community of suitably qualified stakeholders includes only politically powerful older men. It illustrates the manner in which some of the contestations hook into transforming masculinities where older traditional patriarchal sources of power are challenged and eroded. Qhonono's defence places the matter squarely as one that can only be resolved through the re-instatement and legislative elevation of these patriarchal courts.

Contesting contexts

The above cases foreground the manner in which the terms of reference brought to bear on any discussion on the dangers on/of *ulwaluko* are key to unlocking some of the silences and assumptions of the 'circumcision' polemic. It is the elision of context that allows for slippages between references to *ulwaluko* and the shorthand 'circumcision'.

Two further and specific events around which discourses of risk and endangerment have congregated illustrate the manner in which these slippages hide the more complicated contestations that arise under *ulwaluko* circumstances.

Over several months the national print media, most notably *City Press*, followed gospel singer Lundi Tyamara's decision first *not* to undergo *ulwaluko*, and then to participate in the rituals. Making his initial decision public meant that several commentators could now remark quite directly on Tyamara's decision. His defenders successfully framed the issue as one that could be about certain chosen ways to inhabit Black masculinities. What was refreshing about their approaches was how they dissociated *ulwaluko* from a specific exclusive position within indigenous culture. They challenged attitudes such as those espoused by Qhonono discussed above, by suggesting that changing masculinities are a matter of public record. They insisted that there are other routes to adult masculinities, and to Black manhood, and challenged Tyamara's detractors' allegations that he would never be a 'real' man if he did not undergo *ulwaluko*.

Brian Baloyi pointed to the manner in which he remains a man even though other commitments, such as his Kaizer Chiefs matches as a teenager, prevented him from participating in initiation rituals as required under Tsonga cosmology. Baloyi declared, 'Honestly, I never had time to go to the bush although lots of my friends in Alexandra went. But I had to make a choice between that and soccer. I chose soccer' (quoted in Mofokeng, 2002).

Baloyi's choice highlights several things because it offers an interesting dilemma between two recognisably masculine performances. He suggests that his is a valid choice,

the evidence of which is his unquestioned manhood as accepted nationally. A highly visible athlete, until recently with one of the two most popular soccer teams in the country, he pits two sites of Black masculinity against each other. Baloyi's definition of a continuity of fluid masculinities as performed identities challenges the above definitions of Black manhood. Baloyi argues that there are other routes, emphasising that choice and creativity are integral to such identities. It is possible to become a Black man, accepted as such, without undergoing the heavily policed ritual that permits masculine fluidity only under the most stringent of conditions.

Baloyi, like the boxer Baby Jake Matlala, another of Tyamara's defenders, speaks from a respected Black masculine position. His narrative pits two sites of authoritative masculinity in South Africa against each other, and argues that participation on the kind of masculine terrain is negotiable; it also juxtaposes two Black male cultural terrains against each other.

Baby Jake Matlala's defence of Tyamara's choice links with Baloyi's in asserting the malleability of indigenous culture, and articulations of manhood within that. Although also required to undergo *ulwaluko* as dictated by Pedi custom, he chose a quicker version at the hospital. The problem with Matlala's interjection, however, is that it conflates initiation with the cutting of the foreskin, and underscores some of the difficulties of this polemic. One of the values of his interjection is that he takes it away from facile discussions of 'Xhosa manhood' by repositioning it in the terrain of wider Black and/or African indigenous masculinities which are malleable.

Not all those who speak out in defence of Lundi Tyamara's initial decision offer nuanced responses, however. DJ Glen Lewis and celebrated jazz musician Selaelo Selota are more dismissive of initiation rituals generally. They both reference discourses that label such processes as 'outdated' because of the demands of a modernised and 'Westernised' lifestyle. More tellingly, both use arguments that foreground 'risk', 'danger' and 'crisis', in line with the pervasive media idiom on *ulwaluko*.

Those who adopted an oppositional stance against Tyamara's choice were more homogeneous in their comments, more directly admonishing. Politician and academic Mathole Motshekga, Pathekile Holomisa, DJ Bad Boy T (Thomas Msengana) and TV presenter Brian Ndevu all categorically deny the validity of Tyamara's choice. While acknowledging that such a choice can be made, they nonetheless stress the inevitably catastrophic effects that would attach to precisely such a stance. Each has a warning. Compare the forms of these warnings (Mofokeng, 2002):

> Motshekga: There are basic rules of life that have to be followed and deviating from them leads to serious problems like moral degeneration. Our children don't go to circumcision schools, they watch American films, and that's why we have so much moral degeneration. Initiation cannot be rejected in the name of modernity.

> Holomisa: It's his democratic right not to go, but he will always be considered a boy, even when he is old and grey. He will scandalise any woman he will marry because a woman cannot marry a boy.
>
> DJ Bad Boy T: Lundi is not a man to me, he is an inkwenkwe (young boy). This is one thing we cannot afford to let go. If this dies, what else would we have?
>
> Ndevu: That could have serious consequences. This is a rite of passage to manhood for every Xhosa man […] By not going there you can never enter the circles of Xhosa men.

These commentators reject notions of a malleable, negotiable manhood. Instead, they espouse a politics of polarity. The most interesting aspect of this dynamic emerges most powerfully in Holomisa's contribution. Active and vocal in both his capacities as lawyer and traditional leader, Patekile Holomisa offers a characteristic hybrid in his interjection. Tyamara is entitled to legally protected choice; it is his 'democratic right' to choose to skip *ukwaluka*. Nonetheless, the implications and consequences of his desire to exercise that right to choice are context derived: he will never be recognised as a 'real man' for as long as he has not been initiated in the appropriate way. Holomisa's declaration is in line with TV personality Brian Ndevu's announcement that Tyamara 'can never enter the circles of Xhosa men' (Mofokeng, 2002). He will be an outcast.

Here the contestation is not around circumcision or its absence, but about the attendant meanings to *ulwaluko*. However, although public responses to Tyamara's refusal to undergo initiation focus on the institution, slippages nonetheless exist, as evidenced by Matlala's reference to hospital circumcision as sufficient. What this debate illuminates is the manner in which the polemic on *ulwaluko* as played out in the South African national media is characterised by competing, at sometimes contradictory impulses.

This emerges quite strongly in another case, this time that of the suggested 'Freedom Park', a 'circumcision village' near Khayelitsha, Cape Town. This initiative was proposed as a way of ensuring that the institution is kept alive and minimises incidents of injury. In other words, 'Freedom Park' near Khayelitsha attempted to regulate the practice of the *ulwaluko* custom. The proposal met with a public outcry since the village would be a permanent fixture, thereby breaking one of the most central tenets of the ritual: the *amabhoma*, used as temporary shelter for the initiands, would remain unburnt and be left standing. These would then be used by the next set of initiands. Criticism of this pointed to the spiritual and symbolic meanings of leaving a certain life behind, partly represented through the burnt *ibhoma* in this case.[1]

Commentators objected to what they saw as the commercialisation of a sacred site of culture since visitors (i.e. tourists) would be permitted to enter some spaces within 'Freedom Park'. This commercialisation was also seen as a dilution, a mainstreaming and disrespectful treatment towards a site of identity already under attack. Maduna

Nqabeni's response is perhaps most indicative of the level of sensitivity around the institution. Nqabeni is said to be a famous *ngcibi*, or *ulwaluko* surgeon. He threatened to hand over his tools rather than confront the possibility of practising as *ingcibi* in such debased form. His response highlights the religious and social functions that space, access and ritual provide, all complexities that are lost when *ulwaluko* is thought of simply as physical.

What is more, the village, well-intentioned as it is, overlooked some of the most central preoccupations that govern the ceremonies of the transition: it included women in all aspects of its planning, it is inconveniently located and would therefore be inconvenient to walk to, it is easily visible and therefore puts *abakhwetha* on display, and it would remain standing, initiate group after initiate group. In other words, it too participated in the slippage between *ulwaluko* and the mere cutting.

ANC ward councillors were outspoken on the matter, and they were much more welcoming of the Freedom Park village. Their perspectives ranged from, '[t]he village is a good thing and we want it – but not at all costs. We want our culture respected' (Gugulethu councilor, Wilson Sidina) to Coetzee Ntotoviyane's retort that nobody would be forced to use Freedom Park and the stress on the importance of using women in the planning stages for Freedom Park. Interestingly, Sidina notes that a separatist desire is only opportunistically equated with misogyny when he declares, 'I don't hate women, but when it comes to culture I'm very strict, and women cannot be involved in the initiation schools' (Moodie & Mbambato, 2004). Women are, in fact, always involved in several aspects of male initiation ritual, so Sidina, Ntotoviyane and others are being disingenuous in denying this.

It is also most interesting that the two women who have most vehemently asserted their right to speak to issues pertaining to *ulwaluko*, Lumka Fulani and Mamisa Chabula, have claimed this authority primarily because of their medical expertise, training and interest. Mamisa Chabula's insistence especially, since 1989, on participating in some aspects of the debate has unleashed a variety of very strong responses. Most of these have ignored her self-positioning to remind her that a woman has no place in any discussions to do with *ulwaluko*. She has retaliated by stressing her various sources of authority. Repeatedly declaring that she speaks as a doctor, an expert on health, whose expertise cannot be challenged given how many botched cuttings she has had to treat over the years, she has remained in and fundamentally altered discussions on *ulwaluko*. Her arguments in favour of using the Tara Klamp in order to ensure safety during the foreskin cutting have been met with detractions that rely heavily on notions of authenticity. She has foregrounded the ways in which she too can be seen as an insider expert – through the constant assertions of her professional right to speak because she is a doctor *and* through her understanding of the sacredness of the ritual by donning *umbhaco* in pictures more frequently as the attempts to silence her escalated.

Engaging and challenging the terms of the debate on her own terms, this offers a response to the gatekeeping which declares that the ceremony needs to be kept sacred. When several male leaders of varied Xhosa Royal households (King Sigcau, Prince Burns-Ncamashe and King Sandile) offered their open support of Chabula, this confused matters further. For Chabula, 'A custom is supposed to heal. A custom is not supposed to kill', and the Tara Klamp is designed not to threaten the transition. In an interview with *Business Day*, she insisted that she was a proponent of 'proper' initiation. That her royal supporters are from across the historic Gcaleka and Rharhabe divide and all her five sons became men through *ulwaluko* is no small matter for the contradictions it poses. Regardless of what her detractors might say about a woman who enters discussion on which she is ill-informed and unwelcome, her status marks her as informed authority. As one-time Director of Health in the Cacadu Municipality, and later a senior official in the Eastern Cape Provincial Health Department, Chabula has maintained her right to speak on any aspect of masculinity, femininity and sexuality more broadly. Indeed, she successfully lobbied for the passing of the Application of Health Standards for Traditional Circumcision Act in 2001.

Chabula's challenges, then, are uninterested in changing the entire ritual, but focus merely on the logistics of the circumcision which forms a very small part of the institution. She has resisted conflating *ulwaluko* with circumcision, and has been most vehement in her defence of what she says can be a 'proper' practice of the ritual, in other words a safe way that is neither physically nor psychologically harmful. Her assertion of insider–outsider status also positions her as one who can safely be seen as a 'custodian of culture' in Sizwe Kupelo's definition.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I contend that the discussion facilitated by the media was structured around risk, and that commentators, by way of response, increasingly framed their interjections in terms of rescue. Discussions about risk clustered around what was seen as endangered. This, depending on the interjector's positioning, could be the initiands' lives, a way of life, a central tenet of (Xhosa) manhood, a 'proper' future for African masculine heterosexual self-positioning, secrecy/privacy, and/or 'authentic' markings of African manhood.

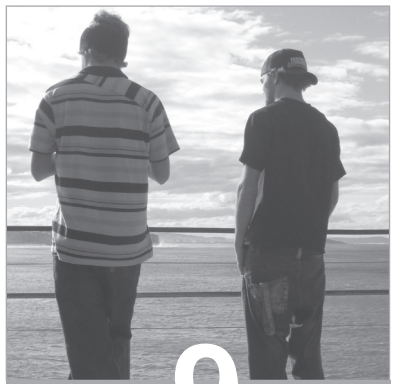
The above commentaries have shown how speaking about Black male bodies, masculinities and manhood in the context of *ulwaluko* and the varied readings they engender highlights the ability of these expressions of masculinity in transition to disrupt expectations of accessibility. This is shown by the resistance of this terrain against functioning as a vacant space that can be simplistically inscribed. It poses questions around what is at stake and to what ends discourses of rescue can be made to work, and it disrupts the assumption that negotiation and shifting masculinities can only be undertaken against set femininities.

Note

This chapter had an earlier incarnation as 'Hypervisibility, Xhosa boy/manhood and the improprieties of speech', presented at the Manhood & Masculinity Symposium held at the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research (WISER), 5–7 September 2004. I am grateful for the provocative presentations by my co-panelists, Thembinkosi Goniwe, Mgcineni Sobopha and Frank Ledimo, as well as insights offered by audience members, especially Nomboniso Gasa, Kopano Ratele and Raymond Suttner.

Endnote

1. Burning of ibhoma here makes sense when viewed within a paradigm where burning belongings is used to mark transitions from states of being. This is applicable to many other sites outside of initiation. Nthabiseng Motsemme (2004), for example, has written about burning clothes within the contexts of the end of mourning.



CHAPTER 9

Social construction of masculinity on the racial and gendered margins of Cape Town

Elaine Salo

Introduction

The young mother gleefully watched as her young two-year-old son reached out from her lap and hit at another little boy, as tears streamed down his face.

'Slaat hom t'rug, slaat hom t'rug!' ('Hit him too, hit him too!') the other young mother laughingly exhorted her son.

This little group was surrounded by about five or six of us, all women, who had come to watch or participate in the usual Saturday afternoon matches at the netball courts in Manenberg. These sports matches were attended by whole families, and a carnival-like atmosphere reigned, just like every other social event in this Cape Flats township. Yet things made no sense to me – the little boys were clearly upset and required soothing, but the women, including the boy's mothers, were laughing at their little squabble. They defined the children's discomfort as enjoyable, humorous, even entertaining. I could contain myself no longer.

'Why do you allow him to beat the other boy? They're crying!' I spoke harshly.
For a moment everyone stopped laughing and looked at me in puzzled amazement. One woman responded scornfully:

'This is Manenberg. He must learn to be tough, or he won't survive here. He can't be a moffie here!'

Soon everyone began sniggering as I walked away, still trying to make sense of the event. Why would the women take such pleasure from the little boys' emotional distress? Why didn't the mothers comfort them instead? The answer to these questions would dawn upon me soon enough, as I began to consider the structural place of men and women in this economically impoverished township, situated on the inner periphery of the city of *Cape Town.*

As I will show in this chapter, these Manenberg women had mapped out the essence of what it means to be masculine in this township, through this incident. Through their actions they had subtly begun unravelling the key meanings of masculinity as they tied emotion to male personhood, race and space in Manenberg. In order to understand the relationship between Manenberg and the local construction of masculine personhood, we need to take account of the historical processes that led to the establishment of this place, as a space which is inhabited by people who were classified coloured. This place is imbued with meanings that resonate powerfully with the political and economic deployment of 'race' in South Africa.

This history defined the township's inhabitants as members of a particular racial group, namely coloureds, who were located very specifically within and between the major racial categories of black and white in the South African apartheid social order. In addition, the Western Cape was legally defined as a coloured labour preference policy area from the 1950s and, until recently, coloured women were favourably located as preferential labour within the margins of blackness. Consequently, until the late 1990s, these women wielded enormous economic power within their communities.

In this chapter I examine how, in the apartheid context, coloured men and women constructed an alternative masculine personhood that drew on, but also resisted their racial and economic subordinate position in the South African social structure. This masculine personhood both reverberated with and reinforced the relatively privileged position of coloured women within the Western Cape economy and within the racially ordered welfare system. In so doing, I shall argue that, in order to explicate the meanings of masculinities in a specific locale, one must unravel the relationship between these identities as they are embedded within specific historical and socio-economic processes and as they reverberate off other gendered identities such as femininities.

In his attempt to unpack the concept 'patriarchy,' Connell (1995, 1997) has argued that, while men in general enjoyed 'the patriarchal dividend ... the advantage gain(ed) from the overall subordination of women' (1995, p. 79), not all men shared in this power equally. He argues that a hegemonic notion of masculinity exists, subordinating all other masculinities. Such a dominant notion of masculinity defines what it means to be a real man and prescribes the culturally acceptable values and practices associated with this image. Building on Connell's thesis, Morrell (2001c) has argued that the meanings of masculinity, whether dominant or subordinate, are not fixed across time and place, but that 'they are socially and historically constructed in a process which involves contestation between rival understandings of what being a man should involve' (2001, p. 7). Morrell indicates that the dominant and subordinate masculinities in the South African context emerge in relation to structural factors such as the racial and economic ordering of society during the apartheid era. These values and practices continue to inform South African masculinity albeit to a waning degree in the contemporary post-apartheid period.

Manenberg: An in-between place with in-between people

Manenberg is a dormitory suburb of metropolitan Cape Town and was established as a place of resettlement in the late 1960s during the apartheid era. It is situated on the sprawling Cape Flats, on the periphery of the old Cape Town city centre. The old city is nestled in the crook of Table Mountain, overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, while Manenberg hugs the grey, windswept sands of the Cape Flats, 15 kilometres away. Though it is far removed from the city centre, Manenberg is still favourably located on the inner margins of the city, in comparison to other townships and informal settlements that are flung furthest out. These settlements, which were established during the 1980s and 1990s, are mainly inhabited by isiXhosa-speaking residents and refugees from other African countries.

The range of residential settlements that was established on this landscape illustrates the historical trajectory of segregationist and apartheid state policies that sought to categorise people according to race, constrain them to live in set geographic locations and determine what housing and services they would receive. This historical perspective is essential if one is to unravel the relationship between state policies, the hegemonic and marginal meanings that peripheral urban space holds, as well as the contestations over the meanings of masculine and feminine personhood that ensue during the contestation over the meaning of place.

Racial segregation has shaped and informed the social meanings of place in South Africa since the onset of colonialism. However, since the 1950s, apartheid legislation ensured that race would fit more closely onto space. This legacy still stubbornly endures, even a decade after apartheid's demise, inflecting the meanings of gender during everyday social interactions.

The Group Areas Act of 1960 was one of the key legislative tools of the apartheid state, which mapped racial segregation definitively onto the geographic landscape. This legislation worked in tandem with the old Population Registration Act of 1950, which located different members of the population in the various racial categories, white, Indian, coloured[1] and African[2]. Historically, white South Africans were assigned the largest, best resourced area of the country to reside in; while only a minimum number of Africans were allowed to remain there, and then only under special permission. Coloureds and Indians were allowed to remain in white South Africa but were assigned separate areas to reside in, under the Group Areas Act of 1960. The majority of Africans were forcibly removed from white South Africa and relocated to their respective 'ethnic homelands', while coloureds and Indians who were residing in areas declared for whites only were forcibly relocated to their own 'group area'. These forced removals resulted in the forced relocation of 1.5 million South Africans between the early 1960s and the early 1980s (Platzsky & Walker, 1985).

Manenberg was one of the last townships to be constructed in Cape Town for the forced diaspora of the Group Areas Act in the mid-1960s. The place resonates with deep ambivalence in popular memory. It is associated with the anger and pain that coloured people experienced during the apartheid era when they were forcibly removed from their old homes in and around the city centre after these residences were rezoned as exclusively white areas in the 1960s. The township is home to more than 80 000 people, who were classified coloured. Most residents still identify as *bruinmense* (brown people) or coloured. However, they also identify themselves as *Manenberg se mense* (Manenberg's people) to distinguish themselves from the wealthier coloureds, as well as Indian and African residents who reside in adjoining areas.

Manenberg is associated with violence and social chaos in the media and in most Cape Town citizens' imaginations. Consequently, most Manenberg residents assert themselves in resistance to the shame and inferiority attached to the place. In contrast to this negative stereotype, residents have constructed an alternative moral world in their efforts to redefine a positive sense of personhood in this marginal space. However, as these residents sought to uphold an alternative moral world, to resist the negative definitions of personhood imposed upon them, they also drew upon the resources offered to them through the old racist system. In doing so, they also reproduced the very same racist system of discrimination. Adult women in their roles as respectable mothers *(moeders)*, and unemployed young men in their roles as tough *ouens* (streetwise men) – who occupied the township for most of the day – became the moral police of personhood and the defenders of their communities as a means to redefine a positive sense of identity and personhood. These people's marginal spatial and structural locations provided them with the cultural and material resources to construct an alternative moral economy that defined the dominant notions of gendered personhood and a set of social values in this context.

Manenberg is also celebrated as the embodiment of its people's survival in the face of apartheid's negation. The older men in the community embody this spirit of survival, and are colloquially referred to as possessing *sterk biene* or 'tough bones' – often enduring long-term unemployment, imprisonment, and religious self-discipline.

The Manenberg residents' opinions of themselves and their township indicate that they do not necessarily accept outside attempts to impose an *a priori* definition of their diverse personhood and agency and the meanings of their township upon them. In spite of, and counter to, the attempts to impose an official construction of a single, homogeneous coloured personhood onto them, these residents create their own notions of gendered personhood in the local context. The different types of person that are found here are multifaceted, gendered in relation to the lifecycle, and determined in and through a local moral economy that is reproduced through three key ways. It is reproduced first, through women's roles as respectable mothers *vis-à-vis* men's roles as sons; second,

through men's roles *vis-à-vis* other men as streetwise men (*ouens*), and finally through men's and adult women's roles as the moral police of younger women. Personhood is mediated by women's economic, reproductive and social roles, and reinforced in the complexity of everyday social interaction within the spaces of the township as well as in relation to state processes.

The processual construction of personhood and the intertwined, complex notions of agency through the dynamic interplay of history with factors such as gender, age and space during social interaction has been illustrated ethnographically by Beidelman (1993), Donham (1999), Kratz (1999, 2000) and Shaw Comaroff (2000). A brief theoretical discussion about personhood and agency is necessary to embed the ethnographic detail about masculine identities that follows.

Personhood, agency and power

I rely primarily upon Giddens's (1984) and Karp's (1995) definitions of agency and power to indicate how these two aspects are linked to and inform the structure of social life through time and space. Giddens defines agency, in its simplest, most eloquent sense, as people's ability to do things. He indicates that, while many have equated agency with intention or motivation, agency or the capability to act can bring about both intended and unintended and often unknowable consequences that are recursive across time and space, thereby generating and reproducing structure (hence Giddens's term structuration).

Similarly, Karp (1995) emphasises the link between agency and structure, as well as the complex nature of agency, as follows:

> [A]gency itself can never simply mean the (free) exercise of choice, or the carrying out of intentions. Choice itself is structured and is … exercised on people and matter. As such, agency implies power. Power and agency mutually implicate one another. (1995, p. 8)

The contingent nature of dependence and autonomy between subordinated and dominant groups implies that both possess agency, albeit of different types, that is their culturally identifiable right to take certain, recognisable actions. The ability of these two groups to influence each other's actions suggests that there is some measure of compliance and agreement as well as struggle between them. Giddens calls this situation 'the dialectic of control' in social systems.

Karp (1995) suggests that our inability to connect agency to structure and power in a more complex, nuanced manner, precludes us from recognising the limitations of agency and the impact of history and societal structure on our lives. Fortes's analytical use of the concept 'personhood' serves as an eloquent analytical means that ties the person and the self to agency, and agency to structure. In addition, it captures the duality of social existence, because it distinguishes 'the person who society expects me to be' (structure)

from the individual '"I" who I know myself to be' that informs the negotiation and the contestation about agency and personhood that arises. Personhood is what connects one to genealogy, to history, and to structural time.

In this study I want to conceive of the possibility of a heterodox social field, in which multiple cultural worldviews co-exist in a hierarchical and unequal, though dependent, dialectical relationship. As I will indicate in my study of Manenberg, this relationship generates binary constructs of gendered personhood that are inextricably linked. Such a social heterodoxy allows for an individual who is identified as a person in one cultural worldview or system of meaning, such as the place Manenberg, to be identified simultaneously as a non-person in a co-existing though opposing cultural worldview, such as existed during apartheid. The individual's embodiment of personhood and non-personhood simultaneously implies that the social construction of power and therefore of agency are relational but exist in opposition. I embed my own study of personhood and agency in Rio Street, Manenberg, within the context of coloured people's racial marginalisation yet relatively favourable social and economic location in the apartheid periphery.

I also use Kratz's (2000) understanding of marginality, to ask how a specific cultural construction of personhood, power and agency emerges in the context of Manenberg, which draws upon the historical, political, economic and spatial marginalisation of coloureds and of Manenberg. I examine how the social construction of persons – as well as the meanings and contestation about their agency that emerge in social interaction here – reveal the specific cultural ideology of power and of agency that exists in this community.

I indicate how the Rio Street community in Manenberg draws on the very physical, historical, social and economic processes of apartheid that marginalised it to create this alternative moral universe of meaning. I explore how these processes as well as the alternative moral economy mould household formation and shape gender and intergenerational relations, so that a gendered and generational ideology of personhood is produced, with certain persons such as adult mothers representing the collective agency of the community and therefore being identified as having the greatest power and agency. The women's gendered roles as mothers articulate with and reverberate with most of men's roles through the lifecycle. Thus, women's roles as mothers pivot on and in turn buttress and uphold men's roles, first as sons, second as *ouens* or streetwise men, third as fathers, and finally as ageing ex-prisoners. As the adult women's and the men's gendered roles articulate, adolescent women are straitjacketed into an ideology of femininity in which motherhood is the only role that is celebrated.

Defining identity from within the local spaces: A view from the periphery within

During my first few visits to Manenberg, I was struck by its physical and social density. I first entered Manenberg via Vygekraal Road, which separates it from the middle-income, predominantly Muslim, Surrey Estate. The road runs past a strip of *koephuise* or ownership houses on the outermost perimeter of Manenberg and becomes little more than a concrete strip. In the densest housing district, the public housing changes to two-storey apartment blocks colloquially named 'die Korre' or the Courts, which stretch out as far as the eye can see. The Courts seem to be a giant, compact Lego-town, laced together into a single unit by a maze of streets and narrow passageways below and laundry lines above. There are few empty spaces here.

The physical density of the Courts is enhanced by the busy pedestrian traffic. The apartment blocks that provide most of the housing here are constructed in two distinctive patterns in the area, as self-contained U-shaped centres, or in a linear fashion running the length of the street. In the first pattern, laundry lines crisscross the space between the two apartment blocks like a giant spiders' web. These laundry lines are never empty – clothes flutter from them like numerous, multicoloured flags overhead. They are symbolic of the women's efforts to keep dirt and dissolution, the classic signifiers of impoverishment and disrepute, at bay. In the second pattern, apartment blocks consisting of four units each sit cheek-by-jowl along the length of the street. In these blocks, two units are situated on the ground floor and two on the first floor. Adjoining apartment blocks are separated by narrow passageways approximately one metre wide, referred to as *gangetjies* or passages. These *gangetjies* lead into the backyards of apartment blocks in the adjacent road. First-floor apartments that are situated at opposite ends of adjoining blocks are separated by a metre-wide landing, accessible by a narrow concrete staircase. This physical density blurs the physical boundaries between public street and private domestic spaces.

Overcrowding is common here. The average household size for a four-roomed dwelling varies between four and eight people. Informal housing suggests that the figure is higher. A vast network of informal housing settlements, called *hokke* or cages, exists in tiny yards to provide extra accommodation for extended family members; the use of these is diversified, with some also used as churches, Islamic madressas, stores, video-game shops or nightclubs. Given this physical and social density, the *Korre* flow almost seamlessly into a single geographic unit.

The Courts' social and physical density is bounded by the broad, spacious four-laned roads on the north-west, north-east and south-east perimeters and the industrially zoned wasteland, *'die Bos'* (the Bush) in the west. For the urban planners, these physical boundaries serve as economic and racial borders that separate Manenberg from other

townships. For the Manenberg residents, in contrast, these boundaries form a *cordon sanitaire* around the area and separate the stranger from the resident and home from the dangerous, unfamiliar places. In this local context, ordinary people create local meanings of racial or ethnic identities, and of multiple local communities that are often in resistance to, but also at times complicit with, those imposed upon them both by officialdom and the political activists.

Ordinary people adapt and reshape these meanings to suit their own ends, through the process of localisation, through the use of the local categories of space and temporality in everyday interaction. In this way, they may give prominence to coloured identities in the local context that deliberately eschew racialisation and push the 'coloured' identity to the margins of inquiry. These social engagements allow for new gendered persons to emerge that are based upon a local moral economy.

The economic capital of local gendered identity

Household incomes in this area are inadequate and people are unable to maintain their households without monetary assistance offered through formal welfare and informal networks of friends and neighbours. At the time of writing, unemployment is estimated to be as high as 60 per cent among the economically active age group. While the official statistics do not draw distinctions between the different areas in Manenberg, poverty is clearly greater in the densely populated Courts. Women who are employed or who are primary security grant recipients are most relied upon to provide the economic means to support the impoverished communities here. Until the recent effects of trade liberalisation on industries in the Western Cape, coloured women living in the townships like Manenberg were more likely to be permanently employed in the local textile economy.

While the Coloured Labour Preference Policy racialised labour preference in the Western Cape, the nature of the local Cape Town economy gendered it. The clothing, textile, leather and canning industries, as well as community and social services, form a major part of the Cape urban economy. Labour is highly feminised in these sectors. Townships such as Manenberg have been a key source of female labour. The feminisation of their workforce placed employed, coloured, working-class women in a powerful economic position as breadwinners of households. While manufacturing relied on female labour, the position of working women was more secure than that of men, who were largely confined to casual labour at the docks or in the construction industry.

Many households also rely heavily upon the state welfare system for relief. Grants for child support are still allocated to women as mothers and not to households. Consequently, mothers are empowered to decide how the monies should be spent. They have to navigate the state's bureaucratic system in order to access these grants. As a result, these women build up a substantial knowledge bank about the state bureaucracy serving the poor.

This knowledge translates into substantial symbolic capital in the local context, which is given enormous social and cultural significance. The symbolic power of the women's knowledge bank is played out at the level of the household and within the Court as cultural constructions of personhood and identity are revealed in this local context.

Making mothers, producing persons: The gendered ideology of respectability and space

I argue that the continued effects of old race-based welfare, housing and labour laws and the unrelenting economic isolation of working people in Manenberg created the material and social interstices in which particular gendered identities such as the *moeder* or mother emerge that are pivotal in, and give meaning to, a local moral economy. City council housing regulations attempted to fix once diverse, fluid and shifting household formations and reify them to suit the nuclear or matriarchal household model. According to these policies, housing is prioritised for single women with dependants and provided to households with a male breadwinner who is married with dependent children. The regulations acknowledge housing needs of men only as heterosexual husbands or as sons of senior women heads of households. Men are moved to the social and economic periphery of the household and of the community.

In this township where total unemployment is high, the majority of men draw upon rather than contribute to these households' meagre socio-economic resources. Men who seek employment constantly find themselves up against the structural constraints, such as their lack of the requisite cultural or educational capital that prevents them from obtaining work. At the same time, there is the cultural expectation that men in their role as breadwinners *should* provide a regular income to support their families and remain responsible for their general material well-being. Men are unable to meet this expectation and create alternative cultural pathways to assert their masculinity. Men are marginalised in the regional economy, in which coloured adult women were considered to be the favoured employees in the feminised textile, canning and leather industries in the Western Cape. The bias towards mothers in their role as welfare recipients, their central role in housing acquisition and their favoured employment statuses provide the structural form within which the moral economy and the central role of women as mothers are elaborated. As these women navigate the labyrinthine bureaucracies that oversee the allocation of housing and welfare, they acquire immense cultural knowledge and social skills that assist them in ensuring their households' survival. This knowledge has become a central feature of women's personhood as *moeders*. In addition, their agency in guaranteeing others' continued existence is the keystone of the local moral economy. Women's practices of child sharing and communal monitoring of children effloresces outward from the domestic household space and elaborates into a key value and practice

of the moral economy, namely communal mothering. In this way, women as mothers share the responsibility of identifying and making persons such as the tough men or the good daughters in this community.

The power of the *ordentlike* (respectable) mothers is contingent upon the demarcation of the community boundary and its surveillance. The roles of the *ordentlike* mothers articulate with men's roles as *ouens* or streetwise men (gangsters) in order to preserve the spaces in which their authority is exercised. Next I examine how men demarcate and maintain these boundaries through their gang activities.

The spatial and temporal capital of masculine identity: Defining local communities

In a township with a population estimated to be more than 80 000 people, who are the local community and how is the community defined? To the outsider, Manenberg appears to be a homogeneous racial township, a single geographic and social unit. Certainly it is discursively described as such in newspaper reports and city planners' maps. However, for the residents of Manenberg, socio-spatial boundaries crisscross the apparently continuous geographic unit, dividing it into multiple small communities. The social and physical density in the Courts enables the social and physical reproduction of people here. Residents use the Courts' physical design as well as the patterns in social density to define the boundaries of the diverse local communities that exist within it. These communities are also further differentiated into diverse social spaces that residents imbue with different social meanings that in turn are activated to define the diverse persons who reside here. Men's role as *ouens* is central to the local definition of community and of greater importance than the geopolitical boundaries imposed by the city planners.

In Manenberg, graffiti is scrawled on almost every perimeter wall, building and even road signs. The graffiti I had seen on the walls in the Courts now took on new meaning. For the uninitiated outsider, the arbitrary script – along with the cryptic yet ubiquitous dollar sign ($) – seems at its most benign to be nothing more than mindless, meaningless vandalism in a township ghetto. The graffiti's message, though recognised by all in Manenberg, is commonly understood to hold significance for a select few only, namely the all-male members of the individual gang and its rivals. This peculiar discourse actively confers meaning on place and person. Not only does it mark off the boundaries of the local community, it confers both gender and identity upon a particular sector of the community, namely the young men residing within or outside its borders. This process of conferring identity and gender upon individuals, as well as maintaining the boundaries of local communities, was especially pronounced during gang warfare.

Men's gang affiliations are key markers of local communities. In this local definition, the Hard Livings and the Americans controlled the largest areas. The remaining area was divided between the smaller gangs, namely the Young Dixie Boys, Clever Kids, Naughty

Boys, the Junky Funky Kids, Respectable Peacefuls, Wonder Kids, School Boys, Scorpions and Yuru Cats. Young men who reside within the boundaries of each gang turf would be identified as members of the local gang by rival gangs on the outside, even if they did not participate in gang activities. Young men living within each community marked its boundaries with the peculiar graffiti associated with their gang. The letters HL$ demarcated the Hard Livings' territory, while YDB$ stood for Young Dixie Boys. WK$ referred to the Wonder Kids, SB$ for the SchoolBoys, JFK$ for Junky Funky Kids, RPF$ for Respectable Peacefuls, SB$ for SchoolBoys, CT$ for the Cape Town Scorpions and YC$ for Yuru Cats. By coincidence, I had befriended the young residents in Rio Street, the single street controlled by the Young Dixie Boys (YDB$).

Rio Street was the single street controlled by the Young Dixie Boys (YDB$). The male members of these gangs take on the responsibility of safeguarding the local residents and defending the community's reputation. These men's identities as gang members are central to the recognition and activation of local community boundaries. Through young men's practices as gang members they affirm their own right to be identified as individual men by other men. At the same time, their actions are reinterpreted through the modes and practices of respectability. In this they sustain the older, adult women's central roles as *moeders* while they still uphold an alternative ideology of masculinity that asserts or displays their claim to manhood among their male cohorts. I show how, through their gang practices, young men define the boundaries of the local, moral context in which the *ordentlike moeders* enjoy supreme recognition of their social power.

In their roles as *ouens*, men embody the limits of the local moral and geographical community. They establish the limits of the geographical community, policing and maintaining them through their violent acts beyond the limits of the geographical and moral community. Local boundaries are particularly meaningful for men who live beyond these limits, and they become impermeable during gang conflict. These are particular types of men, namely those who had been made into *'n ou* (a streetwise man), a member of the brotherhood (*bras* or *broers* in the gang) and who carry the indelible mark of their masculine territorial and communal allegiance, the *tjappie* or the tattoo. In contrast, only the adult *moeders*, the aged and the very young are regularly allowed access to any community. The reasons why these various groups are allowed to cross local boundaries vary in accordance with the social power they wield in and across these communities. The very young are generally perceived to be socially invisible, while the elderly, especially elderly women, are considered venerable persons who are accorded the highest level of respect in all communities in Manenberg. While the elderly men embody the ability to prevail over a lifetime of denial and struggle, the *moeders* wield the power to identify persons both within and across communities. In contrast, young single women are not allowed passage across community boundaries because their roles and statuses are inextricably tied up with the personhood of young men as fathers and that of women as *moeders*.

Young women enable men's passage to the one masculine personhood, namely fatherhood, that allows men to publicly display emotional warmth and trust. In addition, young women's mobility across social boundaries poses a challenge to the ideology of *ordentlikheid*, because it signals that the mothers cannot constrain their younger counterparts' movements. The young men collaborate with and affirm the older *moeders*' power and the legitimacy of *ordentlikheid* by actively constraining these young women's mobility across local boundaries. Some of these dynamics can be seen in the following extended description of events that occurred in Rio Street in 1998.

I became acquainted with, and gained knowledge of, gang lore and practice as I continued to work in Rio Street. In early 1998, I had befriended 18-year-old Enver and his adolescent friends. They appeared to be just another group of young men from impoverished homes, who were at a loose end, undecided about whether they should return to school or get on with the endless search for jobs. Then, during February 1998, a gang war erupted between the Hard Livings (HL$) gang and the Clever Kids gang (CK$) over turf. Three teenaged members of the CK$ were subsequently murdered.

In the days that followed the killings, two smaller gangs, the Young Dixie Boys (YDB$) and the Wonder Kids (WK$) had become embroiled in the conflict, each siding with a primary antagonist. The YDB$ had formed an alliance with the CK$ and so were also in opposition to the HL$ and their allies the WK$. Tensions rose in Rio Street during this time and the young men spoke fearfully of crossing WK$ or HL$ turf.

During the time of the conflict, Enver, a resident of Rio street, was especially anxious about crossing WK$ territory where he would be at risk of being beaten or shot by the gang's members. He relied heavily upon the older women's goodwill for food and shelter. Most Rio Street residents identified Enver as a marginal member of the Rio Street community. When I first asked Vonna about him, she identified him as *'n weeskind*, an orphan, but proceeded to add: *'Hy't soe voor my ma-hulle opgegroei. Sy ma is van 'n borskwaal oorlede, toe't Aan Mary't ve hom ingevat.'* (My mother [Aunty Gwen] and others watched him grow up. His mother died of a chest problem [the local term for tuberculosis]. Then Aunty Mary took him in.) Everyone knew Enver and his mother, a single parent, from the day she moved into the community, 25 years ago. He was only 12 years old when she died and Aunty Mary decided to become his foster mother. She obtained a foster parent grant from the state to assist her in providing for him until he reached the age of 18 years. After that he would be legally identified as an adult and regarded as able to earn an independent income. Within the Rio Street community, however, what mattered was that he was acknowledged as the foster son of a *moeder*, Aunty Mary, and that he was firmly anchored within a respectable household. These details defined Enver as a person in Rio Street.

After his 18th birthday, when Aunty Mary could no longer provide for him, his status in the community and his claim to the women's support had decreased significantly, until other *moeders* like Aunty Gwen and Aunty Frances stepped into the breach.

On his daily round of errands, Enver usually walked to the shopping centre, which was situated about a kilometre away from Rio Street. His route took him across two gang turfs, namely the WK$ and CK$ territories. During the gang conflict, he would take me aside, out of earshot of the other youths, and harangue me to run the errands in my car or to drive him to the mall. At this point in our relationship, I did not know that Enver was a member of the YDB$ and on most days I would accede to his requests. However, on one occasion I curtly asked him why he couldn't walk the route himself. He protested that the WK$ would attack him then, saying *'Ma as ek met Elaine is, sal hulle niks maak 'ie.'* [3] (But if I'm with Elaine, they [referring to members of the opposing gangs] won't touch me.)

'Waarom nie?' (Why not?), I asked.

'Want Elaine is 'n vroumens. Hulle los die vroumense allien. En ons ry' (Because Elaine is a woman and they usually leave the women alone. And, besides, we're driving), he replied.

'Ma hoe gat hulle wiet djy's 'n Dixie?' (How would they know that you are a member of the Dixies?), I persisted.

'Want ek dra die tjappie. Hulle gaan ve my laat uittrek, dan sien hulle mos my tjappie' (Because I wear the tattoo. They'll force me to undress, and then they'll see my tattoo), he shot back.

'Wa's 'it? Wys ve my' (Where is it? Show it to me), I said.

He proceeded to unbutton his shirt and revealed a tattoo on his shoulder blade, consisting of two bells ringing, and the letters YDB$ below.

I struggled to reconcile the popular image of the terrifying gangster with the harmless, self-effacing figure that Enver cut in the Rio Street context. The adult women like Vonna and Aunty Gwen only spoke of him in sympathetic tones. None of the women had ever referred to the active presence of the YDB$ in Rio Street, or to the fact that some of the young adult men whom I had befriended were members of the gang. Now, in the context of a violent gang conflict, their membership of the local gang became clear. Men like Enver could not operate across the boundaries that marked the WK$ or the HL$ turf, unless the man was accompanied by an adult woman. It was as though invisible borders had been drawn between Rio Street and Grande Walk and had become impermeable and threatening to men like Enver. He, in turn was identified as a gangster, a threatening presence in the communities associated with the WK$ and the HL$. For the most part, the boundaries between these communities were only considered to be marginally significant during peaceful periods and he was able to navigate his way safely across these areas, except for the occasional hand sign from a member of another gang, to indicate turf possession. During the gang warfare that erupted in February 1998, however, these boundaries became highly meaningful and his identity as a male resident in YDB$ territory and therefore as a gang member was primary. His errand run had become dangerous if he attempted to traverse it on his own. However, when he was accompanied by an adult woman, his personhood as a gang member was eclipsed by her status as a *moeder*

– someone who commanded respect even from those who resided beyond the cultural and geographic boundaries of her community.

Enver had had his YDB$ tattoo done on a part of his body that was usually concealed by his clothes. Ordinarily, in the context of the Rio Street community, the tattoo remained hidden. It was only revealed in the context of the other members and reflected Enver's personhood as a member of the local group of *ouens*, or streetwise men. He obtained some respect from his peers and from other men for enduring the painful rite of passage, in which he was made an *ou* – someone who could endure physical hardship, and who would protect his local community by inflicting injury on gangsters who threatened its safety. The agency of the *ouens* – namely their ability to inflict physical injury on others, as well as their participation in criminal activities, even murder, outside their communities – contradicted the *moeders*' claims as life giving, morally upright agents, who in turn endorsed their household members' claims to respectability. The *ouens*' agency therefore could not openly be acknowledged within the boundaries of the community, because it not only threatened the central values of moral and material nurturance, but also contradicted the *moeders*' endorsement of these men as *goeie seuns* or good sons. Furthermore, open admission of these men's criminal activities would reveal the contradictory, immoral base on which rested the *moeders*' claims to respectability. Such acknowledgement would indicate that the *moeders'* agency and personhood was dependent upon the *ouens*' degenerate activities, and that these women were unable to reproduce men who were morally upright. Most *moeders* feigned ignorance about Enver's and the other local young men's membership in the gang. However, on occasion, when pushed, they reluctantly admitted to knowing about the YDB$, claiming that they were harmless. Aunty Gwen only spoke dismissively of the *'jongens wat stout is'* (the streetwise men who are mischievous).

The adolescent women, in contrast, feared the YDB$, and spoke admiringly, though fearfully, of the members for stoically enduring the gangs' rite of passage into manhood, which is marked by physical brutality. Enver had demonstrated that he had acquired the necessary toughness, the quintessential quality of manhood, and that he could now be regarded as an *ou*. However, in the geographic and social context of Grande Walk, the territory of the WK$, the tattoo marked him as a *skollie* (gangster or a thug), a stranger, and a threat to the local residents. Through the act of exposing his tattoo in the context of Grande Walk, antagonists would reveal his body as belonging to an antagonistic group of men, as one out of place, the body of a stranger. Enver had looked to me, an adult woman like others in the Rio Street, to mediate his presence and to attest to his identity as a person in the context of another community. The tattoo that Enver had acquired during his rite of passage into manhood had also become the sign that marked him as a threat to men in other communities. The significance of Enver's tattoo, as the sign of local social and geographical boundaries, was operationalised by the context in which it was exposed.

Gang warfare such as that which occurred between the WK$ and the HL$ precipitates a crisis which brings the Janus-faced contradictory quality of young men's personhood as *ouens* and as *goeie seuns* into sharp relief. During such periods, men like Enver are made aware of the different contexts, namely the moral community and the enemy gang turf, in which the different aspects of their masculine personhood are operationalised, and also of the importance of policing the boundaries between these two contexts. Enver's status as an orphan meant that his claim to the *moeders*' protection and their willingness to assert his identity as a good son was precarious. He could not risk being regarded as a *skollie* or a ruffian – an identity, that I show later on, is associated with individualistic, selfish actions that endanger the community. As Enver attempted to negotiate his way across the context of the moral community and the enemy gang turf, he implicitly recognised the interaction of the diverse persons, namely the young women, the *moeders*, and the enemy gangsters within these contexts, and the implications these held for his own personhood.

In the Rio Street community, like other local communities in Manenberg, young adult men are not recognised as men merely through the natural process of physical maturation. They have to be made into a particular type of man, the *ou*, the man who polices the boundaries of the local social and moral community. The rite of passage whereby they are made into *ouens* is widely accepted as being secret, even though local residents who are pressed for information reluctantly admit that they know about the details of this rite of passage. In the next section I indicate that gang practices are initiated in the rite of passage into manhood for young men who, like Enver, find themselves in a liminal state, between the local markers of childhood and adulthood.

According to one informant who was a newly initiated gang member, gangs conduct their initiation ceremonies at night in deserted spaces such as sports fields or empty plots of land on the periphery of the area. The existing members would be armed with guns, leather belts, wooden clubs and planks. They would stand in two parallel lines, facing each other. The leader would then instruct the initiate to run through the gauntlet of gang members, who beat him with their assortment of weapons. If the initiate was able to withstand the beating to the end of the line without flinching or crying out, the gang would agree that he had ably demonstrated that he had the necessary *'sterk biene'* or tough bones to join them. The initiate's display of toughness was necessary because he had to be trusted to defend his fellow gang members during gang warfare. After the beating, the gang leader tattooed the gang's insignia onto his body, using a needle and ink made from hot, melted rubber. Again the initiate was expected to endure the tattooing process without flinching.

The making of men in the township through gangs' rites of passage, like rites of passage elsewhere, is a process that marks the start of the journey into the wider world of gendered adulthood. As in other rites of passage, men are encouraged to take on the

values and responsibilities that signify manhood within their communities. As boys are made into men, their relationship to the *moeders* takes on a different quality. They are expected to show less obvious emotional reliance or dependence on their own and the other *moeders*. In turn, they are expected to openly display their increased preference for and emotional reliance on their male cohort for affirmation. Through this process the young men begin to struggle for and insist upon being acknowledged as the *moeders*' allies in reproducing the community, as they demarcate and police its geographic boundaries. This struggle is manifest in women's attempts to erase the gangs' *tjappies* from their sons' bodies as well as in their attempts to draw in the state authorities to assist them in asserting their authority over their sons. However, in the final analysis, the *moeders* protect and defend their sons' reputations as *goeie seuns* or good sons, just as sons affirm and acknowledge the *moeders*' central nurturing roles in the moral community. In Manenberg, toughness and display of loyalty to local men and the *moeders* first, and then to other members of the local community, are among the quintessential values of masculinity.

Individuals who want to be recognised as men are expected to display to the audience of local men their ability to withstand emotional and physical privation that will mark their lives. More than that, they have to display their potential loyalty to the gang, measured in their ability to withstand the severe beating and the painful tattooing. This initial display of endurance demonstrates the young man's enormous courage and the future potential to defend his brother's life even under the most difficult circumstances. The process of making a gangster reflects not only a rite of passage into manhood but also signifies these men's embodiment of their identities as strangers within other local communities, as well as their marginal gendered, socio-economic and colour status in the society beyond Manenberg.

Men's identification as persons within the community is defined in opposition to the men who give precedence to their own needs and desires, and in so doing challenge the relational and hierarchical aspects of personhood and agency in Rio Street. Men who are defined as *skollies* are considered to be the strangers who exist outside its boundaries and who have no ties to the adult women within the local community. In the contemporary use of the term, *skollie* refers to a ruffian who feeds off the resources of the community, threatening its moral integrity without providing protection for its members. Such men are unlike the *ouens* who have earned the right to openly display their pride because they protect and police the geographic boundaries of the community. *Skollies* cannot earn the respect of other men or women and are considered to be social strangers who threaten local men's ties to the women. They drain precious moral and material resources and bring shame to their own mothers and to their households and cannot be acknowledged as *goeie seuns*, or good sons.

While men are identified as persons, and affirmed by and through their connectedness to the *ordentlike moeders*, they are identified as strangers by men located within another geographic and moral community.

During gang warfare, gangsters could only cross local boundaries if they were accompanied by a *moeder*. These women's presence as *moeders* affirms the young men's identities as *goeie seuns* in a situation where they might otherwise be identified as *skollies*. The presence of the adult woman attests to his identity as a person, someone of moral worth, who does not present a threat to the local residents. The adult women's presence supersedes the significance of the tattoo, in the context of another community.

Local residents such as the *moeders* must possess tacit knowledge about the gangs' secret activities, aesthetics and practices – through which they police local boundaries – in order to assess when to accompany men across geographic boundaries. However this information remains concealed or secret, and is only shared among the *moeders* and the older men. The gang's activities are carried out in the context of the local community and with the knowledge of the local residents, especially the older *moeders*. These women tacitly refuse to condemn the gangs' activities by publicly claiming that *goeie seuns* or good sons don't engage in them and publicly claiming to be ignorant of these actions. In this manner they render these practices invisible, while simultaneously legitimating them as they affirm the men as *goeie seuns*. Within the boundaries of Rio Street, gangsters become the *ouens*, the men who are affirmed as persons. At the same time they could also lapse into the *skollie* identity. In Rio Street, as in other local communities, *ouens* are distinguished from *skollies* through their ability to act in the interest of the community and its residents. *Skollies*, in contrast, act only in their own self-interest. They publicly reveal the nature of the gang's activities and present a potential risk to the long-term interests and safety of the local residents.

The local notions of masculinity begin with, are anchored in, and are marked by, men's actions as *ouens* or streetwise men. They personify and define the socio-spatial boundaries that frame the local community. While the ideology of *ordentlikheid*, embodied through the actions of women as *moeders*, operates across all local communities in Manenberg, it is only from within the confines of the specific local community, such as Rio Street, in which young men's individual histories, and their links to specific adult women are known publicly, that they can freely go about their daily rounds, be recognised as, and perform their responsibilities as individual men. For this reason, the young men have to demarcate and safeguard the boundaries of the local community in which they are recognised as persons. At the same time, they also have to ensure that the next generation of potential *moeders* remains anchored in the local community. The older *moeders* are recognised as persons across the local boundaries and are able to move fearlessly across the divides between the local communities, extending their protection to the men accompanying them. In contrast to the *moeders*, men perceive single young

women's movements across the boundaries of the local community as a threat to the ongoing recognition of their personhood. These women may form relationships with young men from outside the community, thereby threatening the young men's progression to, or their tenuous hold on, the next stage of manhood, namely fatherhood. The young, single women's presence within any local community personifies its actual or potential social and cultural capital and ensures young men's progress to the next stage of personhood in the lifecycle, fatherhood. Young men can form relationships with and marry young women from other communities. However, their own histories would be connected to *moeders* elsewhere, and their willingness to protect and police the geographic boundaries of the community they have married into would remain suspect.

Men's dependence on these women differs across the generations. The young adult men or older adolescents who have dropped out of school and who are economically marginal still have to establish their reputation as men in the community. They are most dependent upon the *moeders* to assert their personhood as *goeie seuns* or good sons. Later, after young men have established their reputations as *ouens*, and as they mature through the lifecycle, they acquire other identities as fathers, toughened ex-prisoners or, less frequently, permanently employed breadwinners and committed members of the Christian or Muslim faiths. As these men mature and acquire these diverse identities, they rely less upon the *moeders* to assert their identities as persons in the local context. Within this set of possible, local masculine identities, fatherhood is identified as the primary identity through which men begin to display their personhood independently of adult women, and through which they are able to demonstrate their ability to nurture and sustain others emotionally and materially. However, their ability to sustain partners and children falls short of the expectation that young women have of them as husbands and fathers, namely to provide steady financial support for their families. Their identities as fathers are inherently fraught with, and fractured across the fault lines of their sporadic access to material resources.

Consequently, while older women as *moeders* can and do assert men's personhood, particularly during early adulthood, men are unable to fulfil one of the young adult women's most cherished desires and a key feature of their own respectability, namely a monogamous relationship and a stable, nuclear family. Even as the older *moeders* and the young men form an alliance, young adult men's inability to fulfil young women's expectations of a loyal monogamous relationship generates tension between the two genders within the same generation. Adult women enjoy the benefits of local boundary demarcation and the affirmation of their status as *ordentlike moeders* at a price to the younger women. Young men assert control over the young women's local community membership, first through physical violence, then through fatherhood. In short, they attempt to ensure that these young women remain permanently within the local community through the latent threat of violence and then through childbirth, embedding

them further in the dense web of kin relations in the local context. The young men's relationships with young women define an alternative pathway to masculine personhood, namely fatherhood.

The young men's transformation into fatherhood further highlights the modes of collaboration that exist between the *moeders* and the young men. The ideology of *ordentlikheid* and the *moeders*' policing practices ensure that young women learn about, and practise the appropriate behaviour of femininity. One of the key means that the *moeders* use to control and constrain the younger women's mobility is by vilifying those who dare to move outside the boundaries of the local community as sluts or *sleg*. Young men's alternative ideology and practices of masculinity not only uphold the power of the *moeders* within the local community, as the arbiters of persons, but also reinforce the young women's subjection and adherence to the norms of *ordentlikheid*. Young men's punitive actions against young women are meant to constrain their physical movements across local boundaries and ensure that they remain within the community, so that they are unable to form relationships with men beyond its borders. The young men's physical violence against the young women serves to display their emotional toughness to their male peers as well as their ability to exert their power over their partners. The physical beatings negatively re-inscribe the feminine behaviours, mobility and practices expected of young women, such as confinement to the domestic space, that are also prescribed by the ideology of *ordentlikheid*. In addition, once a young woman accepts her engagement to a young man, she is usually expected to 'fall pregnant' to him at some point in the relationship. Usually, after the young man has acknowledged responsibility for her pregnancy to her parents, the young woman generally provides domestic services for the young man. He, however, may not be able to fulfil his young partner's primary expectations of fatherhood, namely financial and material support for herself and their children. In these situations, the young man's mother accepts financial responsibility for the upkeep of the child. The link between the *moeders* and the young men, in their status as sons, prevails and asserts the latter's personhood, because of the centrality of the *moeders*' roles in the ideology of *ordentlikheid*. These young men are affirmed as persons, even in the face of their failure to fulfil their material responsibilities as spouses and fathers, because they are the offspring of *ordentlike moeders*, and have affirmed their mother-in-law's respectability, through the act of *ga't sê* or accepting responsibility for the girl's pregnancy.

After the young men have established their reputations as *ouens*, fatherhood becomes the primary signifier of masculinity. Many men attempt to fulfil their roles as the material providers for their families through criminal means such as theft. As I have argued above, this path leads mostly into the cycle of imprisonment and further toughening up through the prison gang system. However, for a few men, religious institutions and practices provide another means to acquire tough masculinity. While these religious practices

and beliefs present the men with alternatives to the violent practices associated with the gangs, they enshrine an alternative toughness as the quintessential quality of masculinity, while still upholding the ideology and practices of *ordentlikheid*. Often, older, pious men initiate young men into and mentor them through the necessary religious teachings and practices, supporting and encouraging them through this alternative means to acquire the character of toughness. For these men, a religious lifestyle infuses the stringent self-discipline they exercise over themselves and their families with spiritual meaning. They are presented with many opportunities to participate in organised burglaries, drug pushing or the many other illegal means to make a living in the informal economy when formal work is scarce. They display an admirable ability to withstand these tempting offers, in the face of the hunger and general impoverishment that threaten their households. Often, they also have to stand by and watch as some *moeders* boast about their sons, the *ouens*, who have obtained money or material resources by some mysterious means to provide for their households. In addition, they attempt to guide many youth through the difficulties and the trials of a religious life, only to watch their efforts shattered as young men are recruited into the local gangs.

These pious men attempt to follow an alternative cultural process to masculine respectability, which is presented through religious faith and the associated institutions. Like the practices associated with the gangs and the ex-prisoners, this process is also shot through with, and sustains, toughness as the central value of masculinity. However, toughness here is demonstrated through the men's exercise of spiritual, moral and emotional self-discipline, as they fight off the temptation to earn income through illegal means.

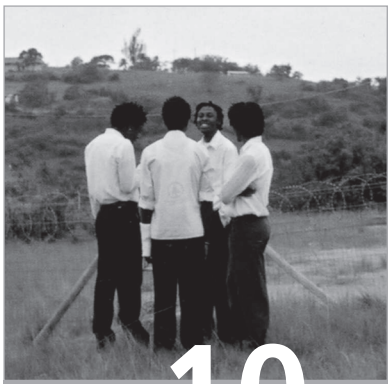
Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to show how the cultural construction of gendered personhood, and, in particular, masculine personhood, in the context of a peripheral urban space, namely Manenberg township on the Cape Flats, is both structured by and reverberates off the racial geography as well as the political economy of the Western Cape during the apartheid era. However, the cultural meanings of masculine personhood that emerge from the densely occupied spaces of the township are not over-determined by the socio-economic and political landscape. Instead I have argued that masculine personhood, especially of the *ou* or the gangster, is anchored in and articulated with the local, cultural meanings of motherhood as these emerge from the women's engagement with their structurally gendered positions within the socio-economic and racial-political economy of the Western Cape. While the racial, economic and political cartographies of apartheid Western Cape locate coloured men on the social periphery, the women actively construct a culturally specific personhood of motherhood that resonates powerfully

within the local socio-spatial notions of community. Men, in their roles as streetwise men or *ouens*, mark these socio-spatial boundaries within which the women claim their agency as respectable mothers or *ordentlike moeders*. In this way, men are recognised as respected persons, legitimate members of the local community. Within the community, these men's simultaneous roles as fathers also powerfully inscribe their masculine personhood into the cultural landscape. However, with the onset of formal democracy and the continuing changes in the racialised socio-economic landscape, the relationship between men and women in this context is shifting, and newer constructions of masculine personhood are emerging.

Endnotes

1. The category coloured which was designated for those individuals who could not be defined as either white, Indian or African, was further divided into sub-categories, such as 'Other coloured', 'Cape coloured'; 'Griqua' etc. These finer racial distinctions never had any real practical purpose. The most important distinctions that were (and still are) recognised were the divisions between the coloureds and the other racial categories.
2. The racial category African was also further subdivided into ethnic groups such as 'Xhosa'; 'Zulu'; 'Sotho'; 'Venda'; etc. In this case these finer distinctions were used to argue that there was no African majority in South Africa, but a number of ethnic groups. Individuals were assigned to an ethnic group, rather than to the category 'African'. Each ethnic group was assigned a 'homeland' where its members could theoretically exercise their citizenship rights.
3. The use of the third person to denote respect to an adult during conversation is common practice in the township.



CHAPTER 10

Masculinities in the era of HIV/Aids: the perspectives of rural male Zulu youth

Reshma Sathiparsad

Introduction

While HIV and Aids have been identified as a health issue in most countries, the prevalence of infection varies widely both between and within countries according to the differing risk factors. The most recent realisation is that South Africa's Aids epidemic, one of the highest in the world, shows no evidence of a decline with between five and six million South Africans reported to be HIV positive (UNAIDS, 2006). The physical, social and economic effects of the disease impact on relationships, education, employment, and family life. Of particular concern is the increasing incidence of HIV and Aids among young people. South African research indicates that, while adolescents have knowledge about sexually transmitted infections including HIV and Aids, this knowledge does not necessarily translate into safe sexual behaviour. KwaZulu-Natal has the highest prevalence of HIV infection (14.1 per cent of youth aged 15 to 24) and the lowest awareness of and exposure to HIV prevention strategies (RHRU, 2004).

Gender inequalities are a major driving force behind the spread of HIV, in that physical violence, the threat of violence and the fear of abandonment prevent women from negotiating condom usage or leaving relationships that are physically unsafe (RHRU, 2004). Dunkle, Jewkes, Brown, Gray et al. (2004) and Campbell (2003) observed that women with violent or controlling male partners are at increased risk for HIV infection, thus highlighting the intersection between masculinity, gender violence and HIV and Aids, an observation confirmed by researchers such as Abdool-Karim (2005), Mitchell (2005), Campbell (2003) and Bujra (2002). In various South African contexts, researchers have pointed to the way in which young women's attempts to discuss condoms or Aids before a sexual encounter has led to rape or violence (Campbell, 2003). What is clear is that widely accepted concepts of masculinity underpin the behaviour of men across the globe.

Gender inequality must also be seen against the fact that globally, and more specifically in Africa, women living with and at high risk of HIV infection have borne the brunt of persistent and deepening forms of economic and social inequality. For Zierler and Krieger (1997) and Farmer (1999), women's relations with power in personal life (as with sexual partners) and public life (as with opportunities for earning a living wage) shape the distribution of HIV in women. They argue that transmission and infection are inextricably bound to social and economic relations of race, socio-economic position, gender and sexuality. It is these relations that cause particular women to be more at risk of HIV infection (Farmer, 1999; Zierler & Krieger, 1997).

Although women at high risk of HIV infection are aware that condoms can prevent transmission, they are unable to insist on their use because of their economic dependence on men which robs them of the choice of whether or not they have sex or whether a condom is used (Campbell, 2003; Selikow, Zulu & Cedras, 2002; Zierler & Krieger, 1997). Many women express feelings of powerlessness, low self-esteem, a lack of a 'voice' and an inability to effect risk reduction decisions or behaviours with their partners. Disempowered rural women often run the risk of being infected by husbands returning from the city who refuse to wear condoms (Ramphele, 2002). These conditions led Morrell, Moletsane, Abdool, Epstein & Unterhalter (2002) to conclude that the risk of HIV infection among women is increased because men set the terms of intimacy. Similarly, Leach, Fiscian, Kadzamira, Lemani & Machakanja (2003) and Koenig, Lutalo, Zhao et al. (2004) concur that defining features such as poverty, racism, sexism and powerlessness are closely linked to HIV transmission and Aids, and that HIV and direct violence against women are intimately linked. For this reason, authors such as Pattman (2005) and Morrell et al. (2002) suggest that, in order to address HIV transmission, the very construction of masculinity must be questioned and challenged.

>> A cartoon developed as part of an intervention programme

In this chapter, I report on research that explores how a sample of rural male Zulu youth views sexual relationships with women. In doing so, I assess the relative importance of masculinities in shaping these perspectives, and I examine the linkages between sexuality, masculinities and HIV/Aids. Based on the findings, I outline the significance of the research for HIV prevention. The research forms part of a broader study on gender-based violence and masculinity which has been published thus far in Sathiparsad (2005) and Sathiparsad and Taylor (2006).

The research was guided by the perspective that gender is socially constructed, based on a growing body of evidence suggesting that masculinity and femininity are

constructed differently according to the social conditions in which people are situated, as opposed to being biologically determined. Authors such as Connell (2002), Morrell (2006), Harris (1995) and Vance (1995) agree that masculinity is not inherited but constructed in the context of socio-economic position, race and other factors. These writers assert that biological determinism – attributing roles and tasks to men and women on the basis of some notion of natural suitability – is an attempt to eternalise gender inequality and must be confronted. The social constructionist approach to gender development is appropriate in view of Thomson's (2002) claim that one way to address gender inequalities is to explore gender relations and the cultural construction of masculinities. Phrases such as 'the pressure of masculinity' and the 'fragility of masculine identity' are often proposed to explain violence and sexual risk-taking behaviour by males (2002, p. 166). Being aware of the complexity of masculinities, I have sought to develop some understanding of the attitudes and behaviour of young men with regard to heterosexual relationships, with particular reference to sexual behaviour as it relates to HIV and Aids.

Research method

The geographical context

A descriptive study was conducted in Ugu District, one of eleven districts of a rural area in southern KwaZulu-Natal, which, although it has a large population (9.4 million) is one of the poorest of South Africa's provinces, with over 80 per cent of the population being isiZulu (Statistics South Africa, 2003). The Ugu District was selected as being similar to other disadvantaged areas in the province that lack basic services such as electricity, water and access to clinics. Churches and small shops selling food dot the landscape, but Ugu offers few services other than schools and a limited number of clinics. Schools are under-resourced and poorly equipped. In such communities, many adults are illiterate and unemployment rates are high. The area has no recreational facilities for young people and the only sporting facilities are soccer grounds. When not at school, males spend their time either talking in groups around the local shops, meeting girlfriends, or visiting the shebeens (drinking houses).

From this study into rural communities in South Africa, the Nelson Mandela Foundation (2005) found that people in areas such as these often expressed feelings of isolation, vulnerability, lack of opportunity, a sense of community and a commitment to traditional values. The foundation's rural education survey in the KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Limpopo Provinces revealed that, in the 195 households surveyed, 65 per cent of the children interviewed reported that no one in the household was sufficiently educated to assist them with homework.

The research process

The research was conducted at three secondary schools in the Ugu District. The study sample was made up of male learners who participated in three focus group discussions held on consecutive weeks at each of the three schools. Ten grade 11 learners were randomly selected from each school's class lists and invited to participate in the study. In total, 30 male learners participated in the focus groups. The learners, all isiZulu first-language speakers, were aged between 16 and 24. Data were gathered using a focus group questioning route. Each focus group discussion lasted approximately 80 minutes.

To obtain more detailed, in-depth information and experiences of the participants from each of the discussion groups, learners were invited to volunteer to participate in individual in-depth interviews. Twelve learners were interviewed, with each interview lasting between 75 and 90 minutes. An open-ended interview schedule guided the interviews. The focus group discussions and the individual interviews explored learners' perceptions about HIV/Aids (knowledge about the disease, transmission, prevention of HIV, decision making about sex and gender issues) and was developed in English and translated into isiZulu. The group discussions and the individual interviews were conducted by an experienced isiZulu research assistant in his mid-twenties who was able to relate to and communicate well with the learners. In addition, an observer was appointed to observe all the group sessions. With the permission of the learners, all the focus group discussions and the individual interviews were audio-taped.

The transcripts were translated and transcribed by the research assistant and the data were analysed manually by the researcher. The themes from the interviews were identified and explored, and the underlying discourses were analysed. Using the social constructionist framework, I attempted to explore the learners' perspectives, explanations and beliefs, as well as the consequences of their behaviours for themselves and for those with whom they interact.

Main findings of the research

This section reports on and discusses the discourses relating to HIV/Aids among the sample of rural male youth against a background of gender inequality and gender discrimination. I highlight the role of conventional masculinity in the construction of these responses. More importantly, this is followed by a presentation of some counter responses which challenge hegemonic constructions of masculinity and related behaviour which, although a minority response, points to the multiplicity of identities and possibilities for shifting masculinities. For purposes of anonymity, participants who were interviewed individually are referred to by pseudonyms when reporting their responses during interviews. Participant responses during the focus groups are differentiated using letters of the alphabet. Direct quotes by the participants appear in italics.

'Loose girls spread the disease'

Some of the intersections between gender violence, sexuality and HIV/Aids that emerged from this study echo previous research by, for example, Foreman (1999), Zierler & Krieger, (1997), Campbell (2003) and Mitchell (2005). The discourses relating to HIV/Aids were clearly gendered. At all three schools, the spread of HIV/Aids was attributed to women's infidelity. At one school, for example, the point was made in the focus groups that boys having multiple partners are at risk because girls are not honest about their HIV status. A common response among participants was that girls had to be controlled because '*loose girls spread the disease*'.

Similar responses arose in the interviews where major discourses of disease, stigmatisation and blame were identified. Women's infidelity and *'indiscipline*' in the form of *'loose sexual behaviour*' were suggested as major contributors to the spread of HIV. A recurring theme in the interviews is well reflected in one participant's contention that *'It would be a person of skirt that would bring the virus*'. This suggests an active female sexuality in comparison with the stereotypical representation of females as passive, submissive and asexual. The majority of the participants made some reference to their fear of the diseases that girls carried. Several explained how men *'end up getting the disease*', implying that they had no active role in acquiring it. The choice of language in these quotes may be unconscious, but nevertheless allows the speakers to distance themselves from responsibility for their actions.

These responses corroborate Leclerc-Madlala's (2001) observation that, among isiZulu-speaking people in KwaZulu-Natal, dominant narratives of blame are framed within a common discourse on female sexuality. The female reproductive biology is associated with both positive and negative characteristics. On the one hand, the female body is the acknowledged site of male sexual pleasure, while, on the other hand, the bodies of sexually active women conjure up notions of danger, disease and the ability to weaken men and to bring all sorts of danger to society. The Zulu have long-established notions of pollution associated with sexually active women and their bodies. Sexual intercourse is also considered to be polluting to a milder degree because of seminal emissions. A woman's 'dirty' reproductive anatomy and related secretions such as menstrual blood and vaginal discharges are often viewed as reservoirs of HIV 'germs' (Leclerc-Madlala, 2001). Ngubane (1977) explains that, in Zulu, the word used to denote illness, *isifo,* also applies to various forms of misfortune and to a state of vulnerability to misfortune and disease.

The migrant labour system and the spread of HIV

In the focus group discussions some reference was made to the migrant labour system, whereby men and women (husbands and wives) work away from home. The majority

of the group saw this as contributing to the spread of HIV via women's infidelity. One participant explained:

> Aii, really, it is very important that a girl be faithful. You see those women that are married, you find that the husbands are working far and they come back on Friday. It is important that she be faithful. It should not be that the father behaves himself far away and when he comes back, he gets a disease. When he goes back to work, he then suffers from diarrhoea and he really gets HIV/Aids.

This reasoning is contrary to common understanding and shifts much of the responsibility for the spread of HIV and Aids to women. The discourse of blame is nested within the perception of woman as carriers of diseases. The participant is referring to the common practice of men working away from home and to women having other sexual partners in their absence. The discourse here is framed within the binary oppositions father/mother; faithful/unfaithful, and behaves/misbehaves. In other words, the father is constructed as being faithful and sexually responsible while the mother is viewed as unfaithful and careless. On the contrary, Ramphele (2002) claims that HIV is introduced into families, particularly in rural areas, when men engage in sexual contact with women or men along their routes. Many men end up with two families: an urban woman to satisfy immediate sexual needs and a rural wife to keep the home stable.

Dumisane, in his individual interview, spelt this out as follows:

> Women reject men (in their love relationships) and then go for other men …get Aids … and then go forward for another affair and then get Aids again. Then Aids keeps on spreading and Aids spreads on and on. She then becomes something useless and an Aids toy and when she knows that she has Aids, she decides to spread it on to other people.

Dumisane's description of a woman with Aids as being useless and an Aids toy confirms the beliefs of these rural learners around the stigma associated with the epidemic, reflected in the reduction of an infected woman to a plaything. The woman's decision to spread the disease seems to have a genocidal connotation that requires no participation or agreement from another party. On the contrary, Ramphele (2002) claims that disempowered rural women are the ones who are often at risk of being infected by husbands returning from the city who refuse to wear condoms. Suspicions of adultery poisoned many relationships and many women were physically and sexually abused by jealous husbands. Likewise, Leach et al. (2003) and Rweyemamu (1999) point out that in reality it is often women who are coerced, forced or beaten into sex by male partners who control sexual encounters and refuse to wear condoms.

The silence on the possibility that men contribute to the spread of HIV may be couched within an entrenched discourse of patriarchy and the related perception that men know

better and are always right. The role assigned to men by the participants is to *discipline* women to prevent them from spreading diseases, denoting a 'little girl' discourse and the paternal responsibility of exercising discipline (Vilakazi, 1962). Significantly, stigmatisation occurs because HIV/Aids is the result of what is generally perceived as deviant and promiscuous behaviour (Abdool-Karim, 2005). One consequence is that, instead of receiving sympathy and support, people with Aids are blamed, feared and avoided. Although this evidence does not suggest that all boys have the same view about HIV transmission, male responsibility and female culpability, it does exemplify male hegemony and the power relations implicit in these discourses.

One participant, Moses, offered a parallel of the pattern of HIV spreading at schools:

> Yes, it does happen that when one is in a relationship with someone who sexually misbehaves and she goes to another school and falls in love with someone with Aids. Then she will come back to him who sexually behaves well. He will meet (sexually) with her and gets Aids.

Responses such as these resonate with findings of Sikwibele et al. (2004) with young men in a squatter settlement in Zambia who expressed fear of HIV infection through sex with their girlfriends. The alignment of '*she*' and '*sexually misbehaves*' and '*he*' and '*sexually behaves*' provides another example of the speaker 'doing gender within a gendered social context' (Barker & Galasinki, 2001). The male is again positioned as the passive recipient, who, through no fault of his own, 'gets' Aids.

Double standards are okay because 'the feelings of males and females are not the same'

For the young men in this study, masculine identity was linked to notions of insatiable sexuality and the need for multiple sexual partners for men, a finding consistent with those of Adomako Ampofo and Boateng (2005), Dunne, Humphreys & Leach (2006), Becker (2000) and Vundule, Maforah, Jewkes & Jordaan (2001). For many of the young men in the focus groups, having many girlfriends meant that *'I am lucky'*, 't*his man has wisdom*' and *'he is a Casanova, because some males cannot get even one girlfriend'*. The construction of hegemonic masculinity within this male peer group conveys the perception that a man with many girlfriends is blessed, and that others should aspire to be like him. The discussions on multiple partners evoked smiles, laughter, humour and much chatter among the participants. These boys adhere to the belief that their identity as men is defined through sexual ability and accomplishment. For the majority of the youth in this study, achieving success as a young *'isoka'* (Casanova) bodes well for a young man's success as a real *umnumzane* (real man/head of household) in later years. Silberschmidt's (2003) studies in rural and urban East Africa and Leclerc-Madlala's (1999) South African study found men arguing that a man who cannot 'handle' several women is not a 'real

man'. These findings cohere with the contention of Whitehead and Barrett (2001) that, because belonging is not an automatic process, masculine performance for most men is central to achieving entry to and being accepted within any particular community of men. Therefore people actively construct their identities in daily interactions and in everyday performances that are associated with and give substance to particular identities.

Congruent with Pattman's (2006) research with school children in Botswana, Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, the application of sexual double standards to girls and boys was noted here as well, emphasising the widely entrenched link between male hegemony and gender inequality. Some focus group comments illustrated this: '*For a male to be unfaithful is understandable ... Its better for him ...*'

'If an outy [man] gets a babe, he is praised.' On the other hand, '*It is a disgrace that a woman has more than one boyfriend ... she is a whore'* (some 'yahs' from other learners).

This unfaithful male/faithful female binary works to keep males in sexually privileged positions. This dichotomy, according to Fairclough (2001), illustrates forms of power that depend on consent rather than coercion in the acceptance of social arrangements which are sustained ideologically in the 'common sense' assumptions of everyday life. A striking feature of the quoted comments above is that the double standard relating to fidelity for men and women is not merely implied; it is clearly stated. This stance was justified by participants who claimed that men had biologically driven insatiable sexual appetites – '*I don't remember a man having had enough*' (focus group participant) – and by Jacob in his interview: '*Once you let him taste , he will want it all the time.'* What is clear here is that these hegemonic constructions of masculinity (being a man) are made possible in relation to the subordinate constructions of femininity (being a woman).

The youths' suspicion about the infidelity of girls is not supported by wider evidence. Bankole, Singh, Weug & Wulf (2004) found that, among sexually experienced 15 to 19-year-olds in sub-Saharan Africa, larger proportions of men than women had two or more partners in the past year – more than 40 per cent of men in some countries and fewer than 10 per cent of women in almost all countries. On the issue of HIV/Aids, these authors highlighted the fact that traditional social values condoned promiscuity among men while undermining women's ability to protect their sexual and reproductive health. Adding weight to this argument, Foreman (1999) confirms that over a lifetime men have considerably more partners than women, which means that they have more opportunity to contract and pass on HIV.

A further similarity to Pattman's (2006) findings was that the young men constructed their gender identities as being different from that of girls, as evidenced in the following focus group interaction regarding sexual desire and sexual initiation:

> A: But the feelings of a male and female are not the same. A man desires to have sex. A woman does not desire sex, but when a man has sex with a woman, she enjoys it. It is

not easy for a woman to initiate sex and say 'I want to have sex' – it is not easy.

B: She is a whore and is now asking sex from me. I am the one that should be asking sex from her. She is not the one that must ask sex from me.

C: Then you hit her for that.

Such responses reiterate Memela's (2005) concerns that, while females are expected to satisfy males sexually, their sexual satisfaction is totally overlooked. A common thread that ran throughout the focus groups in this study and in other studies (Becker, 2000; Koenig et al., 2004; Izugbara, 2004; Leclerc-Madlala, 1999; Wood, Maforah & Jewkes, 1998) was that, although a woman is expected to provide sex, it is unacceptable for her to initiate it.

These responses give credence to the assertions of Arnfred (2004) and Morrell (2003) that, in African contexts, a culture of silence assumed by women indicates a socially accepted behavioural constraint dictating women's reserve, modesty and discretion in sexual relations. The opposition is the construction of men as sexually unrestrained, confident and forthright. It is clear then that, in keeping with the male sexual drive discourse, the position of men as subjects and women as objects is firmly entrenched.

Any attempt by women to move into an initiating role can have serious negative consequences for them, the assumption being that they are sexually experienced, a position that is reserved for males. Herein lies the double-bind for women that arises from widely accepted concepts of masculinity. While females are expected to accede to men's sexual demands, such submission may warrant criticism and labels such as 'slut', 'loose woman' and 'whore'. An important consequence of sexually assertive and sexually experienced women being viewed as promiscuous is that safer sex negotiation is daunting for many women (Larkin, Andrews & Mitchell, 2006).

Some alternative responses: 'Forcing a girl to have sex is not right'

As noted in the preceding discussion, the majority of the participants supported dominant views of masculine identity that condoned sexism and violence against women. However, on several issues, counter discourses surfaced, giving credence to Foucault's (1994) contention that power relations are always accompanied by relations of resistance. The fact that some participants contested hegemonic masculinities and demonstrated support for more equitable relationships with girls suggests that alternative forms of masculinity were operating around and within dominant forms. Some examples are provided here to illustrate this point.

Alternatives to the dominant view that women should provide sex on demand is demonstrated in the following focus group interaction:

> V: No, it can't be that every time an outy when wanting to have sex, she would say yes.
>
> W: I say that it is not a must that whenever you want to have sex she must provide because if she doesn't use contraceptive pills, she will have a lot of babies … At the end, you leave her like that.
>
> X: A girl that is disciplined should not just give you because you have asked. You should wait until the time has come, and then she can give or provide you as you have agreed.

A similar response was noted at another school: *'If she does not want, it is her right. There is nothing you can do, because if you grab her, you can go to jail.'*

These collective responses indicate a range of reasons for their stance: it (sex) should not always be expected; she could fall pregnant; one should wait until the woman agrees to have sex; it is her right (to refuse); if he forces her, a man can go to jail. We may then assume that, despite the contextual and cultural construction of men's dominance, they do in fact make decisions about their behaviour, and, at least, potentially have the capacity to translate those decisions into action (Bujra, 2002). In fact, one young man viewed a girl's refusal to have sex as a display of strength against male dominance, providing evidence of an emerging gender consciousness within a context where dominant patterns of masculinity can begin to be renegotiated.

With regard to sexual relations, some participants agreed that forced sex is abusive and that men and women ought to respect each other's sexual rights. The suggestion during a focus group discussion that *'Forcing a girl to have sex is not right. We* [boys] *must understand that and accept it'* evoked responses of nodding heads from other boys. A few participants agreed that sex must be talked about and consensual, not coerced or forced. Although in the focus groups, some participants maintained that forced sex was acceptable depending on circumstances, in the interviews most of the boys claimed that they would 'never' engage in such behaviour. Thabo articulated this clearly in an interview:

> No, it [forced sex] is not right, because now it means that this thing that you are doing, she is not enjoying. She is hurt by what you are doing. You are satisfied and she is not satisfied. It means that in that relationship that you have, there is one person that is satisfied. You find that the other one is not and she is not treated well in the relationship. It is no longer good.

In contrast to general focus group responses, Thabo opposed the construction of women as objects. He displayed sensitivity, care and support for a discourse of equality in sexual relations, denoted by terms such as '*not right*', '*she is not enjoying*', '*she is hurt*' and '*she is not satisfied.*' A shift from a dominant to a less-dominant position is indicated in his contention that '*it is no longer good*' implying that it may have been good previously, but is now inappropriate.

Despite the predominant view in the focus groups that women are responsible for the spread of HIV and Aids, in their interviews, some participants acknowledged the role of men in the spread of the disease, as is evident in the following quotes:

> Moses: In my opinion, I suggest that you must have one partner and that you always carry a condom. You must be faithful to one another. … It is also important to carry a condom all the time because sometimes the feelings get lost … and you find yourself having unexpected sex.

> Vusi: Both males and females have a role … I don't think it would be fine if only males change in order to stop the spread of HIV/Aids. I think that if everyone can change, because we are saying that girls sometimes have a role in the spread of HIV/Aids. So if one person changes and the other one does not, nothing will change.

For young people, '*feelings getting lost*' and '*unexpected sex*' may be a common feature of relationships, especially in a disadvantaged rural area like Ugu. In the schools that participated in this study, classroom programmes focusing on gender, relationships and sexuality were very limited. In the study by Sathiparsad and Taylor (2005), teachers at schools in the Ugu district expressed concern about HIV/Aids infections among learners and their families. However, in the interviews, several participants spoke of condom usage and fidelity as a means to prevent the spread of HIV and Aids. Vusi offered a more balanced response denoting his support for responsibility, respect and equality between men and women, again giving credence to the notion of the multiplicity of masculinities.

The fact that these are alternative responses supports Strebel's (1997) assertion that dominant discourses are neither fixed nor unchallenged and are subject to modification. The presence of alternative beliefs provides the basis for my argument that masculinities, including Zulu masculinities, are not static. Furthermore, the responses demonstrate clearly the observation of Sunderland and Litosseliti (2002) that one or more identities may be foregrounded at different times; they are sometimes contradictory and sometimes interrelated.

Significance of the findings for HIV prevention

The research findings clearly demonstrate the intersection between sexuality, HIV/Aids and socio-cultural constructs of gender, and therefore provide some guidelines for developing interventions. A central point is to move away from stereotypical notions of men/masculinity/domination and women/femininity/subordination. One of the important elements of a social constructionist approach to gender is to explore the differences *among* men and *among* women since these tend to be more decisive than the differences between women and men. Such exploration may enhance our understanding of the many ways of being a man or a woman.

Although, for the majority of participants in this study, constructions of masculinity centred on the objectification of women as sexual providers and double standards relating to acceptable male and female behaviour, the minority alternative responses suggest the potential for shifts in attitudes with regard to sexuality and HIV/Aids. Some of the youth argued in favour of negotiating sex with women, respecting their rights, and being sensitive and caring to their needs. Alongside their strong assertions about women spreading HIV and Aids, some participants acknowledged that men have a role to play in prevention, commenting on the need for fidelity on the part of men and acknowledging the need to use condoms. Further exploration of these aspects is likely to assist the development of interventions. It is crucial to address sexual and gender stereotypes that promote high-risk behaviour as well as attitudes concerning masculinity and male–female relationships. Issues such as violence and dominance as well as sexual and reproductive health concerns must be highlighted. Maximum use should be made of opportunities to encourage alternative forms of talk about sexuality, to support gender equity, to provide safe sex education and to promote healthier relationships. One way to do this would be to involve males who offer alternatives to the dominant ideas about masculinity in educational programmes, supporting Pattman's (2006) suggestion to make learners the resources.

Schools are significant sites for gender-related interventions, given that schooling environments emphasise patterns of hierarchies, exclusion and power and provide a platform for the performances of masculinities and femininities. An additional advantage is that schools can provide an effective channel through which to reach families and communities. As this study focused on school-going youth, I consider some implications regarding sex education for males and females in schools, bearing in mind that there were limited planned life skills and sexuality programmes at the participating schools.

To encourage gender-equitable behaviours and collaborative relationships among learners, schools need to work through the curriculum, the school management, teachers, learners and parents. Work with boys on issues of gender and violence requires a focus on the ways in which violence, domination and oppression are implicated in the construction of idealised masculinity and how these affect male–female relationships, including sexual relationships. Violence needs to be portrayed not as a matter of nature but as systematic acts of injustice that preserve existing relations of power. Furthermore, it is important to bear in mind that gender issues must be conceptualised as applying to both boys and girls.

Sex education needs to enable young people to recognise their own and their partners' needs – be they for sex, love, romance or a combination of these – and to communicate these without having to resort to unsafe sex. As noted previously, constructions of sex as an area that males control limits women's ability to control their own sexual experiences and sexual health. Sex education within the context of HIV and Aids must therefore challenge these constructions in order to be effective. As women are becoming

more vocal about violence in their lives, it may be possible to challenge the discourse of women as being 'loose' or 'whorish' in relation to the stigma of Aids.

The research findings highlight the significance of misinformation among the youth regarding sexual relationships and the spread of HIV. As advocated by Izugbara (2004), an urgent need exists for well-trained rural adolescent sexuality educators and change agents. Such training should include lessons on culturally responsive approaches and innovative sex education strategies. Because gender power relations influence sexual relations, emphasising rights around sexuality could help to address asymmetrical gender relations in schools. Such rights could include rights relating to respect for bodily integrity, choice of partner, consensual sexual relations and the right to be sexually active or not (WHO, 2005).

However, simply providing information on protection against ill-health is often insufficient to change behaviour. Cornwall and Wellbourn (2002) caution that changing what people *know* may have no impact on what they *do*. HIV/Aids prevention campaigns tend to overlook the realities of power dynamics, including the gender inequities that structure heterosexual relationships. It is important for sexuality educators to provide counter narratives to challenge a hegemonic masculinity that views female sexuality as dangerous and diseased and men's sexual behaviour as uncontrollably biologically driven. Condom promotion must be accompanied by knowledge regarding prevailing power relationships, sexual patterns and the context within which sexual and reproductive decisions are made.

Teachers must be included in training to increase awareness of their own classroom practices and their expectations of boys and girls. This is essential in view of the fact that school processes, such as disciplinary measures and recreational facilities, tend to be gender specific. Training can be aimed at enhancing understanding of issues such as power relations, gender and identity, and at equipping teachers to address the relationship issues faced by learners. In addition, being gendered beings themselves, teachers need to confront their own attitudes and experiences relating to issues such as gender and violence (Dunne et al., 2006). In this regard, Jackson (2002) notes the importance of providing African role models of men who take a different approach to gender, and who have not lost their stature as males as a result. As the findings of this study infer, men may be afraid of letting go of their dominant positions and rights for fear of losing self-esteem and respect of their peers.

Walsh, Mitchell and Smith (2002) question the depiction of gender in HIV/Aids discourses in life skills and sex-education programmes in schools. Terms such as 'risk-taking, negotiation, decision making and consensual sex' may be used differently in relation to young men and young women; for example, a young woman may place herself at risk of verbal or physical abuse just by carrying a condom. Furthermore, sexual behaviour is linked to morality in such a way that sexually active girls are judged differently from sexually active boys. Since young women are presumed to be pure and innocent, there is an absence of references to desire and pleasure in messages of prevention. These authors

argue that such notions of innocence in HIV/Aids campaigns must be challenged and replaced by constructions of young men and women as 'knowers' who should be involved more directly as producers and consumers of narratives about sexuality, HIV and Aids.

This study highlights the firm entrenchment of patriarchy, poor socio-economic conditions and practices such as migrant labour that fuel unequal gender relations and pathologies such as violence and HIV/Aids. Therefore, what is required is a shift beyond individual behaviour change to approaches that tackle contextual factors such as poverty and discrimination. Establishing new forms of culture entails challenging current economic realities as well as deep-rooted norms and values.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have highlighted some variations in masculine discourses and masculine positions regarding the way in which young men relate to women. I have argued that including men in initiatives to achieve gender equality is likely to mitigate the impact of HIV/Aids, as is being recognised in South Africa and in other African countries such as Tanzania, Zambia and Kenya where men are being drawn in as partners in the fight against Aids. The connections between constructions of masculinity and men's behaviour towards women are increasingly being highlighted. In concluding, I point to a few such South African initiatives. The Targeted AIDS Intervention (TAI) reports positive outcomes from two of its projects, the Shosholoza Project and *Inkunzi Isematholeni* (a big man comes from a little boy). These projects target youth both in and out of school with the aim of reducing HIV risk behaviour. Interventions include examining how the youth see men and masculinity and how they view relationships (Makhaye, 2005). Another active project is the Gender Education and Training Network (GETNET) and its 'Men and Masculinities Programme'. Key focus areas include self-reflection, interrogation of culture and religion, deconstruction of power relations, HIV/Aids and gender-based violence (GETNET, 2003). Similar programmes aimed at youth include DramAidE and Stepping Stones, which also target youth for change. In order to sustain a change in masculinities as suggested by the success rates of these programmes, they need to be expanded and continually replicated. The ultimate challenge lies in replacing stereotypes, particularly of African men, as being irresponsible with notions of reliability and dependability.

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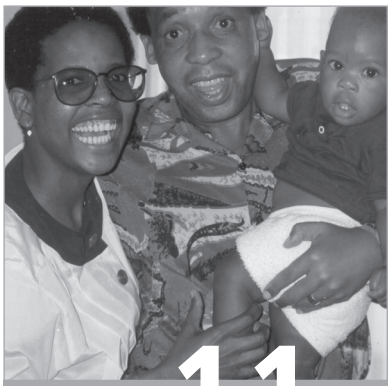

CHAPTER 11

Masculinities in the ANC-led liberation movement

Raymond Suttner

This chapter aims to uncover elements of the formation and manifestations of masculinities within the ANC. While notions of masculinity or masculinities have been examined in other literature, this work tries to specify the precise character of a distinct process and phenomenon. This bears resemblances to that found in other situations, but has specificities that need to be brought into the foreground.

While by no means exhaustive, this contribution tries by the range of enquiry to locate masculinity formation in situations and complexities that have not previously emerged. In certain respects, these relate to a past that is in some respects a warrior tradition. In part, ANC masculinities also interface with belief systems that precede and coexist with the organisation's existence, for example the relationship between initiation and other *rites of passage* to manhood. In considering phases of ANC development, this chapter relates briefly to the early ANC and substantially to the later period of illegality, both of which require interpretations that are not provided by existing literature on the ANC (e.g. Erlank, 2003; Unterhalter, 2000) nor by more general textbooks (e.g. Connell, 1995; Whitehead, 2002).

In examining the period of illegality, underground organisation is understood to include not only acts performed within the country, but also the place where training and preparation occurred outside; that is, to include what is conventionally separated as part of the 'exile experience'.

This chapter argues that, in reading ANC texts outside of their full context, the significance of women entering 'male terrain' is underplayed. Furthermore, the emphasis on the text leads to a fetishisation and disembodying of certain words emphasising manhood and an automatic and incorrect reading of this as necessarily downplaying the political role of women. This interpretation is not substantially strengthened by the mainly

privately expressed views of certain ANC leaders on relationships with their wives and other women.[1] But it is primarily flawed in its failure to give weight to the significance of *the reality of denial of manhood*, which also signifies specific and overwhelming disempowerment and subjection to political domination. The assertion of manhood needs, in turn, to be read as the language of rejection of this overlordship and assertion of political freedom.

In the later period, Unterhalter (2000) has deployed concepts like 'heroic masculinity' in relation to autobiographies and, while the scope is apparently limited, lack of qualification may sometimes lead readers to believe that the understandings provided, as with Erlank (2003), go further than the area of enquiry. While dealt with more fully later, the notion of heroic masculinity refers to men being representatives of heroic projects, whose success is contingent on women being at home, often waving men goodbye as they depart to face danger. This chapter challenges the application of such concepts and understandings, arguing that there were both male and female heroic projects, whose content was subject to extensive qualification and conditionality, in both cases.

Moving away from what is covered by these writings, often-unacknowledged elements of the revolutionary experience are unpacked, in particular the impact on the personal and the emotional. These practices and notions of commitment can be interpreted as feeding into ideas of the male relating to 'the rational' and the female expressing 'the emotional'. But there are again extensive qualifications found through showing different models of manhood within the organisation.

In general, the chapter indicates a range of sites and modes of masculinity formation in the ANC, again subject in their interpretation to extensive qualification and conditionality.

Attack on manhood and the need for African men to assert that they are men

Major textbooks on masculinity primarily, if not exclusively, concern situations different from that of South Africa (e.g. Connell, 1995; Whitehead, 2002). When they speak of masculinity or masculinities, they are not relating to a situation where manhood has been denied in the sense that it has been in the history of apartheid or colonialism generally. When they refer to 'hegemonic masculinities' or 'gender orders', they do not purport to cover the layers within these layers that also give meaning to attempts to reclaim manhood in the context of apartheid and colonialism (see Connell, 1995; Whitehead, 2002; Lindsay & Miescher, 2003).[2]

These works sometimes relate to claims of a denial of masculinity or crisis of masculinity on the part of men who feel that gender equality assaults their sense of manhood (see Beynon, 2002; Connell, 1995; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2003; Whitehead, 2002).

They do not purport to address a situation where manhood is actually assaulted – that is, where men are called boys, no matter what their age, and where many whites never bothered even to know their actual names (see also Fanon, 1963, pp. 36–7). The childlike status of the African was expressed very plainly by General J. B. M. Hertzog, former prime minister, in 1926:

> Next to the European, the Native stands as an 8-year old child to a man of great experience – a child in religion, a child in moral conviction; without art and without science; the most primitive needs, and the most elementary knowledge to provide for those needs. If ever a race had a need of guidance and protection from another people with which it is placed in contact, then it is the Native in his contact with the white man. (Quoted in Morris, 2004, p.152)

This is not an unusual text for its time, in some ways a mild example from the genre of racist writings. What it signifies for our purposes is that the infantilisation of Africans and men in particular links to or seeks to justify political domination by designating Africans as a race of children.

In reading African assertions of manhood, therefore, we need to understand it as a challenge not only to a childlike status but as symbolising wider rejection of overlordship, represented by such statements as Hertzog's. The assertion of manhood is in this context a claim for freedom.

It was also a situation where colonialism and apartheid consciously set about subduing the military power and perceived sexual threat of the African male. The latter finds repeated expression in nineteenth century colonial commissions, with reference made to African men leading lives of 'indolent sensuality'. Because they battened in ease on the labour of their wives they did not fulfil their 'proper destiny' and work for the white man (see Simons, 1968, p. 15).

Colonial and apartheid oppression did not treat Africans as boys for all purposes, in that they recognised that processes of transition to manhood were taking place within African societies and generally did not intervene in these. It was only in their relations with African males, in the context of the colonial encounter, that men were treated as boys. What this meant in the eyes of African men and their womenfolk and children is that men were men in one context but were unable or not allowed to perform the roles of men (admittedly patriarchal, though, as will be seen, that must be qualified) including providing protection of women and children.

Non-intervention in the traditional process of manhood formation itself requires further study, explaining why it happened. We know that the culture of the Other was treated as exotic and that it was marginalised in relation to that of the coloniser. Even where some colonisers purported to value local culture, it tended to be treated purely as an anthropological curiosity. Western music, art and other practices constituted culture of universal validity. African culture fell within the realm of anthropology.[3]

Returning to non-intervention of colonisers in the African *rites of passage* to manhood, it was allowed, but not recognised as constituting manhood for purposes of coloniser–native relations. The validity of the transition within the society of the local people was not recognised in the colonial encounter. In colonial–native relations, it was as if it had not occurred at all.

Manhood had been conceived from early times as including a right and duty to protect. The content of this quality was much more than an element of patriarchal power. In so far as apartheid and colonialism invaded relations between husband and wife and father and child, that was humiliating in itself. But in the context of colonial and apartheid domination, 'protection' takes on a wider connotation than that which can be ascribed to patriarchy alone. Inability to protect came to mean inability to prevent your child or wife falling into the hands of police or, worse, security police, who were known to do serious harm.

That most of the accoutrements normally associated with citizenship were denied to men and women under apartheid was undoubtedly not a denial of manhood alone. But if one traces a documentary history whose discourse refers to emasculation and the need to restore manhood and a virile nation (e.g. Erlank, 2003, p. 653), unless it is also related to *the reality of denial of manhood*, it is historical in the sense of chronology, but is ahistorical in failing to locate these assertions fully. If full weight is not given to the denial of manhood, one cannot give meaning to a claim of manhood. This is also, of course, the male-dominated language of the time, not only within African discourse.

We need also to reflect on what it means for there to be silence on women's voices on the question of manhood. It is my impression that this would reveal a rich and complex 'manhood narrative'. Women wanted their menfolk to recover their dignity and manhood. This often carried expectations on the side of women of a specific role to be played by men, their menfolk being scorned if they were not in the leadership and in the forefront. Evidence is likely to show that the restoration of manhood and a 'virile nation', far from being regarded as a threat to women, was seen as one of the conditions for the freedom of all. Obviously, as indicated, these notions of manhood were not without contradictions, having a patriarchal character. But the assertion of a discourse of restoration of manhood including women as well indicates a wider significance than gender relations.

The argument presented here is that one cannot read off gender relations or a negative relationship to women from the assertion of manhood in itself. At the same time, it is not being argued that the assertion of manhood being seen as a claim for liberation means that gender questions are resolved. What characterises that which Connell (1995) calls the 'gender order' needs to be analysed by relying on data beyond such words.[4] The object here is purely to argue that the assertion of manhood has no self-evident and timeless meaning, nor the meaning attributed to it in these writings, which purport from such usage to read notions of gender inequality and even broader political strategies.

Thus Erlank (2003) writes of such discourse as 'fundamental to understanding the political strategies of the ANC and other nationalist groups from the 1920s through the 1950s' (p. 653). Furthermore, such discourse 'explains' some of the gendered currents that motivated nationalist activity during this period as well as some of the reasons why African male leaders were disinclined to involve African women in political activity undertaken as part of opposition policies to the white South African state (Erlank, 2003). A careful reading of her text does not appear to provide evidence that such causal connections necessarily existed.

The failure to include women in these claims cannot be used to deny the reality that notions of a race that were children, infantilised men and that their manhood was denied, even if that also applied to women. The assertion of a need to restore manhood was a legitimate claim, a legitimate part of a struggle for liberation. That no mention is made of women has no inherent meaning for the relations between men and women and the conception of these relations. That issue must be separately analysed and argued and as will be shown, even where the concept of the nation was defined in terms of manhood, it coexisted with extensive political and public activity of women.

The struggle to be a man meant the struggle for dignity and reclaiming of rights and to be treated as an adult human being. This is something that needs to be read into any analysis of ANC masculinities.

ANC masculinities

What makes ANC masculinities and what is their character? What are the factors that impact on manhood within the organisation? This chapter argues that these are very diverse and impact differently on different people, depending on their own specific identities within the organisation as well as prior to or alongside of their membership of the ANC.

There is a substantial literature on feminism or women's struggle for gender equality within or about the ANC-led liberation movement (e.g. Walker, 1991; Wells , 1993; Bernstein, 1985; Hassim, 2002; Ginwala, 1990). But the flourishing of masculinity studies on other continents has only recently impacted on South African literature and scholarship relating to the liberation movement.[5] As far as I am aware, there are only two articles dealing directly with the question in regard to the ANC (Erlank, 2003; Unterhalter, 2000). Only indirect reference is made in one chapter of a more general and pioneering collection on South African masculinities (Morrell, 2001d).

This chapter argues that the liberation struggle has thrown up distinct models of manhood. But these notions are as always contingent on conceptions and practices of the feminine. Notions of masculinity are essentially conditional, contested, ambiguous or contradictory and have varied over time and at any particular moment and within any

particular experience. The key factors impacting on such notions in South Africa have been the political conditions prevailing both on the side of the apartheid regime and that of resistance forces, and the roles assigned to and assumed by women. This chapter hopes to prove these claims of diversity and conditionality by a broad overview, but focusing mainly on the two periods indicated.

Methodologically, the contribution rests on the assumption that any attempted characterisation of masculinities within the ANC must be grounded in formal/constitutional pronouncements as well as in practices, the latter often qualifying or diverging from the formal. Furthermore, documentary evidence needs to be supplemented with oral evidence, where practice can more easily be uncovered. This is obviously a simpler task for later periods, although practice is by no means impossible to uncover from the documentation of early phases.

Location cannot be total, but characterisations of masculinities must be situated within the contradictory character of phases of struggle, specific conditions within which these are manifested or realised as well as extensive qualifications that may be found within the experiences of both men and women.

Early ANC

The ANC was formed in 1912 in the face of the establishment of the Union of South Africa two years earlier. Raising the notion of a 'native union', the ANC was in fact advancing the idea of an alternative or counter-nation, at first only comprising black men. The organisation did not at its inception envisage nonracialism, nor did it include women as members. Implicitly, then, the notion of the national with which the ANC initially worked was one comprising African men only (Jordan, 1988; Seme, 1972; Suttner, 2004b).

Taken at that level of official and constitutional politics, the matter is clear and straightforward. But the politics of the time – and as it unfolded – was by no means unambiguous. Within one year women were in the streets of Bloemfontein under the banner 'We have done with pleading. We now demand!' (Wells, 1993; Gasa, 2007). In other words, they entered the public domain, supposedly the preserve of men (see Whitehead, 2002).

Women thus entered the public domain, but they did so also in a more radical, popular form – on the streets of one of the most conservative cities of South Africa. One year after the establishment of the ANC, they stepped into this terrain as self-empowered actors, independent of their menfolk. This is part of a long history of women as political actors and subjects, constantly claiming the public space as theirs (Gasa, 2007).

That women entered the political stage, and in this way, immediately qualifies the significance of the formal and constitutional statement that women were not ANC members. It indicates that, whatever status they were formally granted within the organisation, that

could not dispose of the question of whether or not they were political subjects, with a concrete role in a future nationhood.

There were also clear divergences from constitutional provisions of the ANC. Women were in fact voting in elections for the highest office in the period when they were not supposed to be members (see Ginwala, 1990). Such practices cannot be brushed aside, nor are they cancelled out by statements or correspondence of leaders enunciating a specific ideal of manhood with a corresponding role for their womenfolk (Erlank, 2003). These statements are part of the history, but an element that needs to be supplemented.

Joining the national liberation movement and the 'making of a man'

It is nevertheless true that the national liberation struggle is suffused with imagery relating to manhood, going back to the periods of early resistance to colonial conquest. There is also evidence that the national liberation movement is connected in some cases with processes of *transition to manhood*.

Initiation to manhood, used loosely, is often found in the discourse and practices in various terrains of the liberation struggle. *The discourse of denial of manhood coexists with that of regaining manhood through the struggle or struggle-related activities.* Mongezi Radebe's political development was through reading, including banned literature:

> I know, for instance, people in Heilbron whom I had never thought were politically aware, and I got friendly with one and he gave me *The Struggle is My Life* by Mandela, and he said it's a good book, *it'll make me a man*. A man selling coal … I had never thought that he had been to school, and I knew him not to be in a position to read anything or write his name, but he gave me that book. So it was like that in townships all over. (In Frederikse, 1990, p. 158) (Emphasis inserted)

This is obviously about regaining manhood as discourse, or the discourse of transition to manhood being associated with joining the struggle, becoming part of the process that would end the infantilisation of men and regaining their place as adults.

But the act of joining ANC or MK, the abbreviation commonly used to refer to Umkhonto we Sizwe (the Spear of the Nation, the ANC's armed wing) was associated in some situations with more specific processes for attaining manhood or *rites of passage*. It is not clear whether this idea of initiation is always used tightly or whether it interfaces purely with 'traditional' notions of initiation, nor whether it necessarily gives new meanings or understandings to this process. What is entailed needs further research.

This is illustrated by moving to a much later phase, from the 1960s, where we enter a period ripe for the emergence of notions of 'heroic masculinity'. This is because the banning of the ANC (and the earlier illegality of the Communist Party) created conditions where considerable danger attached to resistance. Yet the interface between masculinities and the struggle was extremely varied. In some ways it linked into the imagery it

drew on, to earlier pre-Union notions and values of manhood. These connoted martial bravery; they signified men who possessed land and who were able to protect it, their women and children (see the discussion of Makhanda below). In other senses, the interface between masculinities and the struggle linked into age-old practices, originally requiring specific *rites of passage* in order to achieve manhood. These, in many but not all cases, were also associated with martial traditions.

Peter Delius (1996) has suggested that Pedi initiation processes, which stressed a warrior tradition, facilitated recruitment to MK (see 1996, p. 129). In situations where the warrior notion of manhood was hegemonic, it certainly could be of assistance in recruitment for armed struggle. The late Zingiva Nkondo, when asked why he joined MK, indicated that they (the Shangaan) were 'always ready'. He meant by this that he was a descendant of Soshangane, one of the groupings that broke away from Shaka's Zulu kingdom and established the Gaza empire in what is now Mozambique. As a descendant of this warrior tradition, Nkondo saw himself as having a predisposition towards entering a war situation, where required.[6]

Becoming a man through joining MK: Dinokana

Initiation arises in processes related to MK, in a more specific way than Delius reports, in the former Western Transvaal, now the North-West Province. Around the time of the Rivonia trial, the community of Dinokana, a village forming part of Lehurutshe near Zeerust, was emerging from intense battles with the government over the Bantu Authorities system, attempts to depose their chief, and later the extension of passes to women (see Manson, 1983a, 1983b). This patriarch/women alliance may again manifest the ambiguities already referred to (i.e. assertion of a power over women, as theirs), but simultaneously a desire to avoid humiliation and powerlessness in relation to a state that could harm them.

Some of the chiefs in the community had sided with the women and also decided to throw their weight behind the ANC. They had set up underground structures, which they linked to MK and its recruitment machineries. Referring to the decision, Victor Moche says:

> But being chiefs they had then called village councils, *lekgotla* as it is called … After persuading the villagers that this was the right thing to do, they had then levied a 'head tax' on each household in terms of providing human power to join MK. So if you had a family of four young men, the eldest would be told, you will go to Gauteng to work for the family and you will send number two to school, number three is too young so he will stay at home and he will look after his parents and the cattle and number four will go to MK. So they allocated the family in this way.[7]

This is referred to as the 'decision under the tree', a tree opposite the current offices of the chief's councillors. As with many physical objects to which ritual significance is attached, this tree has peculiar qualities in that its branches fall off at the slightest touch. According to Radilori John Moumakwa, who was one of between 50 and 80 boys[8] who were sent out, they were told that it was time to '*bolwa*' or '*bolala*'; that is, it was no longer the responsibility of their fathers to provide trousers.[9] Certain informants claim the boys had just returned from initiation.[10] According to other versions, such as Moumakwa, they were to be initiated, in this case, through joining MK. Dr P. M. Sebate of the African Languages Department, University of South Africa, provides his understanding of the meaning of the term '*bolala*' in this specific context:

> What 'go bolala' means here is that the boys had to go out to be initiated in the teachings of MK so that they could be men amongst men; men who would not be afraid to withstand the cold winter, the beating of the enemy, and the wrath of the forest. Having graduated as MK soldiers, these 'boys' would be able to protect their families, villages and above all their nation.
>
> I do think 'the age of 14' [mentioned by Moumakwa in interview, 2003] tells you something, 'that boys who go out for initiation are between childhood and manhood.' Normally when 'bogwera bo bolola' (initiates go out) village boys from a number of sub-courts gather at the main court (kgotlakgolo) of the village where the chief resides. It is then that the chief of the village gives an instruction that 'bogwera bo bolole' (initiates should go out). These boys will be in the forest at an area selected or chosen by the village witchdoctor (traditional healer). They will be there for the three winter months, where they will be taught work songs, war songs and hunting songs; and, that a stick thrashing can only kill an ant.
>
> Now back to our 'bolola'. In [this context] we learn that the boys were sent out at the age of fourteen, which is in line with the age at which boys go out on initiation. Secondly, it is said that fathers were no longer able to provide for these boys, so they had to 'bolola'. Remember, after initiation these boys will have qualified as 'men'. Thirdly, when boys from Dinokana went out to join MK, they were between childhood and manhood and were tasked to go out and learn 'war songs', to protect their nation, that the 'whipping they received from the white man could only kill an ant.'[11]

In Matumo's Setswana English Dictionary, the following entries are found:

> *boloditse* … bolotsa, has let out, as livestock from the kraal or initiates of an initiation rite and *bolodiswe* … *boloditse*, have been let out, as livestock from the kraal, or initiates of an initiation rite. (Matumo, 1993, p. 22)

In Brown's *Setswana Dictionary*, one finds: *Bolola … bolotse*, go out of kraal of cattle, etc; set out on a journey; go on the war-path' (Brown, 1980, p. 30).

That MK may have provided elements of what was required in their transition to manhood, in teaching war songs, can be seen in the words of the following song played on Radio Freedom:

> *Abasakwazi Nokupumula (They Cannot Rest)*
>
> Lead: Bayekeleni, sobabamba ngobunyama
>
> Chorus: Nangokuhlwa
>
> Lead: Abasalali, umkonto, mkonto wesizwe
>
> Chorus: Abasakwazi nokupumula / Umkonto uzobashaya, uzobaqeda
>
> Lead: Mabesati bayagalena / Sizofika sifuna, umkonto we sizwe
>
> Chorus: Ushona ngapha, ushona ngale, Bayawazi
>
> [Translation] Let them be. We will get them when it's dark./ When night comes/ They cannot sleep, due to the spear, the spear of the nation/They cannot rest/Our army will hit them, we will finish them/ When they try to do one thing or the other/ The people's army will come/ Here now, then there – they learn of our elusive forces. (Radio Freedom, 1996)

Moumakwa refers to *bolwa* in this context being 'the opposite' of what it would normally be:

> Initiation, that's a bolwa. Now that one was opposite, now you go to join MK.
>
> Q: Had you not been initiated?
>
> A: No.
>
> Q: Oh, so this was instead of initiation?
>
> A: It's a form of initiation.
>
> Q: It's a way of becoming a man?
>
> A: It was a way of becoming a man.
>
> Q: Oh, it wasn't after initiation, because your age group, age-set was going to get initiated through MK?
>
> A: Through the MK.[12]

Clearly the *rites of passage* in these cases relate to preparation for warfare. In the case of the Dinokana situation, one sees the disruption of conventional *rites of passage* in a situation of societal stress. Similar processes have been recorded in the case of Palestinians during the Intifada, where experiences of youth clashing with the Israelis and being

imprisoned were treated as displacing normal routes for attaining manhood. Generational hierarchies are subverted, and youth returning from prison are treated as men enjoying greater seniority than their own parents (Peteet, 2002).

In another situation, the element of secrecy attached to initiation ceremonies in the Matatiele area of the former Transkei was involved in the recruitment of people to join an underground unit. Recruitment was restricted to those who had been part of the same initiation group, though not all were necessarily selected. Their common experience enabled those selected to assess the suitability of others. But the secrecy, which they shared as an initiation group, was seen as a core basis for establishing themselves as an underground unit.[13]

Transition to manhood on Robben Island

But in some cases, the ANC directly intervened in the process of transition to manhood, though there is no firm evidence of a specific decision mandating those who executed the tasks. Some ANC prisoners, especially the young people who arrived after the 1976 risings wanted and expected to perform initiation rituals while on the Island. Joseph Faniso Mati says:

> ... We realised that most of these youngsters were to stay in prison for a long time and that circumcision was necessary for them. It was all done clandestinely. We did not know when it would happen and the ANC pretended as if they did not know about it. There were no celebrations afterwards and we would only discover it the following day when we were going to play soccer and found that most of the youngsters were not there.
>
> They had been circumcised by [Johnson Malcomess] Mgabela – in small groups together. They would stay in the cell the following day or two – no water, their wounds being dressed by Mgabela, sometimes suffering from severe pain. All of this was done with the connivance of the person in charge of the hospital[14] (Quoted in Coetzee, Gilfillan & Hulec, 2002, p. 52)

Mgabela describes his role:

> When I first came to work in the hospital, I felt happy. I wanted for quite some time to work there, because I was an Ingcibi when I was outside. An Ingcibi is the person who performs circumcision – cuts the boys, dressed their wounds, helps them to become men. Long before I started to work in the hospital one boy came to me. He knew that I did that work outside and he wanted me to circumcise him. But I was afraid that if they discovered that I did it, they would put me away for an extra two or three years. After this boy, other youngsters also approached me: 'We are getting old here inside.

> And there are still more years because we are doing fifteen, seventeen, eighteen or twenty years. When we go home, we will be old and this thing must be done.'
>
> In the meantime, some of the boys among us continued to demand: 'You must cut us!' They even said: 'You refuse to help!' I started to realise that these boys of the Western Cape, Transkei, Border and the Eastern Cape had a better chance now. And they would be old when they were released. After all, Schoeman [the head of the hospital] was not too negative and the prison chiefs took no steps after Fourie had left. [A white warder who had Mgabela circumcise him, only to have it discovered by the authorities.] So the next year I started to circumcise. It was April/May 1974 that I started, right up until July and then I stopped. Then I started again in December. So many! Do you know how many altogether? Three hundred and sixty-one – total number!
>
> You see, after 1976 all these school boys were arrested; they were flocking to the Island. They all said they wanted to go and be circumcised by me ... Later on, we accepted that the prison authorities would look the other way. They pulled up their shoulders and said that nobody should come and tell them that somebody else had cut him. (Quoted in Coetzee, Gilfillan & Hulec, 2002, p. 71)

Circumcision of PAC and black consciousness youth, resisted by sections of their leadership, sometimes paved the way for their recruitment to the ANC (Coetzee, Gilfillan & Hulec, 2002, p. 71).

More investigation will be required to understand, in this context, what significance and meanings attach to the demand for initiation. Did it emanate mainly from people coming from certain parts of the country, rural areas in particular, and especially the Eastern Cape, as this evidence suggests? In so far as the ANC and MK were primarily an urban movement, to what extent does the existence of certain townships (e.g. Guguletu, Kwazakele) or pockets of townships (e.g. parts of Soweto) that are ethnically very homogeneous and sometimes more tenacious in holding on to older practices than people in the rural areas, explain this phenomenon? What did 'resort to such rituals' mean?

Is it to be interpreted purely as continuation of a 'traditional' practice, without which manhood could not be attained? Or did observance of these rituals also connote elements of resistance, as has been the case in other situations? (Spiegel & Boonzaier, 1998) Many writers have shown that the same phenomenon may have exactly the same form, where its social significance varies under different conditions (e.g. Spiegel & Boonzaier, 1988, p. 53; Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983).

Some decades back, Philip Mayer, in a study of initiation practices in New Brighton Township, showed how conditions in the city, in the absence of adequate infrastructure and broader social conditions, precluded observance of rituals in the same way as in the rural areas (Mayer, 1971).

As in the case of resort to diviners and healers, we may be dealing with coexistence and intersection of distinct forms of social knowledge and belief systems.[15] While Mayer reports that most Africans in his study placed great store on acquiring the knowledge and technical skills provided by 'Western' education, initiation schools were regarded as providing additional social knowledge and skills needed to acquire manhood (Mayer, 1971).

We need obviously to interrogate these claims more closely, in particular the degree of flexibility within this process or notions of manhood. Alternatively, in what way has it changed and to what extent is this reflected in expectations from initiation practices and the actual conduct of these and teachings by those officiating on the Island?

Obviously, in carrying out initiation on Robben Island many of the features of 'traditional' initiation, in particular the extent of seclusion and the presence of elders to lecture initiates on the significance of transition to manhood, could not easily be fulfilled. In the account thus far, circumcision has been emphasised, though it comprised merely one element of a wider process of induction into manhood. What modalities were used to encompass these or were they not dealt with in the situation on the island? To what extent did an abridged form of initiation (if it was that) change its meaning or implications?

A recent discussion (in July 2004) with a former PAC prisoner on Robben Island, who was circumcised by Mgabela and wishes to remain anonymous, confirms that the process involved was not merely circumcision but initiation. The former prisoner indicated that he was sent to the Island at the age of 17 and considered it necessary to be initiated. He indicated that, while Mgabela conducted the circumcision, other older prisoners instructed the boys, becoming men, on the 'qualities attached to manhood' – how they should conduct themselves as men.

It was not clear from the discussion whether such instruction entailed a specific conception of manhood *deriving from their being political prisoners*. From what was related, it appeared to conform to what are described as 'traditional' conceptions of such instruction. Further research will hopefully contribute towards clarification.

If the authorities turned a blind eye to the practice, why was this the case? Was it because they saw no harm, and saw in fact beneficial results deriving from what they identified as 'traditional' ritual, cementing notions of unchanging 'tribal' and ethnic identities? To what extent are we dealing with a phenomenon whose meaning was contested? What was the precise attitude of the ANC towards initiation practices, assuming they must have been aware of these being conducted, seeing that senior members were involved? What meaning did the organisation attach to these practices? (No former Islander with whom I have spoken appears to have been unaware of this practice.)

Initiation in exile

It is not clear to what extent initiation practices were implemented in exile. I have been told that many people, some as old as 40, were initiated on their return to South Africa.

But, in Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College, established by the ANC in Tanzania, initiation was an issue. It is reported that it was not easy for a Sotho man to have a relationship with a Xhosa woman. This was not because of ethnic animosity but that the Sotho students 'might not have gone through initiation, and could be seen as amakhwenkwe, "boys" – as males who have not yet undergone initiation are referred to in Xhosa society' (Morrow, Maaba, & Pulumani, 2004, p. 107).

For those who wished to be initiated, there were South African *ingcibis* available. But Dr Siphokazi Sokupa, a medical practitioner at SOMAFCO, is reported as saying that the boys were not taken to live in the bush for some time as the tradition required. It was feared that, in tropical surroundings so different from the veld of the Eastern Cape, students would develop diseases like malaria (Morrow, Maaba, & Pulumani, 2004).

Such initiation, occurring under *de facto* ANC auspices, leaves unstated what precise notions of manhood were entailed. What meanings of manhood were commended to the initiates? That boys were circumcised signifies little, for that is an operation that can occur outside of initiation. What needs to be probed further is whether, in the different conditions in which these youth found themselves, on Robben Island and in SOMAFCO, the notions of masculinity took on connotations that stressed martial or other values. It is by no means clear that notions of initiation within South Africa follow any one pattern. The traits that are commended to boys as desirable for a man in the instructions they are given before and after the circumcision may vary considerably. It is also important to note the role of women in these processes – that men do not become men without the substantial (and generally unacknowledged) role of women, something that has always been there, but may have increased in the current period.[16]

Manhood and the early martial tradition as inspiration to later generations

Earlier warriors

When Nelson Mandela made his speeches from the dock in court cases in 1962 and at the Rivonia trial in 1964, he referred to the impact that tales about earlier warriors made on him:

> Many years ago, when I was a boy brought up in my village in the Transkei, I listened to the elders of the tribe telling stories about the good old days, before the arrival of the white man. Then our people lived peacefully, under the democratic rule of their kings and their amapakati,[17] and moved freely and confidently up and down the country without let or hindrance. Then the country was ours, in our name and right. We occupied the land, the forests, the rivers; we extracted the mineral wealth beneath the soil and all the riches of this beautiful country without let or hindrance. We set up and

> operated our own government, we controlled our own armies and we organised our own trade and commerce. The elders would tell tales of the wars fought by our ancestors in defence of the fatherland, as well as the acts of valour performed by generals and soldiers during those epic days. The names of Dingane and Bhambatha, among the Zulus, of Hintsa, Makana, Ndlambe of the Amaxhosa, of Sekhukhuni and others in the north, were mentioned as the pride and glory of the entire African nation.
>
> I hoped and vowed then that, among the treasures that life might offer me, would be the opportunity to serve my people and make my own humble contribution to their freedom struggles.[18] (Mandela, 1990, pp. 149–51. Original spelling of names by Mandela retained.)

This was or was to become an important part of liberation discourse over the years that followed. All broadcasts of the ANC's illegal radio station, *Radio Freedom*, would begin with references to earlier warriors of various peoples of South Africa. Illegal pamphlets would refer to this heritage. Even to this day, it is conventional in ANC celebrations, such as the presentation of the January 8 statement on the organisation's anniversary, to refer to these past heroes.

This established a notion of the male warrior as hero in ANC self-identity, or as a model to be emulated. This remained part of Mandela's thinking in 1990, when he is quoted as referring to his military training in Algeria as having 'made me a man' (quoted in Cock, 1991, p. 169).

In conducting the armed struggle, cadres were encouraged to see themselves as 'picking up the spear', that had been dropped when Bambata and others had been defeated in the last armed rebellion before Union, in 1906, continuing a tradition of martial heroism and resistance.

The heroes, it will be noticed, are all male. Certainly there were women warriors like MaNthatisi, who, as the mother of the heir to the Tlokwa, led her people in war, though not against the colonists. In the case of the Moorosi, as will be seen, women were prepared to fight the colonists. The exact role of women in these situations needs further examination.

One of the key figures in the heroic iconography, listed by Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu, was Makhanda,[19] who led an attack on the garrison in Grahamstown in 1819, and was sent to Robben Island where he died trying to escape (Roux, 1964; Mostert, 1992; Pringle, 1966). There are many interesting features in Makanda's life, but it also raises issues of manhood. At that time, there was conflict between Ndlambe, the regent of the Rarabe clan, and his nephew, the heir Ngqika (called Gaika by the colonists) who was collaborating with the colonisers (and, as often happened in these relationships, was 'rewarded' in the end, with his own land also being seized). What is interesting for our purposes in defining the areas of difference between Ndlambe and Ngqika is repeated reference to the followers of Ndlambe *not regarding Ngqika as a man*.

When Makhanda surrendered to the British in order to end the warfare and plunder of Xhosa lands, a delegation of councillors approached the British and, according to the British record, used language suffused with masculinist imagery to justify their rights (Pringle, 1966):

> … Our fathers were MEN; they loved their cattle; their wives and children lived upon milk; they fought for their property. They began to hate the colonists, who coveted their all, and aimed at their destruction. (Emphasis original)
>
> Now, their kraals and our fathers' kraals were separate. The boors made commandoes on our fathers. Our fathers drove them out of the Zuurveld; and we dwelt there, because we had conquered it. There we were circumcised … (Spelling as original)
>
> We wish for peace; we wish to rest in our huts; we wish to get milk for our children; our wives wish to till the land. But your troops cover the plains, and swarm in the thickets, where they cannot distinguish the man from the woman, and shoot all …
>
> You want us to submit to Gaika [Ngqika]. That man's face is fair to you, but his heart is false. Leave him to himself. Make peace with us. Let him fight for himself – and we shall not call on you for help … But if you will still make war, you may indeed kill the last man of us – but *Gaika shall not rule over the followers of those who think him a woman*. (1966, pp. 285–7) (Emphasis inserted)

This discourse[20] illustrates an early theme of manhood being associated with willingness to resist, willingness to defend your land and protect your people, especially womenfolk who were not supposed to be targets in warfare. The depiction of Ngqika as a woman is a sign for cowardice and treachery. Morality and honour is associated with being a man. Similar imagery is found during the Moorosi rebellion against the British in 1879, when the British hold Chief Moorosi's son, Lehana, captive and he hesitates over rescuing him. Atmore (1970) reports:

> Moorosi was under great psychological pressure to authorise the rescuing of the prisoners before it was too late. Lehana's mother is said to have upbraided him: 'I don't produce children for the white man. You take this skirt and give me your trousers [a very short Basuto garment].'… (1970, p. 23.) (Atmore's spelling of Basotho)

Even in this process of women challenging gender roles, they accepted the notion – by reference to wearing trousers – that warfare was an attribute of manhood.

Clearly, then, when Mandela and *Radio Freedom* invoked the memory of Makhanda and others, they were appealing to a martial and primarily masculinist tradition. But within that martial tradition, as it evolved, there were variations, with the full extent of women's role still to be uncovered and acknowledged. This chapter will argue that later periods disclose many variations in manifestations of masculinity and femininity,

some diverging from notions of 'heroic masculinity', including what may be called 'heroic femininity' and others conforming to these.

Heroic projects

Notions of 'heroic masculinity' have been drawn from masculinity theories and applied to the South African situation (Unterhalter, 2000; see also Whitehead, 2002). While there is definitely something useful and suggestive in this approach, we need to be extremely wary of casting notions of heroism within a monolithic model. Even where someone may well be correctly designated as a male hero, by the definitions of the struggle concerned or by other forms of characterisation, we may well find, as the evidence to be presented shows, that these heroic figures have quite varied ways of playing out their masculinity and heroism, or that they conduct themselves in a manner that requires modification of this notion. This is not necessarily to contest the way in which some literature does depict male heroism, as Unterhalter shows. But that is not the only model of manhood and heroism found within the ANC-led national liberation movement. Also, as indicated, the 'heroic project' was never confined to men.

Underground work and 'revolutionary masculinity'

Underground work may have been mainly the work of men, leaving behind women to look after children and other household responsibilities. In this respect, it conforms to or is depicted as conforming to a pattern of 'heroic masculinity', where the man is assumed to 'make history' and the woman's domain is the private sphere.[21] Thus, Ben Turok writes, after he had placed a bomb at the Rissik Street post office:

> Mary [his wife] asked me what the matter was and I was not able to tell her, but she knew that I was on edge. When she read the newspaper the next day, everything became clear. She was rather resentful at not having known about my MK role and we discussed this. *Certainly, she had to pay as high a price as I did. She had previously been left with the children while I was in hiding and she had to face the police when I was away. But our security demanded this kind of balance and she was bound to accept the arrangement.* (Turok, 2003, p.139) (Emphasis inserted)

And again:

> Deeply steeped in these [revolutionary] texts, I now saw myself as a typical communist revolutionary. I held senior posts in the ANC,[22] SACP and MK. My personal life was now overtaken by my being swamped with work; I was constantly in meetings. Mary had also become fully integrated into the work of the COD[23] as chair of the Johannesburg branch *while trying hard not to neglect the boys …* (Turok, 2003, p. 139) (Emphasis inserted)

In other words, Ben Turok's job was to concentrate on revolutionary texts. Mary could be involved, but without neglecting the children. The assumptions, which need to be problematised, appear to be in line with the masculinist view that man has been assumed to make history (O'Brien, 1983).

This consigning of women to the private domain relates to a heroic male mythology (Whitehead, 2002). Stephen Whitehead writes:

> Despite its inherent flaws, the image and mythology of man leaving home to engage in a heroic project maintains a resounding presence in most societies. We see the mythology at work in the notion of 'man as hunter'; the adult male subjecting himself to the rigours and dangers of the wild, far removed from the comfort of (female) home … Yet despite their absence from the main scene, which such notions suggest, women play a key role in the imagery of 'man in his world' … Woman is the Other that necessarily exists in order to allow man to assume his central role. Indeed, at a practical level, women are usually the ones who make the necessary sacrifices of time and energy in order to supply the means and space for men to exercise their heroic project. (2002, p. 119)
>
> … In the 'real world', the dilemmas of the heroic male project, together with their irresistible character, are caught in the timeless images of men trudging resolutely off to war, waved off by their womenfolk.[24] (2002, p. 120)

Elaine Unterhalter (2000), in a study mainly comprising South African 'struggle autobiographies', identifies a common construction of masculinity in texts across race, class and generation:

> The work of heroic masculinity … is work where men cross boundaries of race, class, ethnicity and age, trusting different men (and some women) with their lives, generally despite the effects of socialisation, and the strictures of the state which warn against such a course …
>
> Heroism and adventure is work lived exclusively in the public realm, which must be supported unquestioningly by the private sphere (mothers, wives, girlfriends, children) … In men's autobiographical writing the support provided by a feminised portrayal of 'home' is always complemented by male camaraderie, deep bonds of friendship formed in adversity. Side by side with heroic autonomy, is deep loyalty generally to other men. If there is a choice between the private (feminine) world and the public sphere of heroism and adventure, the choice is always made by the author for the public world, backed up by reference to history. The sacrifice of 'the soft world' of feminised relationships is justified in terms of the 'hard achievements' of heroism and male camaraderie. (2000, pp. 166, 167)

It may be that this accurately conveys the content of these works. But further evidence, from outside of such writings, creates complexity in applying this picture to South Africa. There were women, like Ray Alexander, who joined the Communist underground, while her husband Jack Simons refused, to some extent reversing conventional domestic responsibilities (see Simons, 2004; Suttner, 2004a). This replicated a pattern in their marriage, where Jack, a leading theorist, would drive Ray to her trade union negotiations and wait in the car having to content himself with his books, flask and sandwiches (Simons, 2004). It is also a characterisation that is immediately qualified by different conceptions of manhood, some of which are referred to below, as well as by the reality of women not always conforming to these conceptions of their role. There were women as well as men in MK and the broader underground, as we will see. In some cases these women had men under their command.[25]

Diverse models of manhood

It is interesting to investigate and interrogate the models of manhood within the ANC. There were many people who may have represented, through their conduct, models that were commended to others, much as the Cubans say 'be like Che [Guevara]'. It may be that many of these conform to macho militaristic images. Military activities themselves may encourage traditional notions of manhood.

But one of these individuals, who was one of the most famous revolutionary models, and who did not conform to 'traditional' or contemporary 'hegemonic' macho notions of manhood, was Vuyisile Mini. He was the composer of revolutionary songs, including the famous one *Nants' indod' emnyama* ... / Watch out Verwoerd/ Vorster here comes the black man.'

Mini was a South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) unionist, early MK soldier and Communist. He died on the gallows, convicted on false evidence. Cadres used to be told stories about Mini being offered his freedom on death row, in exchange for supplying information about his comrades, and refusing. In the tradition of freedom fighters 'holding their heads high', Mini is said to have walked his last steps to the gallows singing some of the many freedom songs he had composed (Luckhardt & Wall, 1980, pp. 177–8).[26]

These are the qualities often associated with being a revolutionary and in particular with what one may call 'revolutionary masculinity', found especially in someone like Che Guevara or Chris Hani (MK and Communist Party leader, assassinated in 1993). The oral and written tradition among the members of a liberation movement tends to create a model of what is revolutionary conduct and of which people are exemplars of such conduct. Clearly Mini has been projected as representing such a model.

But there was also a side to Mini that is not so easily assimilated into this convention (just as there are elements of Chris Hani's persona, which, as will be shown, raise similar

ambiguities in accommodating such a label). In so far as it is a masculinist tradition, there are elements of his conduct that disrupt what is the supposed conduct expected of male heroes.

Sobizana Mngqikana, as a member of the Border Regional Command Secretariat, was instructed, after the formation of MK in 1961, to write to comrades in Port Elizabeth demanding a report back on the ANC conference that had been held in Lobatse in 1962. In some ways, this mode of operating was a hangover from the earlier period of constitutionalism, demanding normal forms of accountability, without sensitivity to the changed conditions demanded by illegality.[27] Sobizana Mngqikana reports:

> In response to our demand a delegation comprising Vuyisile Mini and [Caleb] Mayekiso[28] came to East London. The meeting lasted from 8 p.m. to 5 a.m. the following day. The four-room house in which we held the meeting was discreetly guarded and secured by MK cadres. Before we could delve into the main part of the meeting, Mini, in tears, expressed dismay at the uncomradely letter we had written. 'Did we know the implications of the resort to armed struggle?' he asked. 'Did we appreciate that blood is going to flow and that lives are going to be lost'? At some stage he couldn't continue as tears rolled down his cheeks. Mayekiso, I remember, mildly reproached him: 'Vuyisile, Vuyisile stop this, stop this!' After a while he cooled down and proceeded to give a report of the Lobatse conference and the expectations that the leadership had of us …[29]

What this account shows is a revolutionary hero conducting himself in a manner that does not conform to conventional notions of manhood, where men are not supposed to shed tears, that being the role of wives and widows. It contradicts the idea found in much masculinist discourse that the rational is the prerogative of males and the emotional that of females (see Connell, 1995; Whitehead, 2002). In other words, MK soldiers and members of the ANC are provided here with a model of manhood that may disrupt conventional military expectations of what it entailed to be a man.

The model presented by Chris Hani is especially important because in some ways he has attained heroic status equivalent to that of Che Guevara in the Cuban struggle. This is not to suggest that all who admire him emulate all elements of his personal conduct, nor that Hani was a saint. But there is a complexity in Hani's life, and a definite break from textbook notions of the male hero, which need to be factored into any account of masculinities within the ANC. This will be illustrated in the sections that follow.

At another level, the often stereotypical notion of macho soldiers is qualified by Faith Radebe's account of male soldiers' longing to have children visit the camp in Angola. She reports how they continually asked that Angolan women be allowed to visit the camp with their children so that they could have children around them.

In the same camp, men objected to women who were pregnant being sent to Tanzania to have their babies, because the facilities were available only there. They wanted the

women to have babies in the camp and the facilities to be provided. They longed for elements of normality in their lives, represented in this case by the presence of babies.[30]

Revolutionary morality and the suppression of the personal

Involvement in a revolution, which is what motivated the ANC/SACP underground organisation, especially in the period of insurrection, raises under-researched questions concerning the impact of these activities on conceptions of the personal, and negation of intimacy, with overriding demands for sacrifice and loyalty to something greater than oneself. It may be that many of these values also feed into conceptions of masculinity, already referred to, which may be dominant (though contested) in the ANC's self-conception, and, in particular, in those activities of the organisation that are considered most heroic (Unterhalter, 2000; Suttner, 2004c).

There is a substantial body of revolutionary literature, some of which used to be much sought after, which has a specific orientation towards the place of the personal. Notes from The work of Liu ShaoQi, for example, who wrote *How to be a Good Communist,* were found in Nelson Mandela's handwriting at Rivonia (Mandela, 1994).

> A PARTY MEMBER'S PERSONAL INTERESTS MUST BE UNCONDITIONALLY SUBORDINATED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE PARTY.
>
> At all times and on all questions, a Party member should give first consideration to the interests of the Party as a whole, and put them in the forefront and place personal matters and interests second … [E]very Party member must completely identify his personal interests with those of the Party both in his thinking and in his actions. He must be able to yield to the interests of the Party without any hesitation or reluctance and sacrifice his personal interests whenever the two are at variance …[31] (Liu ShaoQi, 1984 pp. 136–37) (Upper case original)

In essence, the idea of a revolutionary is an individual who expects nothing personally, who is prepared to sacrifice all personal needs in order to ensure success of the struggle.[32] Consequently, there is no sacrifice too great that can be offered or expected and there is no situation where personal needs can supplant that of the organisation. The heroic legacy of Party cadres is constantly communicated to members (Hermet, 1971). The French Communist Party, during the period of resistance to Nazism, was known as the 'Party of the executed' because it suffered so many deaths in the resistance (Palme Dutt, 1964, p. 271). The exemplary revolutionary life of Ernesto Che Guevara, the famous Argentinean-born Cuban revolutionary, inspired generations of revolutionaries throughout the world. Yet his ideas also contain a specific notion of the personal and the political that we are now in a position to interrogate more closely (see Guevara, 1965).

Earlier, such examination or discussion may not have been possible for many who were in the thick of the liberation struggle, given the conditions of operation. Furthermore, whatever the dangers or negative legacies in this perspective (to which I will draw attention), Guevara's position and that of Liu, just quoted, may have been one of the conditions necessary for success in revolutionary ventures. Single-mindedness may have been required for successful conduct of the tasks of a revolutionary and also helped blot out some of the pain entailed (see Suttner, 2001).

The argument will not be that some harmonisation between personal and political needs was always impossible. There are cases where it was achieved, despite the great stresses. It may be that Albertina and Walter Sisulu achieved this in their marriage (Sisulu, 2002; Suttner, 2003a). Walter and Albertina Sisulu's responsibilities to the 'ANC as family' do not seem to have impaired their conventional role and exercise of responsibilities to children and grandchildren. In fact, Walter Sisulu was constantly consulted on Robben Island about the naming of children or his advice was sought on other family issues. In the case of Albertina Sisulu, her role as mother cannot be narrowly confined to that of a caregiver or whatever other conventional notions attach to motherhood. As a mother, she also saw herself as a politiciser of her own children and a wide range of others who came to be embraced in the notion of 'sons and daughters'.[33]

But it may nevertheless be true that the denial of the personal was *generally* one of the conditions for successful prosecution of revolutionary activities, in many situations. The reason for probing is that there are consequences and scars that have been left through these sacrifices and they need to be recognised, acknowledged and if possible remedied.[34] Yeats, in his profound but ambivalent poem commemorating the martyrs of the Irish Easter 1916 rising, writes:

> Too long a sacrifice
> Can make a stone of the heart.[35]

This numbing of emotions may be part of the legacy of ANC/SACP underground organisation, for it may well be that these conceptions of revolutionary morality were more thoroughly absorbed in the underground situation than any other site of struggle.[36] There are sacrifices beyond those that are known that remain with many people, unacknowledged as part of their contribution.

Underground work and its secrecy forced choices, with enduring pain and guilt, on many cadres. Many had to leave their homes and families and loved ones, usually without informing them of their departure (e.g. Duka, 1974; Bernstein, 1994, pp. 16–17, 18–20, 21–22). At the time, the expectation was that they would soon return, instead of being away for decades. Many left children as babies only to see them again three decades later. Ike Maphotho was one of those, spending more than ten years in Rhodesian jails after being captured in the Wankie or Sipolilo campaigns – a part of resistance history

that still needs to be adequately documented.[37] When explaining that the underground group to which he belonged (after release from the first of two terms of imprisonment) used to tell young people that the time had come to leave in order to join MK, Anton Qaba was clear that there was no opportunity to say farewells. There was no such thing as 'I have left this or that at home.' Allowing people to return to their homes could compromise the security of everyone involved in the operation.[38]

Hilda Bernstein (1994) captures the pain:

> Exile exacts its price not only from those who leave, but also from those who are left: parents and siblings; and wives and children left by husbands who fled across the border, often without a word of farewell and leaving behind no money for material needs. The women went to work and brought up families alone and in loneliness, shouldering the total burden of responsibility and care, often through silent years without any communication from the one who had left …
>
> Many who left concealed their intention to depart from those closest to them – parents, wives (mostly; few women left husbands), brothers and sisters – both for self-protection and to protect those left behind from reprisals and allegations of complicity. Then their lives were haunted by the unresolved departure – not having said goodbye. For years there could be no communication by letter or by phone with any member of the family … Without the rites of farewell the one who had departed was already within the realm of the dead.
>
> Abrupt and secret departure added a sense of guilt to the exiles' pain of unresolved separation from the closest members of the family. Some mothers left babies, believing they would be reunited within a short time – only to meet them again when they were strangely grown … The years of loss and suffering of the mothers are only one part of the picture; the other is the alienation, the resentment and feelings of rejection suffered by the children who were left behind. (1994, p. xiv)

Ruth Mompati was sent out for political training in 1962. She was not able to return because it was believed she would face arrest. This forced her separation from her children. 'But I still wanted to go back, because I'd left a baby of two and a half years, and a child of six years. And I just couldn't think of not going home ...' (Quoted in Bernstein, 1994, p. 20). When they did reconnect in 1972, they did not know one another: 'I was not their mother ... I was a stranger ... I think I suffered more, because they had substitutes. I hadn't had any substitute babies. I now had grown-up children, who became my children as years went on ...' (1994, pp. 21–22).[39]

Eric Mtshali left to join MK in 1962 without being able to inform or say goodbye to his wife or children. Eight years later, without having had any contact, his wife died.

Q: So you have no idea of what your wife thought about your just disappearing?

A: Absolutely.

Q: Did it pain you a lot?

A: Yes it did, but I took it like a man …[40]

Faith Radebe fully accepts the need in a revolution for operational considerations to take precedence. But this placed intolerable strain on her marriage. Husband and wife were not able to spend time together or sufficient time together at important moments of personal crisis or illness. She is clear that this did not feed into already existing weaknesses in her marriage, but the demands of the national liberation movement literally made it impossible to relate in a manner that could sustain it. But that is not intended to put blame on or repudiate the revolution or the liberation movement. It is a reality that Radebe sees as regrettable but one of the necessary or inevitable fall-outs from a revolution.[41]

This type of severance of relationships was not peculiar to underground organisation, in that imprisonment often ruptured relationships irreparably.[42] Antonio Gramsci, the Italian Communist who died in Mussolini's prison, never saw his wife or children after his arrest (Fiori, 1970).

Success in underground work meant that operatives had to harden themselves and repress basic needs to communicate with others. The work meant concealing important parts of their lives and fears and anxieties. This often created misunderstandings in not meeting social expectations from people or simply failing to explain adequately why one or another thing was done or not done.[43] Underground life sets serious limits on social and emotional life, and safeguarding what is done below the surface limits what can be done above ground. One cannot stand out; one cannot associate oneself with activities that might draw attention to one. In the darkest periods, underground workers had to resist public identification with causes they supported in order to safeguard what they were doing below the surface.

Love for the people versus inter-personal love

Paradoxically, both Liu and Guevara do not deny the importance of love. But, in the revolutionary context, they do not conceive of or acknowledge love as an inter-personal phenomenon. Personal love is supplanted by 'love for the people'.[44] Guevara writes:

> At the risk of seeming ridiculous, let me say that the true revolutionary is guided by great feelings of love. It is impossible to think of a genuine revolutionary lacking this quality … *Our vanguard revolutionaries must make an ideal of this love of the people*, of the most sacred causes, and make it one and indivisible …

> The leaders of the revolution have children just beginning to talk, who are not learning to say 'daddy'. *They have wives who must be part of the general sacrifice of their lives in order to take the revolution to its destiny.* The circle of their friends is limited strictly to the circle of comrades in the revolution. There is no life outside of it.
>
> … We must strive every day so that this love of living humanity is transformed into actual deeds, into acts that serve as examples, as a moving force.
>
> … There is also the danger of the weakness we can fall into. If a man thinks that dedicating his entire life to the revolution means that in return he should not be distracted by such worries as that one's child lacks some necessity, then with this reasoning one's mind is open to infection by the germs of future corruption.
>
> In our case we have maintained that our children should have or should go without those things that the children of the common man have or go without, and that our families should understand this and struggle for it to be that way … (Guevara, 1997, pp. 211–212) (Emphasis inserted).

Liu relates the question of love to 'communist morality', the need to 'show loyalty to and love for all comrades, all revolutionaries and working people …' (Liu, 1984, p. 137).

Ray Alexander Simons describes how she was unwilling to return to Latvia, from where she had emigrated as a teenager, in order to be with her fiancé. '[A]lthough I was not in love with any other man, *I was indeed 'in love' with the people here*, the country and the struggle against race discrimination …' (Simons, 2004, p. 81) (Emphasis inserted).

Writing of the Spanish Communist Underground, Guy Hermet refers to the Party as 'a sort of extended family in which memories and hopes are shared and to which [the member] is tied both emotionally and materially. In a letter to his wife from prison, Julian Grimian uses just the word – family – when he refers to the Party, saying that it was sending him too many parcels, considering the financial difficulties it was in.' The USSR also formed an over-arching family figure (Hermet, 1971, p. 149).

In South Africa, Communists sometimes used the word 'family' as a metaphor or code word to refer to the Party. But this was also true of the ANC. One woman cadre, in explaining to her children that she has to leave them behind in Tanzania in order to execute an ANC assignment, tells them, 'although I may be your mother, your real mother and father are the ANC. The ANC will look after you, feed you and clothe you' (in Majodina, 1995, p. 29). This conception is found earlier, in recollections of the role of volunteers in the Congress of the People campaign, which led to the adoption of the Freedom Charter. Mrs Sibanda, an old volunteer from Cradock, reported, 'Whenever we went to people's houses, and they were in trouble, or had problems, we would become mothers of that family, and men volunteers should be fathers.' (Suttner & Cronin, 1986, p. 12)

Dealing with the question of comrades marrying while in MK, Von den Steinen (1999) refers to 'the common slogan that the ANC was each comrade's mother and father'

(1999, p. 207). Permission had to be sought from the ANC leadership before a couple could marry. Security considerations made contact with family back home difficult if not impossible, and placed strain on young couples who felt that taking such a step without the knowledge of their family was problematic (1999, pp. 207–8). Baleka Mbete argues that the need for the organisation to approve was not a manifestation of authoritarianism but a responsible attitude, ensuring that adequate investigations were conducted to ensure that other parties were not prejudiced, for example undisclosed spouses left behind in South Africa. There was also an overall need to care for young people who left in their teens and had no role models other than the mothers and fathers in the ANC.[45]

But having received such permission, we have seen, the needs of the organisation sometimes placed inordinate strain on these relationships, with partners often being deployed far away from one another.

The question one may ask today is what are the consequences of wives or children not being consulted about the sacrifices that the (usually, but we have seen not always) husband/revolutionaries decided should be their lot.[46] We know this consultation did not usually take place, and may well have endangered the activities of MK had it occurred. Obviously, this left much 'unfinished business', which may still need to be resolved. It is also interesting that the designation 'revolutionary' in much of this literature appears to be assumed to apply almost exclusively to males.

These notions of love may also have resulted in specific conceptions of parental responsibility and relationships, as part of this vision of a broader love of the people that tends to supplant or downgrade the inter-personal, including responsibilities towards children. Freddy Reddy, a psychiatrist working in MK camps in Angola from the 1970s, reports a consultation that he was involved in concerning a young man who left the country to join MK, but mainly to meet his father. He had hardly known his father, who had been in prison during his childhood and then joined MK outside. Reddy describes their meeting and the differing reactions of father and son:

> The first time he saw his father was on the parade ground during inspection. He was very excited, but his father gave not the slightest sign of recognition, nor did he contact him later after the inspection. The boy was emotionally devastated. He felt that his father did not love him. It was not very long before he developed confusional psychosis. On asking his father why he ignored his son, he replied that *everyone in the camp was his children:* 'I could not give him special treatment.' (Reddy & Karterud, 1995, p. 226) (Emphasis inserted)

How widespread was this attitude? To what extent was the embrace of this wider notion of parenting an adoption of wider responsibilities towards children in general? Or was it primarily a mode for displacing or repressing the need for responsibility towards one's own children?

In fact, many young people missed their parents very much. Phumla Tshabalala speaks of missing her mother every night. But it was not only the young girls or women; she said there was no one who did not miss his or her mother. In fact, Gertrude Shope, head of the ANC Women's Section, was asked to visit camps for two days instead of one because there were so many young men who wanted to be with a motherly figure.[47]

Women in MK testify to Chris Hani's departing from what may often have been the norm, making cadres feel that their personal fears and emotional make-up were as much the concern of the army as strategy and tactics. Dipuo Mvelase, a female MK commander, describes the way in which Hani raised issues that for many people were outside the bounds of revolutionary discourse:

> He was … a comrade to whom you felt you can say anything and not feel bad about it, whether it is personal or whether it is about the struggle … Someone you could confide in, probably say certain things that I couldn't even say to my mum … Despite the fact that everybody needed his attention because he was the commander in that area [in Angola], we had about three hundred new recruits and he spent every single evening talking to us. And you felt wanted, you felt at home. You felt important you know.
>
> Asking you about your family, how you feel, what is your experience, do you miss home? Questions that you thought you wouldn't be asked because we are in a revolution … you as a person, you get lost … But Comrade Chris made sure that you don't get lost … [H]e humanised the struggle … He made every one of us feel we count. This is something that one never experienced before, because there are those big expectations that revolutionaries have to do this – have to sacrifice that. That revolutionaries are ordinary people, one never felt that until I met Comrade Chris …[48]

Hani also integrated this concern in the way cadres were briefed prior to being sent on missions into the country:

> Comrade Chris's brief … had more to do with you and your readiness than with the details of your mission. He would ask: are you really ready and some people find they are not really ready to come into the country. But they are scared because they will be called cowards ... less revolutionary.
>
> He made you feel that if you are not ready it doesn't mean you are less revolutionary … You can still make a contribution and to win the war it doesn't mean you have to be in the country ... And Comrade Chris used to be more concerned about you succeeding, you fighting so that you can fight tomorrow. Not you fighting and making a sacrifice and be put in the heroes' book. The *life* of each and every soldier used to be very important to him. He used to ask: Do you think there are things that are personal that you need to sort out? His view was that if you go home with the baggage of

> certain personal problems that are not resolved, that are not addressed, you might not be very, very confident in fulfilling your mission – that you might *die* and that used to concern him *very, very much*.
>
> We all joined the army because we were angry, but once you are there … some people discover that they really don't want to go back home and fight, you know, and because of an army situation there isn't enough space to accommodate that ... Comrade Chris managed to accommodate it because he used to deal with us individually and discuss with us and find out what troubles us, what makes us happy, you know, and that … was very important, more important than the mission itself because these people – we have to implement these missions, and not some objects because they happen to have skills …[49]

Women in MK also testify to Hani's always emphasising gender issues, introducing rules to protect women from abuse and seeking to ensure that they were deployed for what they were trained to do, as soldiers, equal to their menfolk.[50]

Conclusion: No easy route to characterising ANC masculinities

This chapter has tried to convey, through limited periods of ANC history, the essential conditionality of any assessment of masculinities within the organisation. The ANC carries a number of legacies within its organisational consciousness, practices and individual identities. Some of these are warrior traditions. Some link the ANC to cultural systems preceding and coexisting with members joining the organisation. Some stress specific conditions of manhood that may presuppose limits on the role of women. Yet other elements of that legacy are conducive to realising gender equality. Notions of manhood within the ANC are diverse. It may be that the example of Hani is atypical of MK or MK leadership or that of the ANC-led liberation movement as a whole. It nevertheless represented a role model for many, and it complicates the picture and indicates the urgent need to go beyond formal texts or other writings and uncover the variety of actual relationships that existed. Before more can be said, further research needs to be done in order to bring this legacy to the surface and unpack the extent to which it impacts on the present.

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Endnotes

1. As in Erlank, 2003, p. 656ff.
2. For a more elaborated qualification than that provided in the text, see Lindsay and Miescher, 2003, p. 6ff.
3. I borrow here from Needham, 1969, p. 13.
4. The concept of the gender order was first developed by Matthews (1984). I refer to Connell here because of this chapter's focus on masculinities and femininities.
5. Cock (1991) made an important earlier contribution.
6. Interview with Zingiva Nkondo, 18 September 2002, Johannesburg.
7. Interview with Victor Moche, 23 July 2002, Johannesburg.
8. The approximation of the numbers relates to some of the original 80 being sent back by the then Bechuanaland authorities.
9. Interview with Radilori John Moumakwa, 15 May 2003, Mafikeng.
10. According to Zakes Tolo, who also comes from the area, but is of a much later generation (personal communication, 20 May 2003).
11. Dr P. M. Sebate, email communication, 20 May 2003.
12. Interview with R. J. Moumakwa, 2003.
13. Interview with M. Mandubu, 29 July 2004, East London.
14. It is interesting that the necessity of initiation to manhood is related to returning home, while as indicated later in the text, some people only felt they could be initiated on returning home from exile.
15. See Suttner, 2003b, pp. 314–6, and Suttner, 2004c on access of MK to sangomas/inyangas in certain situations.
16. Personal communication from Nomboniso Gasa, on the basis of research in Ntshingeni village, June 2004. Discussion with Dr W. Serote, Maputo, January 2004.
17. This refers to 'insiders', those of highest rank next to the king (footnote in Mandela, 1990). The word also refers more conventionally to councillors.
18. See Mandela's almost identical statement in the Rivonia trial, (1990, p. 161). See also Delius, 1996, pp. 128–9, regarding similar upbringing of boys in Sekhukhuneland. In an interview, Walter Sisulu, n.d., pp. 18, 214, describes similar veneration of these heroic figures in his childhood. See ibid, p. 164, for the way he taught history classes on Robben Island.
19. Conventionally referred to – as in Mandela's court address – as Makana. The name is also sometimes spelt Makanda and Makhanda. He is also known as Nxele, which means the left-handed one.
20. Referred to by Pringle as a 'manly remonstrance' (1966, p. 287).
21. See Whitehead, 2002, pp. 114, 117ff, and chapter 5 generally.
22. For the record, whites could not be members of the ANC until the 1969 Morogoro conference opened membership to those based outside the country.
23. This is the abbreviation for the Congress of Democrats, an organisation formed for whites within what became the Congress Alliance, comprising the ANC, South African Indian Congress, Coloured Peoples' Congress, COD and later SACTU, which was formed in 1955.
24. What characterised the South African situation is that there were generally no 'goodbyes' to loved ones, apart from it also being a heroic female project, as indicated.
25. See below and interview, Faith Radebe, 2004. There are many such women.
26. Luckhardt and Wall (1980) refer to Mini as a 'musician and poet of exceptional quality' (pp. 177–8). See also the following online material:
    Vuyisile Mini (n.d.) at http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/misc/mini.html
    Worker, Poet and Martyr for Freedom (n.d.) at http://disa.nu.ac.za/articledisplaypage.asp?filename=DAS186articletitle=Vuyisile+M
    Vuyisile Mini (n.d., c. 1986) at http://www.sacp.org.za/biographies/vmini.html
27. See discussion in Suttner, 2003c, p. 139.
28. He was also to die after torture in police detention.
29. Interview with Sobizana Mngqikana, 2 February 2001, Stockholm.
30. Interview with Faith Radebe, 11 October 2004, Johannesburg.
31. See also Turok, 2003, and Suttner, 2004c.
32. See Hermet, 1971, on the Spanish Communist Party underground experience.
33. See Marx, 1992, and statement of Lindiwe Sisulu, in Strasburg, 2004.
34. See interviews in Bernstein, 1994.

35. W. B. Yeats (1973). [1916]. The collected poems of W. B. Yeats (p. 204). London & Basingstoke: Macmillan.
36. This numbing of the emotions was also very necessary in prison, where prisoners sometimes felt that allowing themselves to hope for release and a satisfying personal life would weaken their resolve (see Suttner, 2001).
37. Interview with Ike Maphotho, 28 January 2004, Polokwane.
38. Interview with Anton Qaba, 2 March 2004, Pietermaritzburg.
39. See also Bernstein's (1994) interview with Thuso Mashaba, pp. 67, 70, 71.
40. Interview with Eric Mtshali, 8 February 2003, Johannesburg.
41. Interview, Radebe, 2004. Obviously when one is outside of such a struggle and does not make the choices Radebe makes, one can adopt various moral positions towards the break-up of a marriage. But Radebe had made these choices and she recognises this very unfortunate price that resulted from her choices.
42. For example, interview with Ahmed Kathrada, 18 February 2003, Cape Town.
43. See, for example, quotation from Jeremy Cronin in Frederikse, 1990, pp. 126–7.
44. Though the testimony of Guevara's daughter, Aleida, in an article on his Motor Cycle Diaries, indicates an atmosphere of love in the family environment. See 'Riding my father's motorcycle', online at http://www.cubasolidarity.com/aboutcuba/cubaspeaks/cheguevara/041009aleida.htm, where she describes him as 'the most complete man I've ever met'.
45. Interviews with Baleka Mbete, 19 February 2003, Cape Town, and Pallo Jordan, 20 February 2003, Cape Town.
46. Apart from the earlier quotation regarding sacrifices that the revolution demanded from families of the leaders, one of the most famous revolutionary statements, Che Guevara's farewell letter to Fidel Castro, in resigning from the Cuban government, includes the remark: 'Wherever I am, I will feel the responsibility of being a Cuban revolutionary, and I shall behave as such. I am not ashamed that I leave nothing material to my children and my wife: I am happy it is that way. I ask nothing for them, as the state will provide them with enough to live on and have an education' (Guevara, 1997, p. 354).
47. Interviews with Phumla Tshabalala, 13 July 2003, Johannesburg, and Nomphumelelo Setsubi, 20 August 2004, Pretoria. Confirmed by Reddy and Karterud, 1995, p. 227, and interview with Faith Radebe, 2004.
48. Interview with Dipuo Mvelase, 29 June 1993, Johannesburg. Nomphumelo Setsubi, in an interview, reports similar impressions.
49. Interview with Dipuo Mvelase, 1993.
50. Interviews with Dipuo Mvelase, 1993 and Nomphumelelo Setsubi, 2004.

CHAPTER 12

Culture change, Zulu masculinity and intergenerational coflict in the context of civil war in Pietermaritzburg (1987–1991)

Mxolisi R Mchunu

Introduction

This chapter explores issues of generational conflict in the struggle between 'fathers' and 'sons', in the light of two incidents that took place in the KwaShange area of Inadi in the Vulindlela district of Pietermaritzburg in KwaZulu-Natal, the one in 1987 and the other in 1991. These incidents were simultaneous with political upheaval in the Pietermaritzburg area, upheaval that was tantamount to a civil war between the United Democratic Front (which was regarded as the internal wing of the then banned African National Congress) and the Inkatha Cultural Movement (later the Inkatha Freedom Party). This conflict was related to the struggle against the apartheid regime, resulting in a state of emergency being declared, and thus circumscribing the media reports. Studies of this violence in KwaZulu-Natal have suggested that there was a struggle between younger males and older males, perhaps emanating from different views on manhood with these differences accentuated during the time of political conflict. In the case under discussion, 'fathers' attempted to control the younger generation, who they believed were getting out of control and were using the political unrest of the times to their own 'non-political' ends. The 'fathers' acted against this apparent lack of control by demanding respect and insisting on discipline. It will therefore be hypothesised in this chapter that respect and discipline are key features in constructions of traditional Zulu masculinity. In response, the young men insisted on being treated as men, asserting their claims of manhood against their 'fathers', who they believed were trying to extend their generational subordination.

Below is the evidence in literature for the two incidents. The first derives from the court case report (in Jeffery, 1997) dating from some time after the incident itself, and the second from a concurrent report in the *Sunday Tribune*, which concerns the actual happenings of the event (in Jeffery, 1997).

(i) The KwaShange massacre of September 25, 1987, 11pm:

> Twelve people, including three black policemen, were arrested in connection with the killings. In April 1988 two men, one a former policeman, were convicted of the 13 murders in the Natal Provincial Division of the Supreme Court in Durban. Mr. Justice N S Page said that there were extenuating factors in that the accused 'had launched a pre-emptive raid on the youths', whom they feared would attack. Their crimes, however, said the judge, remained acts of 'appalling and merciless cruelty'. The evidence showed that at about 11pm on 25 September 1987 a group led by Mr. Nkosinathi Hlengwa, a policeman, attacked the house in which the youngsters were gathered. 'The house was encircled by Hlengwa's men and stones were thrown, breaking windows. Shots were fired and a door smashed in. When the youths tried to barricade the doorway a fire was started. More shots were fired into the house.' Those who sought to escape from the blazing house were struck down one by one. The screams of those that remained in the house ceased only when a gas bottle exploded, 'producing the final holocaust'. Five of the youths died from severe burns, six burn and stab wounds, one of pneumonia associated with burns, and one of head and stab wounds. 'Most of the bodies were unrecognizably scorched, with shin bones and skulls showing through their skin.' Judge Page warned that 'the deeds of Hlengwa [and the others] had sown a crop of hatred amongst parents, friends and relatives, the fruits of which were probably still to come'. (Quoted in Jeffery, 1997, pp. 162–163)

Those 'fruits' were to come five years later in the second incident, of which the following is a newspaper report:

(ii) At the ambush corner at KwaShange on 10 February 1991:

> Two buses returning from the (IFP/ANC political peace talks) meeting were ambushed in KwaShange (near Pietermaritzburg). Some 18 IFP supporters were killed and 11 were injured. A survivor of the ambush, Mr. Solomon Madlala, said that 'all hell broke loose when a mob of people shattered the windows of his bus with stones and bullets' as it approached a curve in the dirt track that led through the ANC-controlled village of KwaShange. Mr. Madlala jumped through one of the open windows. 'But there was nowhere to run,' he said, 'because we were surrounded.' With stick and cowhide shield he forced his way into the long grass at the road's edge and then made for a thicket of bushes. He was shot at as he went. 'Then came his greatest horror', as he heard the buses leaving the area. 'He was not the only one left behind, however. Encroaching darkness and fear of revealing himself prevented Mr. Madlala from seeing anything, but he could hear screaming and shouting and he realized that people were being slaughtered. Indeed, before the night was out no fewer than 18 men, most of those who had been stranded when their buses took off had been systematically hacked or

> shot to death. Their bodies were found next day. They were spread out within a one-kilometre radius spot, suggesting desperate attempts at escape … automatic weapons had been used to rake the vehicles and to dispatch those who, frantic to escape the bullets, jumped from buses only to be cornered and slaughtered by an ANC ambush party'. Many of the bodies were stabbed repeatedly and some had their heads crushed or beaten in so they were almost unrecognizable. 'There was a lot of hatred there', commented one policeman.[1]

It is commonly believed that these two cases of violence were part of the UDF/Inkatha conflict (see Jeffrey, 1997). In this chapter, I offer a critique of this view by showing that generational differences were, in fact, at the bottom of both incidents.

Owing to the state of emergency in operation at this time, media reports were not free to explore either the political ramifications or the links between these two incidents. Nevertheless, Judge Page, in the court case summation, warned of the dire consequences to generational interactions that would surely result from the first incident, while local IFP member Mr Velaphi Ndlovu, commenting at the time of the second incident, noted the fact that the two incidents had taken place at the exact same location. Later political media analysts did not take up this implied link. This was possibly because of the confusing and complex nature of the two incidents. Against current understandings of the time, it was reported that older men who were responsible for the first instance of violence were UDF supporters. Normally, the UDF was regarded as an organisation with a popular youth base, whereas Inkatha was assumed to have the support of older men. The matter was made more complex because the political allegiances of both young and older men seemed to shift from the one incident to the next.

In this chapter, I will argue that the two incidents are related and derive from generational conflict stemming from the pressures of socio-economic change on the lives of the KwaShange community at the time. More important, this is the understanding of the community itself, which still bears the scars of these traumatic events. In seeking to find historical precedents for such generational conflict, I have relied upon historian Ben Carton (2000) who suggested this as one of the root causes of the Bhambatha Uprising of 1906. This argument in no way undervalues the political dimension of the two incidents in relation to the apartheid struggle of the times. My initial approach to these incidents was in the context of my study of the relationship between Zulu fathers and sons in this same area (which happens also to be my home district). To reiterate, I found that all my informants from the three generations I studied consistently emphasised the centrality of discipline to their idea of a 'proper Zulu' father-and-son interaction. The two incidents were consistently mentioned as indicative of a breakdown in the communication between the generations.

'Fathers' killing 'sons': A deeper look at the first incident

In this chapter, I use the terms 'fathers' and 'sons' in inverted commas because it was often not biological fathers, but uncles or classificatory fathers, and even cases of elder brothers, who were the men applying the discipline to youths ('sons') involved in this incident. 'Fathers', and 'sons', are usually part of 'disciplinary courts' in the community, and therefore 'classificatory' derives from the fact that some of the youths involved were 'illegitimate' and their mothers' brothers or their own elder brothers had to take over the disciplining role of absent biological fathers.

The community memory of the first incident (which is still commemorated with memorial services[2] in the Inadi area) is that a number of boys (then between the ages of 17 and 21 years), who were essentially 'poorly disciplined', had gathered in groups of 'trouble-makers' (known for armed robbery) to prepare for a planned assault. Their 'fathers' had decided to forcibly 'discipline' them in a 'disciplinary court' (essentially to *sjambok* [whip] the youths). There were certain *izinsizwa*[3] (older youths) who aligned themselves to the age group of the 'fathers' who proved to be informers and 'betrayed' the boys' group to that of the 'fathers' by giving details of their activities. The 'fathers' carried dangerous traditional weapons (such as spears) to the 'disciplinary court'.[4] It is said that a gun went off and the ricocheting bullet ignited a gas cylinder in the home where the boys were being 'disciplined', causing approximately 13 boys to be 'accidentally' burnt to death. The youths were buried in a single graveyard near the Mtholangqondo High School, where most had been scholars.[5] The ensuing court case resulted in a number of prominent senior men being jailed for culpable homicide, including the man who was the owner of the gun that was fired, even though it was his brother who had taken the gun to the 'disciplinary court'. Many of the fathers risked the 'horror' of finding one of their own sons among the 'miscreants' and thus could have inadvertently contributed to their deaths. (An example was my neighbour who was then a married man who had gone with the other men to discipline the youths, not knowing that his younger brother was there on the day, but fortunately the boy managed to escape.)

The media at the time quoted this incident as being politically motivated. The understanding of the politics of the area and times was that, while there was a legitimate struggle to be freed from the apartheid system, men who in fact belonged to longstanding rivalries, which had nothing to do with politics, would align themselves to either the UDF or the Inkatha movement. In this

>> Typical burning of buildings during 1980s unrest in Pietermaritzburg

area, the 'fathers' were alleged to be UDF supporters while the 'sons' were said to be of the Inkatha movement. The politics of the time were of such generational tension that I was reminded of this incident in the field when one of my informants commented upon my question as to whether he thought 'fathers' were disciplined or not. His comment was:

> Kuningi okuhle ebebekwenza okukhombisa ukuthi bafundisekile kodwa okwasibabazisa, namanje futhi kuseyindaba ekhulunyelwa phansi ukuthi amadoda, amadala aqotha imbokodo nesisekelo ezinganeni. Uzokhumbula ukuthi ngeminyaka le edlule kwafa izingane, ezinye zazo kwakuyizingane zesikole zibulawa oyise ngoba zaseziqala ukuba uhlupho emphakathini. Mina-ke Macingwane ngithi ukuba babefundisekile, sasingekho isidingo sokuthi bathathe izikhali uma beyoqondisa igwegwe abasebelibona ezinsizweni.
>
> [Translation] There are a lot of good things that they ['fathers'] did which showed that they are disciplined, but what shocked us, was what they did some years ago when they 'finished' [killed] our [the community's] children! You will remember that some years ago, thirteen boys, some of them mere schoolboys, were killed by their 'fathers' because they were misbehaving [showing a lack of discipline] in the community. What I am saying, Macingwane [interviewer's praise name], is that, if they ['fathers'] were disciplined, they would not take up arms against their 'sons', to straighten their 'bowlegs' ['crooked' ways].

One informant of the 'fathers', age explained what the particular boys in question had done:

> Basebeyiqedile imizi yabantu, bahlasela kwaMbanjwa, bathatha utshwala, bathatha konke ababekufuna endlini, base beshisa nendlu, bahlasela kwaZibula, lapho kwafa ingane kade ilele nonina endlini. Esinye sezizathu esenza ukuthi babulale ukuthi babegxeka amadoda ikakhulukazi ayesebenza eGoli.
>
> [Translation] These young boys had attacked the Mbanjwa home and stole beer and took everything they wanted and burnt the house of the [neighbouring] Zibula and there [when they burnt down the house] they [accidentally and dispassionately] killed a baby. One of the reasons why they did this is that the husbands of the women living in these homes were working in Johannesburg, and they accused them of being UDF members, they themselves claiming to be Inkatha [rival political grouping].

Yet another elderly informant recalled with anger:

> Isala kutshelwa sibona ngomopho. Umuntu ngeke alindele ukuvuna izithelo ezinhle uma ungalaleli.

> [Translation] People who defy the culture [of the 'fathers' who carried guns] must suffer the consequences [of being jailed, in this case]. One cannot expect to reap good 'fruits' if you do not listen!

This informant continued by saying that the 'fathers' who were sentenced to approximately 15 years' prison reaped what they had sown because if they had behaved in a manner that befitted 'responsible men' they would never have taken up arms against 'mere school boys'. Ironically, this informant said nothing much about the lack of discipline of the 'sons', who had occasioned the incident by their bad behaviour. This silence, in my estimation, is due to the African custom of never saying something bad about those who are deceased.

The oral sources of the 'fathers' referred to the boys who died on the scene as '*Babona ngomopho*' ('They suffered the consequences [of disobedience and immoral behaviour].') clarifying their commentary by saying that they (the boys) had not listened to their parents and that they should as young boys have been in their homes, not planning assaults outside at night. One must realise that the 'fathers' could make this comment because they themselves were the discipliners in this case which went horribly wrong, so they were in fact justifying themselves in these statements.

One woman who was listening to the interview regarding the incident had this comment:

> Zaseziyinkinga kakhulu leziyangane emphakathini. Kwakuyizingane ezincane, okwakufike kubeyindida ukuthi akekho umzali owayengaqiniseka ukuthi eyakhe ingane ayikho lapho. Isibonelo esomfana wakwamakhelwane owabe ekhona, nomfowabo omdala wayehamba neqeqebana labamnumzane ababeyoshaya lezozingane … kodwa-ke wayengazi ukuthi ingane yakubo nayo ilapho, ngomusa wenkosi yakwazi ukuphunyuka ibaleke.
>
> [Translation] Those children were troublesome in the community; they were still too young to be doing such things. These children were completely out of hand and the fathers took a huge risk, as they did not know if any of their sons were present at the gathering. For example, so and so was there and he was of the age of the men ['fathers'] and his younger brother was there [who was of the age of 'sons'].

The woman continued:

> Abamnumzane endaweni babevamise ukuthi bahlangane, kuxoxwe ngalezizingane, ngezinye izikhathi baze bakhempe (camp) babehlanganisa amacebo okuyobamba leziziingane bazishaye kodwa akekho umnumzane owayazi ukuth; uyoshaya ingane yakhe, abaningi babenesiqiniseko sokuthi ezabo izingane zilungile, njengokulesisigameko nje baningi abazali abazwa sebetshelwa ukuthi izingane zabo bezilapho kushe khona.
>
> [Translation] Men of the area had started to meet together and plan to entrap these young boys so as to stop them and discipline them; they had made many attempts to

> do so but failed. This time [of the incident] they had actually entrapped them but the incident went wrong.

Those of my age whom I interviewed (namely 'sons' in this context) have their own perception of this particular incident. And so do I. It is generally agreed that the young men who were involved in this incident were totally 'out of hand', and many of us know that our families would have been among the victims of their assaults if they had not been stopped. Nevertheless, there is a feeling that the 'fathers' acted in a rash manner, that they should have waited before disciplining the boys, especially since there is a belief that the boys were not sober at the time and thus could not have benefited from any discipline in that state. This belief is itself derived from the knowledge of these 'sons' as drunkards and dagga smokers. A teacher who taught the youths in question at the time of the incident (and still teaches in the same school) remembers that these boys had started to smoke dagga at school:

> Akakho namunye uthisha owabe esalindele okuhle kubona. Akakho namunye owayegabalawula ngoba babengafuni ukulalela.
>
> [Translation] No teacher still expected something good from them. They were troublesome and nobody could control them because they never wanted to listen.[6]

This statement shows that it was not only fathers and brothers of the youths who regarded them as undisciplined but evidently so did the teachers. In other words, they confirm the African thinking, expressed in such sayings as *'NgesiZulu kuthiwa libunjwa liseva'; 'Kuphinde kuthiwe umuthi ugotshwa usemnanzi'; 'Kuphinde kuthiwe zibanjwa zisemaphuphu'*. [7] [Literal translation: 'A person is most teachable and malleable whilst still young'; 'The stick bends only when it is still fresh'; 'Birds are caught whilst they are still without feathers'.] All of these imply that it is too late to introduce discipline to a youth who has reached his teens or is already into manhood.

'Sons' killing 'fathers': Retaliation and the second incident

In regard to details of the second incident, I feel that the actual 'horror' of the occasion is well reported in the newspapers of the time.[8] The *Sunday Tribune* of 17 February 1991 (in Jeffery, 1997) said it was '[o]ne of the greater tragic ironies of the ongoing conflict that ANC supporters should have mounted such a "successful" pre-emptive ambush on the very day their victims had been temporarily persuaded of the advantages of peace.'

Jeffery (1997) presents a comment from the then district head of the IFP, Mr Velaphi Ndlovu. When informed of the second incident, Ndlovu is quoted as having said '... the ambush had occurred at the same place where 13 children had been shot dead in 1987' (1997, p. 341). Besides apparently being one of the few persons quoted in the media at

the time, Ndlovu reflects his 'insider' knowledge of the area's problems by making a connection between the two incidents.

When discussing indiscipline, this second incident is invariably associated in the minds of my informants with the escalating spiral of violence resulting from the unfortunate failure of the 'disciplinary court' of the first incident, and it is seen as one of retaliation expressive of this generational conflict. It is one of many events used by my oral sources to illustrate how undisciplined 'young men' (or *izinsizwa)* are in the area, that they could show such a lack of respect to the point of hatred for elderly people and thereby also for themselves.

An interpretation of the two incidents in the context of indiscipline

There are three factors that give substance to the assertion that the incidents were cases of generational struggle rather than purely of political conflict: (a) the community understanding in regard to the indiscipline of the younger age group, such as robbery and theft, stemming from their not receiving proper fathering for whatever reason; (b) the need, and the acts, of 'fathers' to wrest back control by implementing 'disciplinary courts'; and (c) the political opportunism on the part of the two generations involved in the incidents. All the factors are based on the gathered collective insights of the community into these incidents, and upon them rests my argument that the incidents were not motivated solely by the political unrest of the time.

In regard to the incidents, my understanding is that socio-economic pressures of change, which resulted in a breakdown in old forms of traditional discipline, could be seen as the main cause. The 'sons' exhibited a lack of discipline in their robbery and activities, which they disguised under the political partisan front of Inkatha or UDF.[9] This lawlessness, which took on a political aspect during the period of unrest and struggle of the late 1980s to early 1990s, was worsened by factors of social change, as, for example, in fathers who failed to legitimise their sons by marrying the boys' mothers, or who were away from home at work in cities. In this environment, 'warlords' (who can be described as senior *izinsizwa*) encouraged and even intimidated the younger boys to join these parties or gangs, expediently termed *amaqabane* (comrades).[10] Over and above their insight into the social changes that gave rise to the political situation in an area like KwaShange, Thokozani Xaba (2001) suggests how 'disciplinary courts' developed:

> Numerous factors conspired to produce 'struggle masculinity'. The upbringing of youth in poor households of impoverished and poorly serviced townships, coupled with the relations they had with state institutions, engendered opposition to the state. The apparently symbiotic relationship between capitalism and apartheid produced antipathy to capitalism. 'Comrades' were impatient with the elders who either seemed to be

> tolerating or accommodating apartheid and this created tensions between young and the old. In order to curb incidents of crime prevalent in urban areas, older men established disciplinary systems that echoed those of rural areas. According to older men, such systems sought to maintain order that seemed to be dissipating in urban areas. Because such structures performed the function of the police, because some people within them were either policemen or police reservists, and because they often used excessive violence, they were slowly seen as instruments of state oppression. Young men who opposed them were seen as serving the interests of the people. The demands to intensify the struggle by boycotting white shops and staying away from work exacerbated conflict as elders went to war against the youth whom they saw as preventing them from earning a living which would enable them to support their families. (Thokozani Xaba, 2001, p. 110)

I take note of the differences between these authors and my own informants' understanding of this period. First, the authors take the political analysts' views of the time, namely that the youth were UDF supporters fighting the apartheid regime, something not borne out on the ground, where they were Inkatha movement supporters during the first incident and the opponents of the older generation were UDF supporters. Second, by the time of the revenge attack, the youth were ANC (unbanned UDF) supporters, while the older men were IFP supporters (former Inkatha movement). In the latter case, the older men were 'paying for the sins' of their age group or generation who had been jailed for their part in the first incident. These political complexities give credence to my contentions of generational conflict. The community also confirms this contention, many members saying that, if these youngsters were not stopped by the actions of the 'fathers' who applied 'discipline' at the time of the first incident, they themselves (the community) may have lost their property and even their lives. There is strong community support for the 'fathers', all saying that the youths were from undisciplined homes, and in a 'normal' society such a thing would not have been allowed to happen. The community explanation for the ambush (the second incident) was that the youths had grown to hate their elders because of the events of the first incident (confirmed by Judge Page in his summation at the court hearing). Some community members expressed it in this or similar ways:

> If it was a political thing, how could they [the youths] have left these men, their 'fathers' with even their faces crushed in, and deprive them of their 'dignity' by stripping them of their clothes?

> How could they [the youths] have forcibly stopped the men's families from fetching their bodies?

This last description was seen as the ultimate in disrespect for the elders.

The central theme of this generational conflict is that it reflects masculinity in crisis. Campbell (1992) touches upon this conflict when she looks at contemporary and pertinent social realities contributing to violence in KwaZulu-Natal (see Campbell 1992, p. 615). Her analysis appears to be supported by the changes experienced by the community in my study. 'Analyses of South African violence', she writes, 'have failed to take explicit account of the fact that the conflict has almost always taken the form of men fighting men' (Campbell, 1992, p. 614).

Several historians have pointed out that the erosion of patriarchy is a long-established social process. Men seem to be experiencing a generalised sense of undermining of masculinity. Although this is a common experience, it is mediated by age, the sense of crisis felt differently by older married men from younger unmarried men. The older generation articulate their sense of crisis in relation to the family or the private domain, while the younger generation tend to refer to the community or the public domain (see Campbell, 1992, p. 618).

'Fathers' said that their inability to live up to the socially defined role of father as a breadwinner undermined their confidence in their role as head of the family and their sense of their right to demand respect from their wives and children. Clearly, there is a gender dimension to this perception (an internalised sense of being powerless victims of wider social forces), especially evident when put alongside older married women's mothers. While the latter also referred to intergenerational tensions in the community, they did not appear to be as threatened by the younger generation as their male counterparts were. Some mothers even expressed veiled pride for the boldness and assertiveness of their teenaged offspring (most likely male) (see Campbell, 1992, p. 620).

Like Campbell, I have also found that men who have been unable to meet the role of breadwinner and leader feel disempowered. Their frustrations then result in desperate measures to institute discipline, as in 'kangaroo courts', so as to forcibly retain their positions as men. I also found that mothers tacitly 'spoil' their sons, many of whom are illegitimate, encouraging their masculine assertion, which could be termed indiscipline by traditional standards. In addition, one cannot ignore that the 'fathers' of KwaShange were so threatened by the indiscipline of the 'sons' that this manifested as 'men fighting men' or 'fathers' fighting 'sons', thus very much a case of 'masculinity in crisis.'

There are historical precedents to be found dealing with similar generational conflicts. I quote from Carton (2000):

> Youthful rebels so distrusted those African patriarchs who refused to join in the rebellion that they taunted them 'from the hilltop … to plait a long rope with which to climb to the heavens,' and they looted the poll tax. One Nkandla homestead head, Lumbe Ka Nombana, reported that 'old loyalist[s]' were being warned that they would be 'killed by the Rebels'. (2000, p. 152)

An interesting aside is that many of those involved in the first incident were of the Zondi[11], originating from the same area of Ingome, near Umsinga, from where Bhambatha Zondi[12] came.

It is worth noting that, under extreme stressful circumstances (in which the 'sons' had become gangsters), the 'fathers' appear not to have used any of the more modern and Western solutions available to them. (They could presumably have contacted the police or gone to the school head.) Instead, they resorted to the ancient African tradition of 'disciplinary courts', but ironically showed their own ill-discipline by defiling the ancient customary taboo of carrying weapons to these courts and thus inadvertently precipitated the resulting revenge on their own age group. In answer to the media who appear to imply that the youths had the wellbeing of the community at heart, there is an interesting response from Khaba Mkhize, newspaper journalist with the *Natal Witness*, whom I quote from Matthew Kentridge: 'The comrades do not confine their disciplinary activities to their own ranks, however. Residents are also punished if they infringe some newly imposed standard of decency and good behaviour' (Mkhize, in Kentridge, 1990, p. 29). Kentridge (1990) quotes the following by Mkhize on crime and punishment in his *Frontline* article, 'Blood River as Sleepy Hollow':

> [C]omrades have argued that 'polluting the air of our parents is disrespectful'. The disciplinary campaign includes meting out punishment to all those who are disrespectful towards their elders, as well as to thieves and other 'wrongdoers'. The new system of punishment is 'modelling'. This is where a person is stripped naked and forced to parade, confessing his or her offence.' (Mkhize, in Kentridge, 1990, p. 69)

One must assume that Khaba Mkhize was referring to the youth activities of the time – those considered by the community to be gangsters and those who were considered by the media to be UDF and acting in the 'interest of the people'. In reflecting upon Mkhize's passage above, I see the utterances he quotes ('... Polluting the air of our parents is disrespectful' and '... Meting out punishment to all those who are disrespectful towards their elders ...') as showing the youth in some way overcompensating for their lack of proper fathering.[13] Instead of using language informed by more modern social solutions, they are speaking the language of the African past, the exact same language their fathers used in regard to the importance of respect and discipline. This mode of discipline that belongs to the overcompensating youth is what was termed locally as *'inkantolo yasehlathini'* (the forest court).[14] In regard to the 'sons' using African concepts of discipline to rationalise their behaviour, one reads in sociological studies about male children who do not have ready role models in their fathers, who then overcompensate by becoming extremely 'masculine' in an ill-perceived notion of what this means, and who may 'act out' as violent or as hooligans.

One of the important contributions the data have made is to the understanding of those actual changes in discipline that have taken place over the generations of my study. These changes are the results of economic and political impacts on the community's lifestyle. As the study of change within the discipline of social anthropology indicates, there is no such thing as a 'static' society, and my informants – whether of the 'fathers' and 'sons' – while referencing a traditional Zulu worldview, are not exactly the same as the Zulu of the 19th century (themselves also in a process of change, but perhaps not at the faster rate of the 21st century) or even of their fathers and grandfathers. Their circumstances have largely changed as a result of ever-increasing Westernisation and modernisation. However, as is postulated or theorised in anthropology, these foreign cultural and globally imported ideas and 'material benefits' are never taken into a 'traditional' society unaltered. Rather, they are integrated, rejected or reinterpreted according to the original culture's worldview. The social realities of all my generations therefore exhibit a perceptible and steady change from the Zulu 'idealised' norm (which most of my informants still adhere to). This 'ideal' value system can be described as a 'benchmark' against which one can measure change, and is indeed the measure against which the community itself judges change. (In this case, I am talking of the 'ideal' of discipline as defined by my informants as the 'benchmark' against which a lack of discipline is to be measured.) This change, as it has really happened in the KwaShange community, is especially obvious in the data to do with the incidents of the accidental death of the young boys being disciplined and the subsequent vengeance attack.

It is of interest that little (if any) anthropological literature seems to refer to 'disciplinary courts' among the Zulu, which are more typical of Sotho culture. They derive from initiation schools and what was termed the 'order of the whipping' (Monnig, 1967), where boys were hit with whips in initiation, supposedly to 'shock' them into adulthood. Many modern versions of African vigilante groups derive from this Sotho initiation form, such as the *Mapoga Amatamanga*. Historical accounts do sometimes refer to the Zulu use of whipping, in the context of the Zulu military system for instance. As Stuart (1913) has it:

> There was nothing in the shape of remuneration for service, either in time of war or of peace. Nor was compensation given for any injuries received in war. Offences were punished by the indunas, but punishment never took the form of imprisonment for obvious reasons. In regard to the younger warriors, it was invariably severe beating about the body administered by the indunas. (1913, p. 73)

The Zulu of Inadi, KwaShange, still accepted such 'disciplinary courts' as a valid form of discipline in cases where the father had failed in his task, and this is a cultural precursor of these two regrettable incidents. It is known that 'disciplinary courts' do take place in the rest of KwaZulu-Natal. In one case, my informant came from Ntunjambili (ironically

near to the original Zondi homeland of Ingome). In addition, an *Nkosi* (Chief) Ngcobo from Maphumulo stated that he knew about 'kangaroo courts' at KwaShange, but nowadays, because of the compliance with the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, any disciplinary problems involving young men have to be referred to the magistrates' courts. However, if there are cases in which people in the area are suspected of witchcraft, they are still punished by applying traditional whipping.[15] Xhosa 'disciplinary courts' are also not commonly refered to in anthropological literature, yet they are well known for boys' initiations (*amakweta*). An important piece of data on Xhosa 'disciplinary courts' comes from the reaction of ill-discipline in changing and urbanised environments, to quote Mayer (1961):

> The same thing [ill disciplined] had happened in the Xhosa society and it was blamed on mothers: Traditionally, in many African societies, when tsotsis (criminally inclined or disobedient young males) grow up apparently lacking in the moral faculty, many Xhosa migrants blame the mothers. Tsotsis are said to be children of unmarried mothers; of loose women. 'The youths who become tsotsis are those who are reared by mothers and grandmothers only.' The argument is that in the absence of a male head of the family (the natural implanter of morality by traditional Xhosa standards) nobody has taught them the elementary lessons of right and wrong. These have been their mothers' darlings, not rebuked or beaten enough. If an older boy or a man was ready to punish him for being naughty, the mother far from being grateful would rush and defend her son and pick a quarrel in his presence. (1961, p. 75)

Mayer goes on to discuss a much slighter disturbance (similar to KwaShange's first incident) that occurred in 1958, which grew out of attempted reprisals by location citizens ('fathers') against the criminal gangs ('sons') who burden their lives with fear and danger:

> There was to be a 'clean-up', which would teach a necessary lesson to the young robbers, the dice boys, the wielders of knife and dagger, the perpetrators of rape and murder. Most of the criminals' and semi-criminals' gangs are made up of boys and youths, and most of these are amakwekwe (boys) in the technical Xhosa sense, i.e. have not yet been initiated. The counter-movement was organized mainly by mature men, fathers of families and solid characters. Originally, therefore, this was a kind of inter-generation struggle. (Mayer, 1961, pp. 75–84)

> On Thursday 27 November, a man returning from a beer drink was set on in a street in the Amalinda Ward of Duncan Village, one of the respectable parts of the location, by a gang of youths. Men from nearby houses ran out to the rescue, carrying their sticks. Most of the attackers escaped into the bush in Ngcabanga near by, but one was caught. This slight incident turned out to be the genesis of the 'clean-up' movement. (Mayer, 1961, pp. 75–84)

Like Zulu people, Xhosas believe that all boys by nature require perpetual disciplining if they are not to fall into evil ways. It is not seen as a question of parental correction alone. One interviewee in Mayer (1961) stated the following concerning *izinsizwa*:

> A boy 'is a dog' and should be corrected by any responsible-minded senior when occasion arises. The natural mode of correction is physical chastisement. Even an *umfana* [young man] may be beaten on occasion; how much more a mere boy. (1961, p. 85)

To get back to the subject of 'disciplinary courts' and the first incident, it is therefore an important form of community discipline (sanctioned even among the related Xhosa), applied to a group of males, possibly because in the original African context males are initiated together. Even in pre-Shaka times, Zulu males were initiated and subsequently joined regimental groups or *amabutho*. It would appear that the people in this incident were responding to the changed times by referring to an ancient African mode of resolution which is and was the 'disciplinary court'. However, in this particular first incident (along with its retaliation in the second incident), a taboo on the carrying of dangerous weapons was breached.

Laband (in Coetzee, 2002) describes an unusual event in which the protocol of stick fighting was breached. The occasion was a stick fight between two of Cetshwayo's regiments (*amabutho*). This fight took place on 25 December 1877 during the *Umkhosi* or advent of the first fruit festival. It seems that Cetshwayo crammed his favourite *Ingobamakhosi* regiment (*ibutho*), consisting of young unmarried men, into the same quarters as the *Uthulwana* regiment, which was made up of older, married men. Cetshwayo and some of his brothers belonged to the older *ibutho*. The younger men apparently did not respect the customary power relations between themselves and their elders, and were dissatisfied with arrangements concerning the reception of wives of the *Uthulwana*. The levels of antagonism between the two parties eventually led to a physical clash. The older *Uthulwana ibutho* intentionally disregarded an accepted convention by attacking the *Ingobamakhosi* with spears after an initial defeat by the *Ingobamakhosi* (Coetzee, 2002).

In this historical incident, spears were used between the people of the two regiments of different ages. Stick fighting was used to develop discipline, but it is obvious from this historical precedent that Zulus were very aware of the misuse of weapons and that is why there were customary laws against carrying certain weapons. In the case of my first incident of KwaShange, the 'fathers' ought to have carried only whips, and perhaps sticks, to a 'disciplinary court'. However, guns were carried into this scenario, and such a weapon in the 20th century could be said to be equivalent to the spears, as Laband describes, in the 19th century. Of course, it could be said in defence of the 'fathers' that they carried guns because the young men had guns themselves (this in itself would be ill discipline in traditional thinking).

I would agree that the 'fathers' (when involved in 'disciplinary courts') should only have undertaken this disciplinary venture under a responsible overseer (such as an

induna) who in turn was responsible to the local chief. Thus this was a break with African traditional customary law. No matter how terrifying the outcome of this first incident was (including its leading to the second retaliatory incident), this has nothing to do with the fact that these boys were undisciplined in their activities before the incident. While the extreme bloodshed of the second retaliatory incident appears to support the theory that punishment results in violence, I suspect that there is an element of 'putting the cart before the horse', in that the very circumstance that led to the bloodshed and violence was pre-existent. Zulu cultural rearing patterns, with their emphasis on discipline and chastisement, were not the causes of the two violent incidents discussed in this chapter. As already indicated, the violence was the result of indiscipline resulting from social change. Therefore, one cannot say that Zulu 'masculinity' caused the violence. However, particular constructions of 'masculinity' at this time increased the social distance between 'sons' and 'fathers', and it was their failure to resolve the matter peacefully and the failure of the youths to heed the cultural requirements of respect and discipline that resulted in the generational conflict. There is a Zulu saying, *'Inyathuko or indlela ibuzwa kwabaphambili'* ('News of the buffalo is sought of those who are ahead'), meaning that young people cannot know anything unless they learn from the past (culture). My suggestion would be that any understating of these issues cannot ignore the acceptance and study of African traditional customary mores.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued that the two incidents are linked and derive from generational conflict resulting from a breakdown in discipline. While the media of the time saw the incidents as being primarily expressive of the civil war in the Pietermaritzburg area, I do not deny this, but have nevertheless concentrated on matters of culture change and its impact on Zulu 'masculinity' in terms of discipline. The chapter has argued that discipline regulated relations between youth and 'fathers', and that there were a number of cultural mechanisms that existed to enforce discipline, most notably the 'disciplinary courts'. These 'courts', however, also ensured the power of the elders over the youth. When these traditional mechanisms broke down, youth became more autonomous and defiant. As the 'fathers' termed it, the 'sons' became undisciplined. In trying to restore traditional hierarchies where fathers had power over the youth, the 'disciplinary court' was brought back and led to the tragic violence of the first incident of 1987 to which the youth retaliated with their act of revenge in 1991. Their attack was an attempt to continue their long campaign to gain independence from the fathers. But, in doing so, they transgressed cultural norms and this in a way undermined their quest to be accepted as men, on equal footing with the fathers.

Endnotes

1. *Sunday Tribune*, 17 February 1991, quoted in Jeffery, 1997, pp. 244–245
2. The last one to be held was on 19 September 2004 at Mtholangqondo High School where the 13 youths killed in the incident were buried. The nature of the service was a Christian one led by Pastor Mkhize of the Zulu Zionist Church; attending were those of the community and some relatives of those families involved. Because this incident still depresses many people in the community, such services offer spiritual healing and reconciliation. Within Zulu tradition there is a precedent for such healing to be found within traditional culture with cleansing ceremonies (*umgezo* or *inhlambuluko*). These services were for both the 1987 and 1991 incidents (to be discussed in the same subsection of this chapter). Following the second incident there was tremendous chaos in the area with a feeling of community outrage and depression. 'Neutral' prominent church leaders instigated these memorial services which have taken place over the last seven years, gathering, not always in the school, but sometimes on the nearby Ntabaskophu Mountain.
3. An *insizwa* is a youth from between the ages of 16 and 26. The word is the Zulu one used for this category.
4. It is common among the Zulu that a man will not take a weapon (spear or gun) into anything other than a war situation, including a faction-fight, at the instruction of a regimental induna. Least was would they take such weapons to such disciplinary courts for youth (refer to the data in the text on stick and whip carrying in Zulu lore). Even today it is prohibited within families to actually play with weapons where family members are present, it being considered easy to accidentally kill your brother. For this reason, weapons should be kept carefully hidden in the homestead head hut. This is another dimension to the issue of the lack of discipline because, in the community understanding, neither this incident nor the later one discussed in the text could have happened in a truly disciplined family.
5. This school is my own ex-secondary school (changing later around 2002 to become a high school), and I practised in this school (as a student teacher). The atmosphere of sadness generated by the first incident in particular permeated the ethos of the school. The boys killed in the incident had been 'troublesome' at school, as in skipping classes to smoke dagga and coming to school drunk. (Personal communication with anonymous female teacher who is teaching in this school, and taught some of the boys killed in the incident.) These boys were often cited to later students as examples of how not to behave, their graves being the constant reminder to the current young boys of this 'fact'.
6. Personal communication with the teacher (Mrs X), 5 November 2004.
7. My informants articulated these words when I met them for the first time; I was trying to introduce my subject and explaining what I needed.
8. See the following, for example: *Business Day, Cape Times*, 12 February 1991; *Sunday Tribune*, 17 February 1991, *Witness Echo*, 21 February 1991.
9. See my data on the political affiliations of the time under my discussion of the first and second incidents.
10. According to Freund (1996 p. 179), an alternative name to the comrades is *amaqabane* and they belonged to the UDF.
11. The Zondi clan within KwaShange has been in the area since before the Bhambatha Uprising. However, they keep close relationship with their relations at Ingome (Bhambatha having been chief to this section) and the present chief is Mbongeleni Zondi. The chief of the area of KwaShange is Sondelani Zondi. Thus the Zondis at Ingome were fully aware of these two incidenct at KwaShange. Because I am from the area, unfortunately they did not want to share with me their real thoughts on the events in question. One man I initially wanted to interview for my study, who however refused (on the grounds that he had never had a father and could not talk on the subject), is a Zondi who very proudly claims: *'Mina ngingowakwa Zondi waseNgome Ka Mabuyase …'* (I am Zondi from Ingome ka Mabuyase), in reference to the praises of Bhambatha. I think this is pertinent as data because it shows how Zondis at KwaShange still identify with those of Bhambatha Zondi at Ingome. In other words, the younger generation of Zondis used a generational conflict twice in history, thereby changing the political landscape at both times.
12. It is an interesting aside that when I was working for the Bhambatha project, informants at Ingome, many non-Zondis but even a few Zondis, reflected the white colonial perception of the time in describing Bhambatha Zondi's activities as being subversive and unnecessary. However, an important political point is the understanding of the Zondi chiefs and, moreover the understanding of the ANC, particularly president Thabo Mbeki (in some of his nation address speeches), that Bhambatha Zondi can be described as one of the first political struggle heroes who had inspired subsequent generations in their response to colonial and apartheid government. What I wish to point out is the strange parallel between Mare and Waetjen's understanding in regard to the common political perception of the youth being both UDF and serving the 'interest of the people' within the Pietermaritzburg unrest of the 1980s as being almost a repetition of the official ANC and Zondi 'take' on what had actually happened during *Impi yamakhanda* (Bhambatha Uprising). Where this is pertinent to the chapter is that, in both the Bhambatha Uprising and the incident in KwaShange (which was an integral part of this war in Pietermaritzburg in the 1980s), there were conservative community voices (supported by colonial government in the one case and apartheid government in the other case). Another interesting parallel is that, in the Bhambatha project, informants mentioned that Bhambatha Zondi was an undisciplined man, much as the community understands of the young men involved in the events at KwaShange.
13. I mean that sons became very undisciplined because they did not have fathers present to model themselves as role models, so they over-compensated and they became very wild.
14. These courts were held by the youth who gathered together to discipline those whom they thought were undisciplined within their own ranks, for example if one of them was guilty of stealing property or raping a girlfriend of any one of them.
15. Personal communication from *Nkosi* M. Ngcobo from Mapumulo. Durban, 2005.

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Index

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PICTURE CREDITS

P 1: (Zenzo)
p 7: (John Thomas Kinyagu)
p 13: (Akosua Adomako Ampofo)
p 33: Young men tended to speak about boys and girls as opposites with nothing in common (Vivienne Bozalek)
p 41: (Tamara Shefer)
p 50: Boys on the street selling toilet paper (Akosua Adomako Ampofo)
p 65: (Akosua Adomako Ampofo)
p 75: Father carrying daughter (Nompiliso Mkhize - copyright The Fatherhood Project)
p 81: (Myeza Lungisile – copyright The Fatherhood Project)
p 90: (Thobile Mcwane – copyright The Fatherhood Project)
p 94: (Akosua Adomako Ampofo)
p 112: Between Friends: Nico Bhengu and Jabu Radebe (Zanele Muholi)
p 128: Friends in Pinelands (The photo use is taken with a disposable camera by boys participating in Marie Rosenkrantz Lindegaard's PhD research in 2005-2007. The photograper has kindly permitted the authors to make use of the photo.)
p 131: Friends on the train. (The photo used is taken with a disposable camera by boys participating in Marie Rosenkrantz Lindegaard's PhD research in 2005-2007. The photographer has kindly permitted the authors to make use of the photo.)
p 145: A class in progress (Dr Myra Taylor, School of Public Health Medicine, UKZN)
p 160: (Tamara Shefer)
p 181: School-going youth engaged in conversation (Dr Myra Taylor, School of Public Health Medicine, UKZN)
p 182: (Dr Myra Taylor, School of Public Health Medicine, UKZN)
p 195: Dipuo Mvelase, Chris Hani and Tinyiko, Dipuo's baby son, shortly before Hani was assassinated. (Copyright Dipuo Mvelase)
p 225: The 'older generation' preparing for one of their 'disciplinary courts' (The Alan Paton Centre of Struggle Archives photograph collection)
p 228: (The Alan Paton Centre of Struggle Archives photograph collection)