

**EXPLORING HOW ADOLESCENT BOYS
NEGOTIATE REGULATORY CONCEPTIONS OF
MASCULINITY**

BY

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Masculinities, hegemonic masculinity, alternative masculinity, performed masculinity, real men, negotiating strategies, risk-taking, social constructionist, discourse analysis, focus groups.

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ABSTRACT

The last decade has seen a growing focus on masculinities in South Africa, following global trends while responding to local concerns. While there is much current work looking at especially young males it is confined to the margins in terms of both research and practise. Many researchers have highlighted the way in which certain masculinities are facilitative of unsafe sexual practices as well as violence in intimate relationships. There is also a body of work that raises broader questions about risk within multiple contexts, including substance abuse, criminal/gang activity, and general 'boundary-breaking' and how these link with traditional performances of successful manhood. A number of authors in this arena are committed to opening up space for alternative constructions of male identities, shifting dominant masculinities, and exposing/developing new discourses within which alternative ways of being a boy or man may be located. This present study is located in a broader study that examined masculinities and risk taking behaviours in the context of HIV/AIDS. The central aim of this study was to explore the processes and strategies used by adolescent school--going boys in their negotiation of hegemonic masculinity and constructing and adopting alternative masculine identities. The research approach utilised a social constructionist perspective, employing a qualitative methodology. The study participants were groups of 14-16 year old school-going boys from 4 schools in the Western Cape, covering a diversity of racial, linguistic, religious and cultural backgrounds. Focus group discussions of approximately one hour and thirty minutes (1h30min) were held with each group of participants, amounting to a total of 12 focus group sessions. The groups were facilitated in the language of choice of the participants and were both audio and video-taped. On this latter, methodological, level we were interested in the contributions that visual text might make to understand how boys do masculinity. With regards to the analysis and findings this study

highlights the well-theorised process in which masculinities are defined, which is that boys' notion of masculinities take on their meaning through negative distancing and 'othering' of different masculine identities.



DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation, unless specifically indicated to the contrary in the text, is my own original work and that I have not submitted it, nor any other parts of it, for a degree at any other university.



DEDICATION

I would like to stay true to the university motto *Respice Prospice* (Look to the future, Learn from the past) by dedicating this work to my son Evan Reece Fouten and to my late father Charles Abraham Fouten.



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First and foremost, I thank God our creator for placing the desire upon my heart to pursue a tertiary education and for providing me with the strength and courage to see it through.

I wish to thank my mother Alice and my brothers and sisters Winston, Lynette (Lyndie), Charlene and Rudi for their emotional and financial support throughout my academic career. Thank you for believing in me, encouraging me and putting up with me over these stressful and challenging years.

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Last but not least I wish to thank Vanessa and her family for their support and encouragement.

PREFACE

“The strength of a man can be measured in the gentle ways he handles matters”

(Anon)



CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Kimmel and Messner (2001) assert that research on men and masculinity is currently entering a new stage, in which the variations among men are seen as central to the understanding of men's lives and lived experiences. They argue that the previously unexamined assumption had been that one version of masculinity, i.e. the white, middle class, middle aged, successful, heterosexual, was the sex role into which all men were struggling to fit. However, this version is also the standard against which other men everywhere were, and to a very high degree still are, measured.

Historically, researchers have used three general models to carry out social scientific research on men and masculinity. These are:

1. Biological models that attributed the difference in social behaviours between males and females (also differences amongst males and other males and differences amongst females and other females) to innate biological differences;
2. The anthropological model that stressed the variation in the behaviours and attributes associated with being a man to cultural differences;
3. Sociological models that have stressed that the accommodation to a sex role specific to one's biological sex is due to socialisation.

Although each of these approaches provides us with some understandings of the meanings of masculinity (and femininity), they are limited in their ability to fully explain and account for the influences of cultural differences (Kimmel, & Messner, 2001).

However, the current increase in research and literature on masculinity is characterized by a view that the masculine identity is a cultural and historical phenomenon (Connell, 1995;

Kimmel, 1987; Segal, 1990; Seidler, 1989; Toerien and Durrheim, 2001). The various and numerous studies have not only moved away from biological essentialism but also reject any account of identity in terms of fixed and coherent roles.

Importantly academics have begun to address the differential racialization of masculinities, exploring the plural and contradictory 'race' and gender identity positions that can be produced (e.g. Archer, 2001). Hearn and Collinson (1994) have suggested that masculine identities are constructed and negotiated through various power relations in respect to women and other men. They state that masculinities may be an assertion of a particular social location (sometimes of more than one such location simultaneously) and a form of resistance of one social division to another. This sentiment is stated differently by Archer (2001) who says that the meaning of manhood is constructed in relation to other men and to women and that masculine identities are constructed through various positions of self and others, particularly with regard to the interconnected social divisions of gender, 'race' and class.



Epprecht (1998) has argued that like any other aspect of culture, masculinity is both subject to change over time and may be an arena of considerable contestation. Ideals of manliness may be more or less dogmatic, restrictive, and insist upon conformity in different historical contexts. Yet throughout history and across cultures certain characteristic features of masculinity occur with striking regularity. "Real" manliness has tended, for instance, to put a premium on men's ostentatious heterosexuality, virility, control of emotions, and the acquisition and exercise of power (Epprecht, 1998).

Waetjen and Maré (2001) state that a link between ethnic minority masculinities, as forms of resistance to racism and attempts to assert patriarchal power, may be a response to the

powerlessness engendered by racist discourses. Wetherell (1993) suggests that the construction of black masculinity entails a constant, delicate negotiation between power and powerlessness, and the hyper-masculine identity of working class male culture. At a micro level, masculinity is achieved in the context of social intersections where versions of masculinity are always open to contestation (Epprecht, 1998; Hearn & Collinson, 1994). Being a man involves negotiating ideological dilemmas (Billig, et al., 1988) as men define themselves as particular types of men.

However, there is a dearth of literature highlighting men's resistance to traditional masculinity and their difficulties with hegemonic masculinity (Shefer, 2003). This thesis is influenced by and builds on the work of some of these authors. It also forms part of a broader contemporary study that focuses on men's practices and masculinities in the contexts of research and interventions around violence against women, HIV/AIDS, and gender sexual politics.



Connell's work (for example, 1987, 1995) provides the central reference point for many, if not most, writers on men and masculinity. His work emphasizes social processes as constitutive of masculinity but is critical of placing emphasis on the role of discourse at the expense of serious politics. Connell (1987) asserts that the task of "being a man" involves taking on and negotiating hegemonic masculinity. Men construct their identities through their compliance or resistance toward the socially prescribed hegemonic masculine ideals.

Wetherell and Edley (1999) state that Connell's formulation of hegemonic masculinity and men and boys' complicity or resistance to it has a number of advantages. Firstly, it allows for diversity in that the study of masculine identities occurs in the plural rather than in the singular. Secondly, it is attentive to the problematic of gender power. Lastly, it draws

attention to the fact that the formation of gendered identities is reliant on the relationships between men as well as the relations between men and women. Research (e.g. Hearn & Collinson, 1993; Kimmel & Messner, 2001; Mac an Ghail, 1994; Morrell, 1998) has shown that men may construct masculine identities in relation to women, specifically the ownership and control of women. Wetherell and Edley (1999) suggest that many masculine identities can be typified by the fact that they are formed around a discourse advocating the protection of femininity. Masculinity is subsequently constructed as powerful since it is, defined through the caring for and control of women.

The formulation of the research question of this thesis was prompted by Wetherell and Edley's (1999) critique of Connell's (1995) notion of hegemonic masculinity, where they argue that the notion of hegemonic masculinity is not sufficient to understand the processes involved in negotiating masculine identities. They suggest that scholars take a closer look at men's negotiation of masculine identities. They have identified three strategies that men adopt for describing themselves in relation to the social position of being a man. The aim of this study is thus to look at the strategies and resources used by adolescent boys in the negotiation of their masculine identities. In addition, the research sought to examine whether they use the same strategies identified by Wetherell and Edley (1999) or whether they use or rely on others.

1.1) SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Research with respect to gender issues has primarily focused on women with few studies done on men, particularly in South Africa. Similarly much of the research has focused on adults with little research done on adolescents. This study therefore aimed to assess adolescents' construction of masculinity and how they negotiate regulatory conceptions of masculinity. This study will hopefully contribute to understandings of adolescent boys' constructions of

masculinity and how they negotiate the pressures to conform to dominant versions of masculinity. I feel the need to mention that this thesis forms part of the first concern of a bigger SANPAD-funded study that focuses on the constructions of masculinity and risk taking behaviour in the context of HIV/AIDS. Whilst macro-level theoretical work is crucial in promoting understandings of gender relations, knowledge is also required of how central concepts are reproduced, reinvented, resisted and negotiated at the level of the interpersonal (Gough 2001).

1.2 OUTLINE OF THESIS

Chapter one has provided an introduction to this study in addition to stating the significance of research in this area. In chapter two I review the literature on males (boys) and masculinities. I concentrate on some of the contemporary debates, discussions and research conducted in the area locally, nationally and internationally. My thinking and theorising is influenced by the work of Morrell (1995; 2001) and Wetherell and Ederly (1999).

In chapter three I provide an over view of the methodology used and the procedures followed. In chapter four I present the findings and discuss the implications of them for the young men. Preliminary analysis confirms what other researchers in the field have highlighted in their findings. It also shows some interesting new conclusions for South African studies on young men.

In the final chapter I bring it all together and present some recommendations on a practical and theoretical level. At the practical level I discuss some methodological issues concerning problems encountered and best practices. At a theoretical level I suggest ideas for future research endeavours.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1) INTRODUCTION

Contemporary articles on gender and masculinity make clear reference to the provisional historical and culturally specific states of the concept and lived experience of masculinity (Connell, 1995; 2000; Kimmel, 1987; Segal, 1990; Seidler, 1989; Toerien and Durrheim, 2001). Researchers have used ethnographic studies and individual life histories as the primary methods to examine the socially constructed dimensions of masculinity (Connell, 1995, 2000 for example). The key findings of research studies reviewed suggest that: there are multiple forms of masculinity. There are hierarchical and hegemonic forms of masculinity, masculinities are actively produced, and masculinities are created in specific historical circumstances. A brief discussion of these key findings follows.

2.2) DIVERSE FORMS OF MASCULINITY

Connell (2000) suggests that there is no one type of masculinity that is found everywhere. He argues that because different cultures and different periods of history construct gender differently, we need to speak of masculinities and not masculinity (Connell, 1995, 2000).

There is substantial proof in the ethnographic studies of Swain (2002), Skelton (1997), and Cornwall and Lindisfarne (1994), to suggest that there are numerous forms of masculinity in any given macro or micro context. We can thus conclude that diverse forms of masculinity exist within any given setting. For instance, in one school, workplace or ethnic group, there may be differing ways of learning to be and being a man (Skelton, 1997; Swain, 2002). There are thus different conceptions of self and different ways of using the male body and identity (Connell, 2000).

There are also hierarchical and hegemonic forms of masculinity. Many studies (e.g. Cheng, 1999; Connell, 2002; Donaldson, 1993; Luyt & Foster, 2001; Wetherall & Edley, 1999) found that some forms of masculinity are prized, honoured and desired above others. Some forms of masculinities are dominant, while others are subordinate or marginalised (Cheng, 1999). Hegemonic masculinity is the type of masculinity the dominant group in a particular context or location performs (Cheng, 1999). The notion of hegemony, originated by Gramsci (1971), is used to define the maintenance of social power by certain groups through persuasion and other means (Barrett, 1996; 2001; Morrell, 1998; 2001). Speer and Potter (2001) state that hegemony invokes power by consent rather than coercion. By defining and legitimating certain definitions of a situation and framing the way events are understood and morality is defined, the ruling classes would maintain their domination. Thus the organization of society seems natural, inevitable and ordinary (Speer & Potter, 2001) and goes unchallenged.

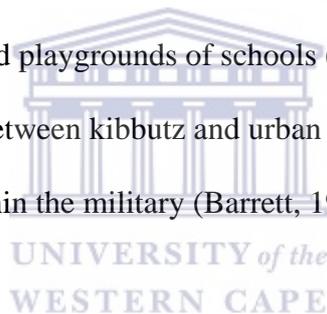


Hegemony was further developed and applied to masculinity by Robert Connell and has been subject to various refinements and applications. For him hegemonic masculinity is the configuration of gender practices that embody the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which primarily guarantees the dominant position of men and the subordination of women. In this society and in this point in history, dominant or hegemonic masculinity equals white, heterosexual, successful masculinity (Speer & Potter, 2001).

Connell (1995) states that hegemonic masculinity is the culturally idealised form of masculine character, the current ideal. The numerous attributes that are characteristic of hegemonic masculinity and appear to be relatively universal include domination, aggression, competitiveness, athletic ability, stoicism, and control (Cheng, 1999; Martino, 1999).

Aggressive behaviour, including physical violence, is important to the presentation of hegemonic masculinity (Murnen, Wright & Kaluzy, 2002). Hegemonic masculinity requires constant validation, and by proving itself dominant and in control of itself and others, it attains that validation (Murnen, *et al* 2002). Cheng (1999) states that one way of proving one's hegemonic masculinity is to act aggressively and even violently toward what is regarded as feminine, women, homosexual and/or "nerds" (that is men, who do not conform to hegemonic masculinity).

Connell (2001) states that the patterns of conduct that a society defines as masculine can be observed in the lives of individuals. However, the collective process of constructing and enacting masculinity has been observed in numerous settings (Connell, 2000), from face to face interactions in classrooms and playgrounds of schools (Martino, 1999; Skelton, 2002; Swain, 2001), to the interaction between kibbutz and urban adolescents, (Lobel & Bar, 1997) also in various career options within the military (Barrett, 1996; 2001; Enloe, 1988).



Swain's (2001) research is an excellent example of how institutions may construct multiple masculinities and how relationships are defined between them. Swain (2001) studied the relationship between the formal school culture and the informal pupil culture. He was particularly interested in the options available for boys to construct their masculinity and establish status or prestige within their immediate peer group. Skelton (2002) also illustrates how two schools with different social class backgrounds promoted and produced different masculinities. Skelton (2002) compared the two schools on the extent to which the schools allowed young boys to draw upon sexually harassing or violent attitudes and behaviours to define their male identities. These are excellent examples of how institutions may construct multiple masculinities and how relationships are defined between them.

2.3) THE ENACTMENT OF MASCULINITY

Masculinity refers to male bodies, but is not determined by male biology (Connell, 2001). For instance, when women behave or present themselves in a way that their society or culture regards as distinctive of men, people refer to them as masculine women (Connell, 2000; Hearn, 1996). It is thus clear that masculinity has to be enacted. Moreover, since masculine conduct by the female sex is seen as deviant or transgressive, so too is feminine conduct by the male sex.

Concomitantly, Phoenix, Frosh, and Pattman, (2003) hold that homosexuality is associated with femininity because of its status as not masculine. Thus, the construction of masculinity is partially underpinned by projecting femininity onto particular boys who are singled out as gay or not sufficiently masculine (Martino, 1999; Phoenix *et al.* 2003). Boys labelled as gay are seen as possessing the same characteristics that are belittled in girls. In a number of studies boys found it extremely upsetting to be called or labelled as gay (Martino, 1999; Skelton, 2002; Swain, 2001). Boys thus policed the behaviour of others and themselves by rejecting versions of femininity or “other” masculinities (Martino, 1999; Phoenix *et al.*, 2003; Wetherell & Edley, 1999).

Many boys learn to establish their masculinity in opposition to femininity (Connell, 2001). They define their masculinity within a set of cultural and social practices that involve a rejection and denigration of what they consider to be feminine behaviours. These feminine behaviours often serve as markers of homosexuality in the policing of ascendant forms of masculinity (Swain, 2002; Wetherell & Edley, 1999)

Cheng (1999) and others states that although it appears that the enactment of gender is necessarily based on or determined by biological sex, it is not always the case. Most people conform to biological or essentialist definitions of what their gender performance ought to be (Cheng, 1999; Connell, 2000; Hearn, 1996).

On the other hand, research in the field of masculinities has frequently identified contradictory desires and conducts (Connell, 2000). This according to Connell (2000) is one of the key reasons masculinity is not fixed. Furthermore there are frequently contradictory discourses on masculinity offered to men. Edley and Wetherell (1997) have shown that masculinity is defined by discourses that construct men both as sensitive and caring and as tough, competitive and emotionally inarticulate. Weisbusch, Beal and O'Neal (1999) found that there are discrepancies in how masculine men actually are, how others thought they should be and what they, the men themselves, thought they should ideally be. Similarly, Phoenix et al. (2003) found that boys behaved differently in a group than individually. They found that boys in individual interactions generally spoke out about emotions and relations in ways that would be defined as "soft" and "wimpish" with in the group (Phoenix *et al.* 2003). In this sense young boys and men enact the gender stereotype about boys being tough.

Psychoanalytic and ethnographic research has also revealed the existence of internal contradictory desires and behaviour. Connell (2001) postulates that a man or boy may conceal deep homosexual desires by an active display of heterosexuality. Thus the public enactment of an exemplary masculinity may covertly involve action that undermines it. Masculinities are thus often in tension internally and externally (Connell, 2001, 2000).

The debates around masculinity have made it clear that the gender identities of men are socially constructed, changeable and often contradictory (Connell, 2000, 2001, Morrell, 1998,2002; Moynihan, 1998). Morrell (2002) suggests that there is overwhelming proof that masculinities, that is how different men negotiate their identity, can change. Masculinities are created in specific historical circumstances. As those circumstances change, the gender practices can be contested and reconstructed (Connell, 2000, Morrell, 1998, 2002). In summary, masculinity has been shown to be a fluid entity; it changes over time and in context at both the theoretical and empirical levels.

Masculinities are thus actively produced using the resources and strategies available in a given social setting. They are accomplished in everyday conduct or organizational life, as patterns of social practices. Masculinities therefore do not exist prior to social behaviour, either through programming of our genes or fixed personality structures (Connell, 2000, 2001).

2.4) SOUTH AFRICAN MASCULINITY

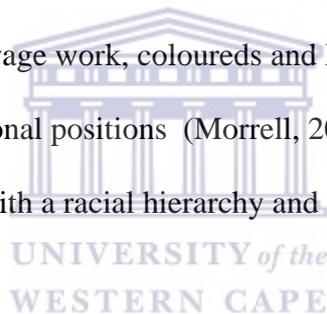
In all societies and in South Africa particularly 'race' and class are of major importance in determining how men understand their masculinity and how they deploy it (Morrell, 2001).

Connell (1995) shows how the process of becoming a working class male and the absence of clear life opportunities has a dispiriting and dangerous outcome on the way young unemployed males consider and conduct themselves.

Morrell (2001) states that the youth from disadvantaged communities generally live dangerous lives on the edge of crime. Their lives are characterized by few life opportunities and a randomness that often finds expression in anti-social activity, drug abuse, and heavy emphasis on heterosexual expressions of masculinity (Morrell, 2001).

To understand the diverse forms of masculinities in South Africa we need to have some idea of the country's history. South Africa as a country has seen many changes in its governmental structures. For instance we may find South Africans, still living, who have lived in three different forms of governmental eras of South Africa, namely Union, Republic and New South Africa or post-apartheid South Africa. If we thus take the position of these commentators then South Africa with its complex past should be an interesting site to study the impact these historical changes had on its citizens in general and how they shaped, influenced and changed ideas of manhood in particular.

It is obvious that the apartheid era was a critical period in South African history. It created ethnic labels like Indian “coloured” and “black”. Working prospects were racialised with “black” restricted to menial low wage work, coloureds and Indian in artisan enclave work and white in supervisory and professional positions (Morrell, 2001). This resulted in the creation of a racially fragmented society with a racial hierarchy and emphasised the hierarchy of different forms of masculinities.



Morrell (2001) states that for black men in urban areas life was a grim struggle. African men were subjected to the rigours of industrial labour and a racial hierarchy ensured that they were paid pitifully low wages. They were also the ones who had to do the most hazardous and menial labour under the most demanding conditions.

Hemson (2001) argues that for black men the harshness of life on the edge of poverty and the emasculation of political power gave their masculinity a dangerous edge. Honour and respect was rare and getting it and retaining it especially from white employers, fellow workers and women was often a violent process.

In the black townships boys were brought up in a socially fractured environment with little or no prospect of well-paid work. Many thus turned to crime as a means to provide for their families and to acquire lavish consumer items (Hemson, 2001; Morrell, 2001). As Wood and Jewkes (2001) have highlighted the unavailability of work placed greater emphasis on heterosexual activity, which confirmed gender power inequalities fuelling gender violence that confirmed the vulnerability and pain that township youth experienced.

Xaba (2001) in his study identifies two type of masculinity that became dominant among urban African youth during and after the apartheid struggles. He called these the “struggle masculinity” and “post struggle masculinity”. The main characteristics of the former were opposition to the apartheid system and political militancy. The conditions that produced the struggle masculinity were impoverished and poorly serviced townships coupled with the strained relations township dwellers had with state institutions. Defiance against authority manifested itself both in a disregard for authority and in open confrontation with it and its institutions. Often confrontation with authority involved violence. The survivors of such encounters received accolades from their friends of being a ‘real man’.

Post-struggle masculinity according to Xaba (2001) is characterised by respect for law and order, the restoration of public order, the resumption of paying for services, respect for state institutions co-operation with police and fighting crime. These masculine identities illustrate how a particular configuration of masculinity forged in one historical moment can become obsolete and dangerous in another. Though these masculine identities existed at different points in the countries history they are in opposition to each other with struggle masculinity being revered.

Field (2001) has highlighted the struggles of growing and constructing a positive masculine identity in a coloured township in Cape Town. He argues that their choices were restricted to the dominant masculine role of 'the gangster', 'the sports men' or 'the workingman'. The gangster and the sports men were the salient masculine options. Both the gangster and the sports men laid claim to respectability and was a potent way to survive difficult situations. The gangster, who is the aggressor of the two, is idealized and valourised. The complex nature of South African society has been highlighted with various masculine identity options available for men. What has been interesting is the emergence of a pattern on how violence and aggression are valourised regardless of social setting and context.

2.5) THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The preceding discussion has shown the fluid and changing nature of masculinity. I therefore assumed a social constructionist epistemology in my exploration of this topic. The premise of social constructionism is that members of a culture construct beliefs, values, institutions, customs and laws that make up their social reality as they interact with one another (Burr, 1995; Gergen, 1997; Freedman & Combs, 1995). The realities that we take for granted as reality provides the belief, words and experiences that makes our existence and constitute our selves (Burr, 1995; Freedman & Combs, 1995; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999).

Social constructionist believe that categories such as gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, class, and nationality are socially constructed which may vary across time and culture depending on the specific circumstances, processes and forms of interaction (Freedman & Combs, 1995). Constructionists are sceptical that there are rational, essential or unchanging human traits that are rooted in biology, psychology or other natural characteristics (Burr, 1995; Gergen, 1997). They argue for example that ideas of masculinity and femininity vary considerably across societies and historical periods (Freedman & Combs, 1995).

Social Constructionism also holds that social realities are constructed through language (Gergen, 1997). Hence the world we know are the words we share through language like systems of visual imagery. Language is thus an interactive and constitutive process, not merely a passive receiving of existing language (Burr, 1995; Gergen, 1997). Furthermore, as Moynihan (1998) states, social constructionist theories of masculinities recognize that gender is achieved through people's interactions in a particular context.

Schwandt (2003) argues that the primary concern of social constructionism is with how it is that a descriptive utterance is socially or interactionally made to appear stable, factual, neutral, and independent of the speaker and merely mirroring some aspect of the world. Potter (1996) states that social constructionist are interested in how utterances work, and how their work is neither a matter of the cognitive analysis of how mental versions of the world are built, nor a matter of the empirical analysis of semantic contents and logical analysis of syntactical relations of words and sentences. He (Potter, 1996) believes that how the utterances work is a matter of understanding social practices and analysing the rhetorical strategies in play in particular kinds of discourse. Gergen (1994) asserts that it is human interchange that gives language its capacity to mean and it must stand as the critical locus of concern.

Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999) state that social constructionist methods are qualitative, interpretive and concerned with meaning. They (social constructionist) want to show how understanding and experience are derived from and feed into larger discourses. Schwandt (2003) states that human life is fundamentally constituted in language and that language itself should be the object of study. But Potter (1996) reminds us that as social constructionist we should be concerned with broader patterns of social meaning encoded in language. Language

is thus not neutral and transparent; it helps to construct reality (Potter, 1996). People's thoughts, feelings and experiences are thus products of systems of meaning that exist at a social rather than an individual level (Schwandt, 2003).

Constructionism means that human beings do not find or discover knowledge so much as we construct or make it. We invent concepts, models and schemes to make sense of experiences and we continually test and modify their constructions in the light of new experiences. We do not construct our interpretations in isolation but against a backdrop of shared understandings, practices, languages and so forth (Terre Blanche and Durrheim, 1999).

2.6) CONCLUSION

In this chapter I looked at some of the current debates, discussions and research, nationally and internationally, on young men and masculinities. I have shown that there are a hierarchy of masculinities, that they are multiple and diverse forms of masculinity, that it changes over time and social as well as physical location and that it is not biologically determined but socially constructed. It is precisely for this reason that I adopted a social constructionist perspective in my approach to and understanding of this study. In the following chapter I discuss the methodology employed in conducting this study.

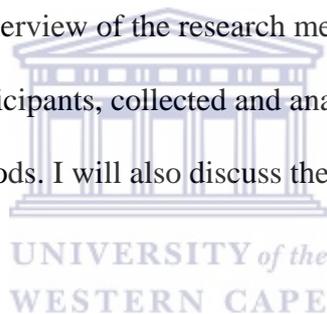
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1) INTRODUCTION

Methodology connotes a set of rules and procedures to guide research and against which its claims can be evaluated and understood. It is thus fundamental to the construction of all forms of knowledge and provides the tool that one can use to create understanding (Daly, 2003).

Nachmias and Nachmias (1996) state that methodology is as centrally concerned with how we as researchers conceptualise, theorize and make abstractions as it is with techniques or methods that we utilize to assemble and analyse information.

In this chapter I will present an overview of the research methodology, design and procedures. I will explain how I recruited participants, collected and analysed the information and explain my rationale for using these methods. I will also discuss the ethics of the research process as well as reflect on the process.



Daly (2003) argues that it is crucial to realise that one chooses methods and techniques as part of a broader package because it is widely accepted that the method involves a set of standards that should be aspired to. Less widely acknowledged is the fact that assumptions and values underlie all methods as well as a particular view of how we are to understand the social world.

3.2) METHODOLOGY

Numerous social researchers have commented on the fact that one of the most obvious problems that we have with social science research debates, hinges on the concept of research methodology. Pretorius (2002) asserts that research methodology means different things to different people but that researchers use it as though there is a consensual meaning attached to

it. He states that the term methodology refers to the concrete modus operandi of doing research as well as the models that influence the concrete research decisions (Pretorius, 2002).

Traditionally, methodological approaches can be subsumed under two main paradigms, namely qualitative and quantitative (Daly, 2003; Pretorius 2002). Rabinowitz and Weseen (2001) state that qualitative and quantitative methods have been variously defined and the debates about the value and use of each have swirled within and around psychology for well over two decades. Distinctions are made on the level of research technique as well as the theoretical underpinnings.

On the quantitative side techniques have come to mean randomised experiments, quasi-experiments, paper and pencil objective tests, multivariate statistical analyses, sample surveys and the like. In contrast qualitative methods include ethnography, case studies, in-depth interviews and participant observations (Pretorius, 2002; Rabinowitz, & Weseen, 2001).

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) distinguish between the two on an epistemological level.

Qualitative researchers in their opinion stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and the researched, and the situational constraints that shape the research. In contrast, quantitative researchers emphasize the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variable, not processes. The research process is within a value-free framework.

Babbie and Mouton (2000) suggest that the selection of a method is dependent on the aims and objectives of the study, the nature of the phenomenon and the underlying theory.

From the preceding chapter the fluid nature of masculinity should be apparent. It is against this backdrop and bearing in mind the aims and an objective of this study, that, I felt this research needed to be located in a qualitative, as opposed to quantitative, paradigm.

I therefore employed a qualitative data collection technique (focus groups) and qualitative data analysis (discourse analysis). Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999) asserts that qualitative methods allow the researcher to research his or her research question in-depth, with openness and detail. Babbie and Mouton (2000) suggest that qualitative research always attempts to study human action from the perspective of the social actors themselves. The primary goal of using a qualitative method is to describe and understand rather than explain human behaviour.

The key feature of qualitative research as set forth by Babbie and Mouton (2000) as well as Denzin and Lincoln (2000) and Patton (1990) is that research is conducted in the natural setting of the social actors as opposed to research conducted in a laboratory. Even though a focus group is a qualitative method and qualitative methods stress the importance of doing research in the natural setting we realise that a focus group discussion is not a natural setting for adolescent boys. The focus is on the process and the outcome. The primary aim is in-depth description and understanding of actions and events in their specific contexts, instead of attempting to generalize to some theoretical population. The qualitative researcher is seen as the “main instrument” and the research process is often inductive in its approach. An important aspect of qualitative research is that it does not claim to be neutral, unbiased and value free. It acknowledges the centrality of the researcher-for the latter reason, and thus places a strong emphasis on the self reflexivity of the researcher. Considering the complex, multiple, and diverse nature of masculinity a qualitative methodology was ideally suited for this study.

3.2.1) PARTICIPANTS

The participants in this study were boys between the ages of 14-16 years attending schools in the Western Cape. Morrell (2001) postulates that the stages through which boys 'become men' are a source of great anxiety and a rite of passage. Several scholars have indicated that adolescence is a difficult and challenging time for both genders. A critical look at the literature also indicates a dearth of information on boys in the South African context. We selected schools with different racial, linguistic, religious and cultural backgrounds. We also distinguished between rural and urban schools. Lindegger and Durrheim (2001) state that the rural-urban divides are important, particularly in the South African context, for studying different masculinities. We thus ensured that we had participants across the historical divides of apartheid as well as across the rural-urban divide. We assumed that boys in the rural areas would be more attuned to the traditional or cultural notions of masculinity as opposed to urban boys who have been exposed to different influences and ideas of masculinity.

We used a purposive sampling method (Babbie & Mouton, 2000; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999) to select boys to participate in the study. Purposive sampling is a sampling method that selects cases that meet particular criteria (Neuman, 2000). In this study the sampling method is appropriate since the participants are required to meet certain inclusive criteria viz, adolescent (14-16 year old), school going, and male. We had a total of 68 young men partaking in this study. (See appendix A for specifics on schools and participants)

3.2.2) DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

Data was collected through focus group interviews with seven groups of boys from seven different secondary schools in the Western Cape. Each focus group consisted of 8-12 boys at each school with whom we met two to three times. According to Morgan (1993, 1995) this number of participants is suitable for a focus group because it is large enough to ensure that

the focus group does not fall flat if some members are silent, and small enough to manage and provide everyone an opportunity to participate. From our experience smaller groups (at least 5 but not more than 8) work better because there is less frivolity and more opportunity for all to participate. Young men being frivolous is not necessarily a negative thing but it was not required in the scope of our focus. There was also a practical reason for the smallish groups. This related to the requirements of using a video camera in order to view the whole group simultaneously.

Focus groups are an ideal strategy to use when collecting data since they allow a space in which people create meanings among themselves rather than individually (Babbie & Mouton, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Morgan, 1993, 1995). In addition, the researcher is able to observe interactions on the topic of discussion which provides direct evidence about differences and similarities in participants' opinions and experiences (Babbie & Mouton, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Morgan, 1993, 1995).

Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999) postulate that when working in groups one is able to access inter-subjective experiences that are defined as experiences shared by a group of people. They suggest that by accessing these experiences through focus group interviews one can gain knowledge of the differences between groups otherwise thought of as homogenous.

The aim of a focus group is therefore to get closer to participants' understandings and perspectives on certain issues. This method is a forum in which to explore people's opinions, attitudes, beliefs, values, discourses and understandings of things, as valid in their own right (Vaughn, Schumm & Sinagub, 1996).

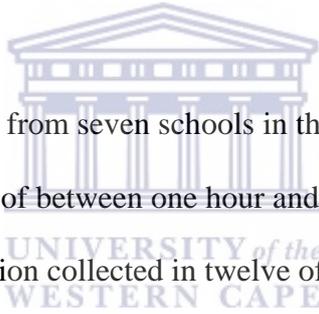
From a social psychological perspective the focus group is by definition an exercise in-group dynamics and the conduct of the group as well as the interpretation of information must be understood within the context of the group (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990). Two interrelated forms of evidence are derived from focus groups, i.e. the group process and the content around which the group process is organized. The group process refers to the way in which people interact and communicate with each other. It can be understood on *two different levels*: (1) *intra-personal*, i.e. the thoughts, feelings, attitudes and values of the individual; (2) *intra-group*, i.e. how people communicate and interact with each other within the group. An integral part of the focus group moderator's role is to consider group processes at work as well as considering and reflecting the individual responses that participants offer. The focus group moderator thus requires very different skills from those required for one-to-one interviewing. The use of a video ensured the collection of data related to group process as well as data with respect to the visual components of the performance of masculinity.

The Music videos, described in detail below, were used as vignettes in the group to facilitate discussion around three central themes: meanings of masculinity; risk taking and masculinity; re-thinking masculinity.

3.2.3) PROCEDURE

I requested permission from the Western Cape Education Department to approach schools in the Cape Peninsula to participate in this study. After receiving the go ahead from Western Cape Education Department the principals of the schools identified to partake in the study were contacted telephonically to determine interest and obtain telephonic consent. Since we collected our data (focus group discussions) during school hours, we required the consent of principals from selected schools as well as the consent of the participants. Consequently a formal letter, including all the relevant information regarding the researcher and the research

project, as well as the letter from Western Cape Education Department granting us permission to do this study was faxed, e-mailed or hand delivered to participating schools (see appendix for all relevant letters). I arranged times, venues and dates with the principal or grade coordinator to conduct the research. I requested the principal or grade coordinators to select participants that met the selection criteria but not to include friends and relatives and to avoid choosing a particular ‘type’ of boy (i.e. those viewed as ‘good’ or ‘bad’). The exclusion of friends and relatives is a requirement proposed by Greenbaum (1993) and others (e.g. Bloor, Frankland, Thomas & Robson, 2001) who assert that people who are acquainted to each other tend to dominate group discussions and thus influence the group dynamics. It should be noted that at some of the smaller schools it was virtually impossible to find groups who did not know each other even if they weren’t friend or kin.



As stated above, we collected data from seven schools in the Western Cape. At all but two of the schools, we had three sessions of between one hour and one and a half hours with each group. Though I used the information collected in twelve of the focus group discussions for this dissertation, for the larger project we had conducted a total of 19 focus groups.

At the start of each group session we played a music video that highlighted different aspects of masculinity. In the first two sessions we showed the popular rap artist 50-cent’s music video. In the first session we played the hit “In Da Club”, that depicted men working out, clubbing/dancing with women dressed in lingerie or sleep wear. In the second session we showed the less popular “Gangsta” that depicted men armed with pistols, fighting, drinking and smoking. In the third session we played “Sorry Miss Jackson” performed by Outkast, to illustrate some alternative masculinities. The music video served numerous purposes. It served as a vignette to generate discussion and as an ice breaker, making the participants feel

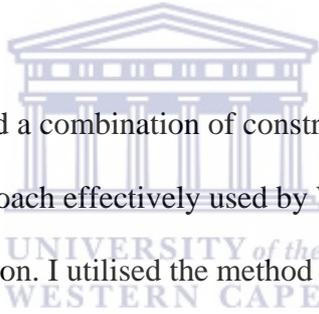
relaxed. More importantly, it was intended to portray a certain kind of masculinity. The discussions were guided by a semi-structured interview schedule that focused on issues of masculinity (see appendix for interview schedule). All the sessions were video recorded and tape recordings were used as a back up measure.

Even though audio-visual video-based data is relatively new, anthropologists have used this data collection method in ethnographic studies (Babbie et al. 2001; Bottorff, 1994). Video has also been used in clinical settings (Joseph, Griffin & Sullivan, 2000). It has also been successfully used in focus group research (see for example, Brown, 2001). However, there are not many South African and continental psychological researchers who have used video recordings, although a group of social psychologists have recently used a video camera for a study on space and segregation (Tredoux, Dixon, Underwood & Finchilescu, 2004). Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999) assert that video recordings are valuable because they provide information not only about what people say but also about how they say things. This often says as much as the content of their words. Though the literature stresses that using video can be very problematic, they all agree that it has fundamental benefits for research (Joseph, Griffin & Sullivan, 2000; Schurink, Schurink & Poggenpoel, 1998).

As with any method, there are some limitations. The camera captures only certain information. In our study the camera focused on those who were speaking, thus preventing us from observing the rest of the group. The literature also suggests that participants feel ill at ease with the presence of a camera and that they may feel fearful of who will be watching the tape or just be afraid to talk (see Bottorff, 1994; Joseph, *et al.* 2000; Schurink, *et al.* 1998). This was hardly the case in our study. Participants were eager and interested to be recorded on camera. The only thing that worried them was what they looked like on camera. They were

very conservative in their approach unlike the participants in Brown's (2001) study who she called, using Whetherall and Ederley's term, "jockeying" for position. Since we continuously reassured our participants as part of our procedure, most participants soon relaxed and forgot about the camera. We assured participants that their participation was voluntary and that they could leave at any time with no consequence. With the exception of two of the schools where a few of the boys had other obligations all came back for the other two sessions.

The audio from the video recordings were transcribed. As part of the analysis the transcripts were read whilst viewing the video recording. This was to identify any suggestive body language. There may be, and indeed are, instances where body movement/language is crucial to the reading of the transcript.



In examining the transcripts, I used a combination of constructionist thematic analysis and discourse analysis. This is an approach effectively used by Willcott and Griffin (1997) in their study of unemployed men in London. I utilised the method of thematic analysis (Smith, 1995) whereby each segment of text is categorised in detail, during the initial reading of the transcripts. Several themes that were grounded in the talk of the participants were identified, combined and contrasted. Having produced a set of themes, the next step moved into a form of discourse analysis (e.g. Burman & Parker, 1993; Potter & Wetherell, 1987) whereby each theme is considered in turn and examined in terms of the different ways it is talked about.

3.2.4) INTERPRETATION OF INFORMATION

As stated, transcriptions were carried out on all the videotapes. The video recordings were used to analyse body language. The transcripts were analysed by means of the process of discourse analysis. Silverman (1997) argues that discourse analysis is overwhelmingly qualitative because it typically focuses on transcripts from every day talk or institutional

settings, on transcripts of open-ended interviews and focus groups, or on documents of some kind.

Burman and Parker (1993) have argued that there are many different approaches and traditions of doing discourse analysis and different analyses are supported by a different philosophical framework. Potter (1997) suggests that there are at least four somewhat independent forms of discourse analysis with different disciplinary homes. These include linguistics, cognitive psychology, sociolinguistics and post-structuralism.

Most of the approaches are characterised by an interest in how language not only reflects a fixed or static reality, but rather that psychological phenomenon, like attitudes and identities, are multiple, variously created and recreated through the language used to describe them (Archer, 2001; Silverman, 2001).



In this study, I employed a form of discourse analysis initially developed in the field of sociology and more recently in social psychology and communications that is distinct in various ways (Billig, 1987; Edwards & Potter, 1992; Gilbert & Mulkay, 1984; Potter, 1997; Potter & Wetherell, 1987). It is characterised by a meta-theoretical emphasis on anti-realism and constructionism (Silverman, 2001). This discourse analysis emphasises the way versions of the world, of society, events and inner psychological worlds are produced in discourses. This leads to a concern with participants' constructions of the self and how the self is accomplished and undermined.

Parker (1992) suggests that discourse analysis is an appropriate social constructionist approach. He asserts that discourse analysis aims to account for how particular conceptions of

the world become fixed and passed as truth. The aim is to understand the function of a particular discourse used by participants, to recognize the way they position their subjects in relations of contempt and respect, of domination and subordination or of opposition and resistance.

According to Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999) discourse analysis can be defined as the act of showing how certain discourses are deployed to achieve particular effects in specific contexts. For a discourse analyst, discourses are broad patterns of talk that are taken up in particular speeches, conversations and text. Texts are examined for their effect, not necessarily their veracity. Identifying the effects of discourse is an essential part of doing discourse analysis, for these effects limit the opportunities for certain kinds of action.

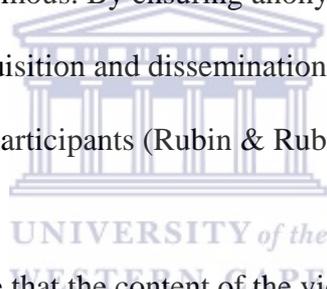
Discourse analysis, needless to say, emphasizes the way versions of the world, of society and inner psychological worlds are produced in discourse. This leads to a concern with participants' constructions on the one hand and the contingent nature of the researchers' own versions of the world on the other. From the preceding discussion it is evident that there is a wide range of different ways of analysing discourse. Silverman (2001) suggest that it is useful to make a broad distinction between a focus on the kind of resources drawn on in discourse and the practises in which those resources are used.

Potter and Wetherell's (1987) conception of interpretive repertoires was used as a primary framework of analysing the transcripts. Broad discourse themes were first drawn from the text, and the interplay between dominant, multiple and contradictory discourses explored. Their conception analysis consists of two closely related phases. First there is a search for a pattern in the data. This pattern will be in the form of both variability and consistency. Variability is concerned with differences in either the content or form of accounts.

Consistency is concerned with the identification of features shared by accounts. Second there is the concern with function and consequence. The basic theoretical thrust of discourse analysis is the argument that people's talk fulfils many functions and has varying effects. The second phase of analysis consists of forming hypotheses about their functions and effects and searching for the linguistic evidence.

3.3) ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999), children are a special population and, as such, particular care must be taken to respect their rights. Since the principal of each school gave his/her consent, particular attention was given to ensure that learners were informed of the research and that their participation was completely voluntary. The research participants and the schools will remain anonymous. By ensuring anonymity my aim is to safeguard the research ethic concerning the acquisition and dissemination of trustworthy information in ways that will not cause harm to participants (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).



Care has also been taken to ensure that the content of the video and audio taped interviews and the interview transcriptions remain confidential. Participants were assured of the researchers' respect for their confidentiality. Participants were made aware of the fact that their involvement in the research is fully voluntary and they could withdraw at any stage in the data collection process.

3.4) REFLEXIVITY

When undertaking a qualitative study, the researcher is both the instrument and the medium of doing the research. Thus, his or her influence on the data needs to be recognized (Smith, 1995). I consequently acknowledge that my presence in the research process had some influence on the data collected. As a male I can identify with the participants. Although this is

not a prerequisite for doing research it is helpful in building rapport. I realize that the way I was initially viewed by participants also influenced the way they spoke and presented themselves to me. At four of the schools, for example, after learning where I was from, it was assumed that I knew certain linguistic practices, styles of dress and where to find cheap goods.

Since I grew up and attended school in a disadvantaged community, I had to negotiate the violent hegemonic masculinity of those contexts. I am thus aware of some of the challenges and consequences of not conforming to hegemonic versions of masculinity. Being cognizant of my own experiences, I was wary not to be biased and influence information in any way and I ensured self-reflexivity in the manner in which I analysed the data. However discourse analyses is less concerned with being biased and influencing information because it is seen as an unavoidable part of discursive life. Thus for every text that held my attention or that I found interesting I reflected on why that particular text held my attention.

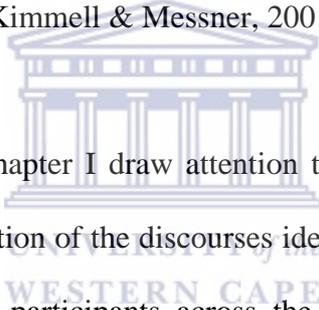
3.5) CONCLUSION

In this chapter I provided an overview of how (methodology), where and with whom this study was conducted. I also provided the ontological and epistemological assumptions of the method employed. I tried to give an accurate account of each step in the research design and also to provide a rationale for the particular methods and techniques that I selected out of the range of alternatives. In the following chapter I will present the findings, discussion and my interpretations of the discussions with the young men.

CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1) INTRODUCTION

Masculinity can be viewed as the common characteristic that marks men as men in a given society, independently of biological identities (Hearn, 1996). It has to do with gender or social sex, a concept that has become essential to obtaining a relatively clear picture of the nature of our mixed societies (Hearn, 1996) and this is particularly relevant to South Africa. As explored in chapter three masculinities reveal cultural stereotypes, conformity to roles and images, and ethnic and generational identities. It reflects the complexity of different ways of being a man, in both time and space, and in terms of different cultures and of the individuals concerned (Connell, 1995; 2000; Kimmell & Messner, 2001; Morrell, 1998).



In this findings and discussion chapter I draw attention to some of these complexities and differences. I start with a presentation of the discourses identified in the transcripts. My focus and interest here is on how the participants across the various groups, namely different language, racial, religious, cultural and geographical location groups define what “being a man” means to them. I then look at the ways in which risk taking and risk behaviours are associated with the construction of a masculine identity. Thereafter I describe the context-specific masculinities, that is the dominant, marginal and divergent masculinities in each context and how the enactment of masculinity in one site differs from the other. This is followed by a presentation of the marginal and divergent voices or masculinities. I also illustrate how hegemonic masculinity is contested and resisted in each setting. Attention is given to the resources and strategies the young men employ to negotiate, contest and resist dominant harmful masculine scripts that prevail in each context.

4.2) BEING REAL MEN

Participants identified a range of behaviours associated with being a young man that reflected traditional gender roles, such as the assumption or expectation that men are the breadwinners (Epprecht, 1998; Pyke, 1996); that they should be responsible and responsive (Hammond & Mattis, 2005) to the needs of their families; that the male is the head of the household; meaning he makes important decisions, and that he was allowed a social life outside of the house. These are only a few of the socially ascribed and socially expected roles that men assume. There are many alternative ways of being a man, as we will discuss later in this chapter.

Extract:1

P: Men are always considered as the head of the household while women are subordinates to men. Therefore a woman is not allowed to be equal to her husband when it comes to household decision-making.

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(Es1)

P: When he does his duty towards his wife and his family and his home.

(Os1)

(See appendix for the definition of extract codes and transcript conventions)

A strong sentiment across groups was that men needed to be the head of the household, which, amongst other things, meant that they went out to work, that 'real' work involved working with one's hands, that they did not do chores around the house, that having money and dressing well was part of this package. "Real men" were referred to as being 'cool, 'fresh', "daai ou" and "the man".

Another central belief/assumption was that men wanted, and in fact needed sex, and that this was the focus of their relations with women. This ‘male sex drive’ discourse (Hollway, 1989) was seen as natural, driven by ‘hormones’, and without it men would go mad as is evident in this quote.

Extract: 2

P: But the problem with abstinence is that you might go crazy, if you are a man.

(Es3)

An interesting about this extract is the way the participant says a man will go mad without sex. He says at the end “...if you are a man” simultaneously challenging and questioning. He says it in a manner that the other participants in the group cannot question or challenge what he is saying, not if they think of themselves as men in any case.

At the same time, hetero-sex and having multiple partners was seen as something required of young men, both by peer pressure (they would be teased), and by girls (who would otherwise leave them for someone else) (Pattman, 2005; Pattman & Chege, 2003). Smoking and drinking were also regarded as acceptable behaviour for young men, as was the need to be able to defend yourself physically if necessary.

Men also needed to protect and look after their women, and in some groups this paradoxically included the need to beat your partner, to prove your authority as the protector and being responsible for the women in their lives.

Extract: 3

F: You said the man is the back-bone of the family. What do you mean by that?

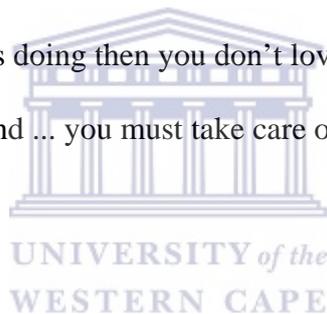
P: He must take care of his wife. Say he got married to a woman (..)You get those men who marry a woman but then tomorrow they divorce her, then they leave her there maybe with a child)

(Os1)

F: So you have a problem, if it's your wife even if its your girlfriend. Am I right you have a problem when they do that?

P: Even if it's your girlfriend ... if ... if...you're saying you don't have a problem it means that you don't love that person ... How can you say you don't love her anymore because if you like let ... let ...leave ... let her do and you agree with that stuff that she is doing then you don't love that person because ... she, she's, your girlfriend ... you must take care of her ...protect her.

(Ss1)



Young men drew on discourses of tradition and custom to account for some male behaviour. So for example, the practice of *lobola* entitled men to expect their women to work for them in the home.

Extract: 4

P: She is obliged to do everything because I have paid (lobola)

P: Helping each other has nothing to do with (lobola) but with love.

So if you take (lobola) as a priority, it means you do not love you partner.

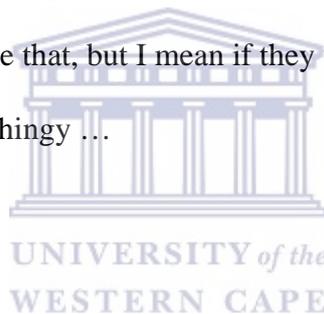
P: No, I do love her but (lobola) equates chores.

(Es1)

Also emerging very clearly in some groups were strong sentiments and much talk in some groups about those who were not ‘real men’. These were constructed as predominantly gay men, whose overtly feminine behaviour was particularly unacceptable. Connell (2001) and others (e.g. Whitehead & Barrett, 2001; Mac an Ghail, 1994) have shown how the process of ‘othering’ marginal masculinities like gay men has been central to the construction of hegemonic masculinity.

Extract: 5

P: Okay I’m not saying like all gays do that, like some gays you can’t even tell that they gay ne, [...] among themselves they don’t parade around with it. I don’t mind if they are like that, but I mean if they walk around going like ‘hello doll’ and that little kiss thingy ...



(Fs2)

Interestingly, the term ‘moffie’ was also used to refer to those men who were physically abusive toward their partners. Such men are in fact rejected and seen as non-men and this is a positive discourse because it serves to stigmatise those men who are abusive and violent towards their partners. Likewise ‘jocks’, those boys who enjoy watching and partaking in sports and excel academically were also ridiculed (a discussion of the ‘jock’ identity follows under the heading context performed masculinity).

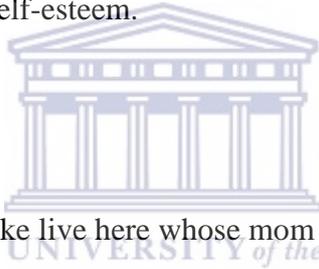
It is interesting to note that the young men in the study identified and relied on a range of social gender stereotypes to construct what they thought it meant to be or a real man ought to

be. These are the dominant voices the more marginal voices, or alternative opinions about what constitutes masculinity are discussed later in this chapter.

4.3) RISK BEHAVIOURS AND YOUNG MEN

Across different groups, it was evident that being a young man was associated with a wide range of risky situations and behaviours. Central to many young men's talk was the fact and possibility of violence, which played itself out in somewhat different forms across cultural and language groups. For boys growing up on the Cape Flats, gangsterism was a defining feature of their social context (Kinnes, 1995; Luyt & Foster, 2001; Morrell, 2005; Salo, 2003), with graphic accounts of the pervasiveness of gang-related violence, which was described, by the young men, as the result of economic need, peer pressure, boredom and as an escape from bullying and low self-esteem.

Extract: 6



P: Some people that like live here whose mom and dad doesn't work. Now this guy comes to you and say, 'I will give you everything that you want but you have to come with me, stand with me, you have to do what I say plus you have to join our gang. Now he has no choice but to go.

(Os1)

P: Maybe some of them gets bullied at school by the bigger children say now they are small then they build up all of that [] then maybe I see, that gang is cool, there then, now they maybe join the gang, now the gang tells them that they have to do something, then they do the stuff and then later when they want to leave then it is already to late.

P: Most of the times the reasons why children join gangs is because their mom and dad is maybe unemployed, maybe their father is a drunk or they don't get

enough money, everything that they want. Maybe he wants a pair of takkies the ones that all the grand people, they wear grand clothes now why should he suffer.

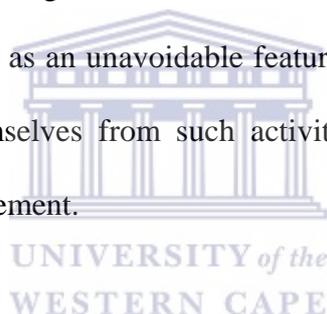
(Os2)

P: The main thing about them indulging in a gangster life is because being cool.

P: I don't disagree with you ne ... but some people don't choose to be a gangster ... some people belong to gangs to make money ...

(Ss2)

Other explanations given as to the reasons some of their peers joined gangs are consistent with Luyt and Foster's (2001) finding, which is the masculine need to be recognised, feared and respected.. While it was seen as an unavoidable feature of life, the young participants in the focus groups distanced themselves from such activity and were outspoken about the negative outcomes of such involvement.



For young men in informal urban areas, violence was also a common feature of everyday life. In this context however, the focus was somewhat more on interpersonal conflicts, either in domestic and heterosexual relations, where violence was seen as an acceptable method of demonstrating power, or in retaliation or revenge and to prove one's bravery. On the other hand, young men from middle-class urban environments seemed to associate violence with being 'cool', drawing on media depictions and fantasies of fighting and toughness, although they were strongly critical of any form of domestic violence. For many of these young men, sexual violence and rape were the result of young women's provocative behaviour and dress, although there was also strong disagreement with this line of reasoning.

Substance use/abuse was also a common feature of young men's lives, although they generated contradictory sentiments. For the most part it was acceptable and even 'cool' for these boys to be smoking and drinking; however they were also aware of the risks of abuse of such substances, which they saw happening largely as a result of peer pressure, family example, and boredom. Drinking was also viewed as tied up with sex, so that getting a girl drunk might make her more willing to have sex, but drinking might also lead to unprotected sex, which could in turn lead to unwanted pregnancy and STD.

Extract: 7

P: Yes, liquor is a problem and if you are under the influence, you can easily engage in sexual acts, which will lead to impregnating girls.

P: She will destroy your good looks by infecting you with the HIV virus and that is why you will look like an orange.

P: In other instances, even if they do not bring HIV, she will approach you knowing that she is pregnant and you will be responsible for the child's maintenance.

(Es2)

Sexuality was a complex and risky affair for these young men. While they saw men as 'naturally' needing lots of sex, sex was often associated with danger and with women's manipulations. Women would entrap men into sex for gifts and money, sex could result in pregnancy, and women could also cause HIV/AIDS infection.

4.4) CONTEXT PERFORMED MASCULINTIY

It is apparent from the literature that masculinities differ and vary within and between groups. In this section I describe the hegemonic, marginal and divergent masculinity of each context

(Connell, 1995; 2001). My aim here is to show how the enactment of masculinity varies within and between groups, locations and context.

Oaklands High School and Spine Road Secondary, though both predominantly coloured and working class, have different teaching and student ethos. Spine Road is renowned for its meritocracy in sport and academics. Teaching staff are predominantly Muslim. Religious affiliation had a significant influence on the morals and values of these young men. It influenced the decisions and choices they made as to what was appropriate, acceptable and pleasurable. The following extracts are taken from both schools at the same point in the discussion on the women in the 50-Cent music video.

Extract: 8

P: It's like that's emm your body ne, its God's body ne, now you show other people your body.

P: Ya because it's sacred and it's a sin.

P: The Koran says that a women should cover her whole body and a man from his knees up.

P: Because God gave them that body.

P:because like women attract men like ... when they have, have on that short skirts and sweater above their navel.

(Ss1)

P: The women were nice (lekke).

F: Define lekke, explain what is lekke?

P: They liked the bikini's and stuff.

P: The women are like an attraction, attraction for him.

P: Their making him, (hulle gee hom lus) their making him lust/desire.

P: They made him lust/desire them.

(Os1)

The young men at Spine Road felt that it was inappropriate for women to dress and act as they do in the 50-cent music video. They drew on religious beliefs and male violence (not included in the extract) to object to this, according to them, improper dress and conduct. The young men at Oaklands did not object to the women, even though there were a few Muslims in the group, they in-fact enjoyed the visual imagery, it brought them pleasure.

Another difference between the two schools was the issue of success or being successful. Success means finding employment to be able to purchase consumable goods and to provide for your family. The quote below highlights this:



Extract: 9

P: 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.

(Ss3)

Of significance in this extract is that at Spine Road participants felt that they could be successful, become something else, something better. In contrast Oakland participants felt that

they had few opportunities to become successful. The hopelessness expressed by Oaklands learners could be translated as endemic of their context. In contrast to both schools, at Fishhoek an ex-Model C school with predominantly middle class, white learners, participants did not speak of success as though, in the words of Luyt and Foster (2001, 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 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 he is demonstrating an alternative way of being in that context (Barrett, 2001, 1996). The subjective position taken by the participant in this text 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 you would be successful. Thus successful manhood is achieved for him when the man can provide for his families material needs (successful in work) and if he remains committed to them (successful in relationships) (Hammond & Mattis, 2005).

Participants in both the Oaklands and Spine Road sites had to negotiate, resist and construct a different masculinity than the hegemonic alternative that was offered in each context, that of the “gangster” (Field, 2001; Pinnock, 1984; Salo, 2003). Gang violence in South Africa and particularly on the Cape Flats has been documented as an example of how marginalized men, in relation to class and racial category, or masculinities assert themselves and gain status (GETNET, 2001; Pinnock, 1984; Salo, 2003; 2005) Boys at both schools related stories of the difficulties and challenges they faced on the way to and from school, how they were in constant risk of losing their life and how cheap life is.

One was left with the strong impression that Spine Road offered its young men more positive alternative ways of being a man in relation to Oaklands. The men and masculinities that emerged as most powerfully on display for the young men in the Oakland community were the mini-bus-taxi drivers. Though they are notorious for their reckless driving and disregard for the rules of the road they provide a cheaper and faster alternative for scholars who have to commute to schools. The majority of them are married and have extra marital children, yet they pursue relationships with these young female scholars. These young men bore witness to how the taxi driver charmed their young female classmates. By reserving the front seat for the girls they fancied, the girls not paying taxi fare, they could request the music they wanted to listen to, their friends would be dropped off where they requested, and they could request a detour to one of the more fashionable eating-places. Paying customers just had to go along for the ride. The young men warned these girls of being labelled as “Taxi Queens” (see Salo, 2003 for a discussion on the Taxi Queen identity) and other derogatory labels. These taxi drivers were seen as Don Juan’s or Casanovas, and one was left with the impression that these young men simultaneously envied and admired these taxi drivers. The alternatives at Spine Road were more positive role models with respect to their relationship with women and in terms of their status in communities, such as religious leaders and local sporting heroes to name a few.

The identity that held the most powerful, though not respected status at Fish Hoek Middle School was that of the “jock.” The jock/s is a title reserved for those boys who belong to the exclusive group of scholars who excelled in academics and in sport (Frosh et al., 2002). Messner (1992) and other (e.g. Frosh et al., 2002; Majors, 2001) asserts 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. For white

South Africans the game of rugby encapsulates these hegemonic ideals more than any other sport (Cock, 2001; Morrell, 2001; Thompson, 2001). At Fish Hoek Middle school the “jock” held hegemonic status because they were considered tough, disciplined and competitive and because of their association with rugby they demanded respect. Even though the ‘jock’ was a powerful identity most of the participants were scathing of it and overtly rejected it.



Extract: 10

F: Okay, so tell me is there other ways of being the man? Are there other ways of being a man?

P: Well the jocks consider themselves the man.

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

(Fs1)

On the other hand, while recognising the power of the 'jocks', most of the participants in this group distanced themselves from this identity. However they too wanted to be recognised and wanted to appear cool. Because being cool, as Martino (1999) and others (e.g. Connell, 1987; Kessler, *et al.*, 1985) state, 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. The participants asserted their masculinity by being disruptive, having girl friends, swearing and smoking and drinking. They constructed a different masculinity by taking risks, as Barrett (2001, 1996) and Xaba (2001) have shown in surviving or successfully negotiating a particular risky situation the risk taker normally receives or is awarded certain accolades from their friends and peers. Where rugby can be seen as sanctioned risk-taking the participants take risks that are not sanctioned by the formal school culture and thus comes across, at least to their friends, as courageous. The participants in the Fish Hoek context were clearly far removed from the violence that played itself out on the flats. Violence was only acceptable when it is justifiable as in protecting your possessions, your family and your life. These young men came across as being very disruptive particularly at school, in the classroom and playground, where they constructed a different identity to that of the conservative 'jock'.

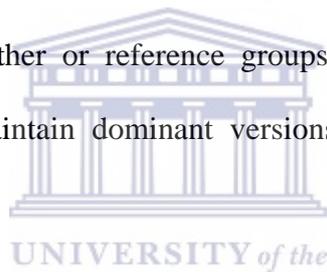
At Esangweni Secondary School, which is situated in the predominantly black South African neighbourhood on the Cape Flats, the young men ascribed to socially and culturally sanctioned gender role norms. They preferred women who dressed and wore their hair in a feminine manner and who did not drink and smoke. The young men's reference points were cultural and traditional ideals. They held on to norms and traditions like 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 contrast to other context, in this context 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. Edley (2001) states that cars are objects of desire for men and women and that it is a symbol of status and power. The other identity that held hegemonic status was the respectable, informed, older, family-orientated man. The participants in this group seemed to be vacillating between the two discourses of the real man and new traditional man. The latter identity was admired and seemed what most of the participants aspired to. The participants in this context distanced themselves from the dominant notions. They were completely comfortable and secure with their alternative identity. Ratele *et al.* (2005) for instance, using much of the same data, states that being different is one of the most troubling states for young men. He highlights the fact that there are several competing narratives that dictates how one ought to be and behave in a particular context. The participants thus drew on some of these competing narratives to construct an identity that they felt comfortable with.

For the most part the issues discussed here, the evident strong role that context plays in shaping masculinities are well articulated in the theoretical literature on masculinities. Such findings are corroborated by Skelton (1997) who found in her ethnographic study of two

schools, that hegemonic masculinity varies from school to school, and is shaped by a number of factors, and that boys negotiate and reject aspects of hegemonic masculinity in the process of constructing, negotiating and re-constructing their masculine selves amongst their immediate peer group.

Thus far I have been looking at some of the dominant and marginal masculinities that are enacted in different context. However, a common aspect that appeared in all the groups and in both dominant and marginal identities were young men's homophobic attitudes. Similarly here and in other studies (e.g. Epstein, 1997; Mac an Ghail, 1994; Martino, 1999; Phoenix, *et al.* 2003) it appeared that homophobia was used as a mechanism to regulate and police men's behaviour. Not only men who they considered to be gay or "moffie", also men who abused women and who belonged to other or reference groups. Homophobia is thus used as a mechanism to construct and maintain dominant versions of masculinity (Martino, 1999; Phoenix, *et al.* 2003).



4.5) STRATEGIES OF RESISTING AND NEGOTIATING HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY

In the following section I focus on the strategies and resources boys use to resist and/or negotiate hegemonic masculinity, and I also present the alternative masculine identities they construct for themselves. It was mentioned earlier that for numerous reasons the gangster identity held hegemonic status in coloured communities on the Cape Flats. In the following extract we were speaking about the perceived status afforded to those young men who joined or belonged. We wanted to understand how the young men who participated in the study managed to be free of its pressures.

Extract: 11

F: You don't want to be the man?

P: You can be the man but without being a gangster you can be the man if 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 their not gangsters.

F: I hear you.

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

F: 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?

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

(Ss1)

Extract: 12



P: 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 ...

(Os1)

I need to make a point here about the gangsters that the participants are referring to. Pinnock (1980) showed that there is no homogenous group of gangsters, that gangs are formed differently, have different roles or functions, they function at different levels of society and

that they have differing styles of dress. The gangs that the young men in our study are referring to are the street gangs who are characterized by their sloppy manner of dress and their involvement in crimes that range from petty interpersonal crimes to more severe and bloody crimes like rape and murder. In the extract one notes that the participant is aware that there are alternative ways of being a young man, which includes someone your friends could admire, and whom they will enjoy and want to be with. So if others want you as a friend, then you can feel esteemed and thus be “the man.” In contrast to the traits associated with the gangster identity, which include toughness, courage and loyalty. These are not necessarily negative and they bear resemblance to hegemonic masculine ideals. What is problematic about it is the unquestionable loyalty that gang members show to each other. Loyalty, in the context of ganging practices is dangerous, in the fact that it demands that you side with your brothers (other gang members) even when you disagree with what they are doing. What these participants are resisting, besides all the negative aspects of belonging to a gang, is that gang membership tends to be extremely restrictive; restrictive in that gang members have limited spaces that they can move into, in their own neighbourhoods as well as others. More importantly though is the restrictiveness in the level of autonomy it affords its members, and that it does not encourage individuality (Barrett, 2001, 1996). By rejecting gang membership they are, in a manner of speaking, ascribing to aspects of western capitalist hegemonic masculinity that encourages these ideals of autonomy and individuality.

In the above extract where the participant says, “...they can maybe all look up to you,” he is valorising his and the groups’ identity. He positions himself as a “hero” for providing an alternative identity to admire. The qualities that the hero has or the kind of friend that he is referring to, would invariably be someone who is reliable, trustworthy a friend that one can depend on.

We then asked if there are other things that allow participants to keep their distance from gangsters. What we were trying to elicit with this question was the cognitive processes that influenced their behaviours. The answer was not quite what we were looking for, but proved to be very interesting. 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 or belonged to a gang. But the answer that seemed meaningless makes remarkable sense. Here the participant is speaking of or referring to the fact that gangsters, with their distinctive demeanour, cannot access the exclusive and trendy places that they can. This is similar to what Salo (2003) suggest, that being able to access exclusive and trendy places has a certain status attached to it. In this case a person is considered cool if you are allowed access to these place/spaces and you are not cool if you are turned away at the door. What this then implies is that he and his friends posses a certain desirable look that distinguishes them from gangsters.

As mentioned earlier being cool is a priority (Martino, 1999) and it has different signifiers and is practised differently. In extract 10 the participant feels that if you want to be cool you need to have women around you, not as friends (because you can be labelled as a “moffie”) but as partners or trophies. It boosts your ego and gives you status. Previously, in the discussion the participants were relating stories of how the gangster got all the nice girls, or that the girls liked or was attracted to 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.

Another example of how these young men negotiated or resisted the hegemonic context specific masculinity can be seen closer to the end of this extract. Subsequent to the earlier

discussion about the jock at Fish Hoek Middle School we focus here on how the jock identity is resisted and negotiated.

Extract: 13

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

P: Well the jocks consider themselves the man.

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

F: What are jocks though?

P: They look like rugby players.

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

F: So they play rugby?

P: Yea they play rugby, they play rugby after school and they watch rugby, they sleep and they dream about rugby, their pillows [...] group laughs.

F: So do you like play rugby?

P: 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..

P: 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 their nothing but academic. (No...) [...].

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

P: I am so big (mimicking a 'jock'). They think that everyone should respect them.

P: Yea its like (shows his middle finger)

P: Are there any jocks in this class?

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

P: Yea we need a Garret or someone like that. (Yea a Garret or Josh) No Josh.

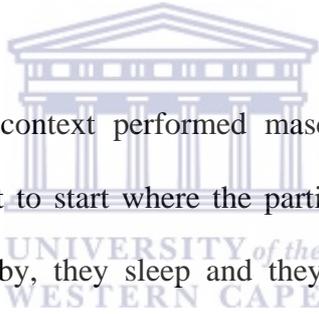
(Josh also smokes and drinks; No he only drinks Garret smokes as well).

P: [...].

P: No but cigarettes are like whatever worse.

P: Worse then a bong? (Group laughs).No really hey?

(Fs1)



In the previous section on the context performed masculinity I described some of the characteristics of the jock. I want to start where the participant says “Yea they play rugby after school and they watch rugby, they sleep and they dream about rugby, (mimicking wrestling actions) their pillows” and the group laughs at his display of the jock. Here he is describing the jock as someone who is obsessed with rugby, and draws on psychological discourse with the description of obsessive behaviour. The group laughter can be translated as them identifying with what he is saying and that they are confirming what is being said. Thus for them being a jock is problematised and undermined as a way of diffusing the power they appear to have in that context. Mac an Ghail (1994) and Skelton (1997) have suggested that a passion for football, and the same can be said of rugby in particular social setting in South Africa, in terms of playing, watching and talking about it is not exclusive to one pattern of masculinity.

In a few lines down a question is directed at a particular individual in the group. He plays rugby but he distances himself 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. Constructing himself as a hero “...make this school proud”. In the next line where the participant says, “I am not like, I dream about rugby, play here in the mornings...” he is confirming what the previous speaker said, that this is not normal behaviour. In the following line the participant is describing the jock as someone who is dull and boring, because they are against smoking and swearing, “...none of them are like party...”

In this section we looked at some of the strategies and resources the young men in our study used to resist and negotiate what they perceived to be the hegemonic masculinity in their context. These included either belittling the hegemonic identity, brushing it off as ridiculous, boring and one-dimensional, constructing it as a disorder or adopting some of its strategies and resources but resisting taking on the ‘whole package’. They also valorised their own identities by showing their individuality and autonomy. They also distanced themselves from hegemonic masculinity and rebelliously rejected some of its characteristics.

4.6) ALTERNATIVE NOTIONS OF MASCULINITIES

At many places in the discussions, participants were at pains to distance themselves from the traditional constructions of masculinity and being a real man, and to assert that it was ‘others’ who followed these paths: of smoking and drugs, of unsafe sex, of violent or abusive relationships, of consumerism, of gangsterism; that they were able to resist influences. Thus they presented images of responsible manhood; of loving, gentle, caring and trusting relationships; of making up one’s own mind, of taking responsibility for one’s actions, having principles and making informed choices; drawing on examples of parents and religious beliefs; describing male abusers as ‘pussies’.

Extract: 14

P: 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

(Ss1)

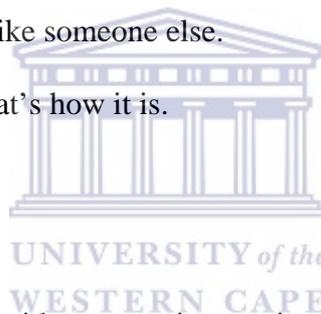
Extract: 13

P: [...] I actually read up about some studies done on twins and you get some twins, I think its like twenty percent of twins they are identical, they want to be the same and the majority don't want to be the same at all.

P: Be original, not be like someone else.

P: Yea, original and that's how it is.

(Fs1)



Through all the talk, one was left with a strong impression of the difficulties these young men had in defining what it meant to be a man, that it was easier to identify what it was to not be a real man, that manhood was something they had not yet reached. There was also a strong association with becoming a man and marriage. For these young men it was assumed as conventional wisdom that the transition into manhood was accompanied with getting married.

In the following extract participants are speaking about sexual intercourse and the various discourses around abstinence. The same participant refers to his sister.

Extract: 15

P: It's a sin... It's a sin to have sex before marriage like in our house my mother's always telling my sister 'Get married first if you want to do it' but she doesn't want to do it ... she has a boyfriend maybe it is like that but they abstain from sex. I don't know but she made a promise to my mother and father that she will first get married before she has sex and I think she maybe kept her promise.

(Ss1)

There are several things worth noting about this extract. The first of which is the manner in which the participant is drawn into the conversation and aligns himself with the religious discourse of it being a sin to have sex before marriage. He tries to use his sister being in a steady relationship as an example to get his point across and realises that he cannot account for her every move. He tries to repair this with "I don't know but she made a promise..." and "...she maybe kept her promise." The "I don't know" and "maybe" are not absolute statements. By saying this he is distancing himself in an attempt not to challenge his sister's veracity and also not to come across as being gullible. Also waiving off any possible challenge from participants who would want to claim that he cannot account for her every move. The participant asserts his masculinity in a subtle way and is extremely crafty in doing it. Two interesting points to note the first being how the participant ascribes to the hegemonic masculinity of the context by protecting his sisters integrity (protecting women in your family) and secondly by coming across as being "cool" as opposed to gullible. He thus asserts his masculinity but not in the traditional machismo or "laddish" ways as described by several other authors but in a more subtle way displaying how the enactment of dominant masculinities can and are being negotiated. I say the enactment because he still conforms to hegemonic masculinity but he goes about it by employing different techniques.

4.7) CONCLUSION

In this chapter I looked at some of the complexities, difference and similarities of being a young man in various contexts. I also showed how hegemonic, divergent and marginal masculinities are enacted in each context. I looked at alternative masculine identities constructed by the participants and the resources and strategies employed to resist and (re)negotiate harmful hegemonic masculinity. Three important points emerging out of this chapter are firstly there is not one homogenous group of boys even when they share a particular identity or belonging to a particular community. Secondly, local hegemonic and marginal masculinities change from one context to the next i.e. a masculine identity might be valued and esteemed in one context and could be ridiculed and marginalized in the other. Thirdly, young men rely on micro and macro hegemonic ideals to construct a positive identity for themselves. Both group and individual identities are important.



CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

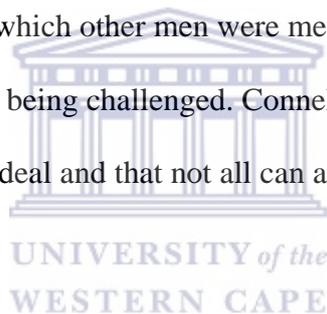
5.1) INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I present a synthesis of the findings reflected in the previous chapters. A summary of the patterns of negotiating strategies used by the young men as a form of resisting hegemonic masculinity is presented in the next few pages. Some of the limitations of this study as well as suggestions for future research are also discussed.

As mentioned in chapter one, the assumption that the version of masculinity that is white, middle class, middle aged, successful, and heterosexual, was the sex role into which all men were struggling to fit and against which other men were measured. This version of masculinity, however, is currently being challenged. Connell (1995; 2000) has argued that not all men ascribe to this masculine ideal and that not all can attain it.

5.2) CENTRAL ISSUES

Overall, the findings of this study have been observed, and are supported, by empirical data in numerous national and international studies. Traditional gender roles have strongly been associated with being a 'real man'. A key characteristic of a 'real man' is that he is always heterosexual, that he is expected to be the breadwinner, that he is the protector of the women in his household. Heterosexuality appeared to be the constant amongst the range of masculinities and narratives from which the young men chose to construct a secure masculine identity. Although it mattered a great deal what group or identity you ascribed to, it was not as bad if you were heterosexual. This was so profound in the attitudes of these young men that in all of the groups it was generally assumed that all the participant were heterosexual and in one of the groups a participant requested that if there was any body who was not that they should



please leave. Homophobic attitudes were used to police other men's behaviour. Other aspects of being a man involved smoking and the use of banned substances, using violence as a means to resolve disputes or to assert authority, have multiple female sexual partners and not practising safe sex. It was apparent in the findings that the young men ascribed to several gender double standards. For instance, it was accepted and even 'cool' for young men to drink alcohol and smoke cigarettes and it was considered 'uncool' and disgusting for young women. Also, young women were labelled and stigmatised if it was rumoured that they are being promiscuous but young men were hailed as heroes. Nevertheless, the young men generally distanced themselves from these negative aspects and presented images of responsible and respectable manhood.

Risk-taking and risky behaviours was also central in the construction of a masculine identity. For some these risks were a method of demonstrating power and to prove their bravery, for others it was a matter of life and death given that they felt they were in constant danger of violent attacks on their way to and from school. At some of the schools the young men conveyed accounts of incidents where gang fights would break out on school and gang members would come on to school grounds to intimidate certain learners. The masculine need to be feared and respected was also highlighted as a necessity.

The findings have also indicated the numerous, diverse, conflicting and contradictory masculine identities in any context. The literature has shown that masculinities are multi-layered (Toerien & Durrheim, 2001), that it means different things to different groups of men at different times (Kimmell, 2001) and that there are multiple, conflicting and competing masculinities (Gough, 2001). Kimmell (2001) further explains that men's experiences depend on different types of class, 'race', ethnicity, age, geographical region of the country and

position in the global economy. Context is thus important because it provides men and young men in particular with immediate identities that they may either identify with or contest (Connell, 1995; Phoenix, *et al.*, 2003; Skelton, 1997; Swain, 2002; Wetherell & Edley, 1999). As a consequence, establishing a coherent sense of masculine identity requires continuous negotiation between this multiple and often-contradictory discourses and is a complex and active process (Toerien & Durrheim, 2001).

This study set out to investigate the resources and strategies used by adolescent boys to negotiate between this multiple and contradictory masculinities. The findings are by no means exhausted and conclusive but reveal several strategies. Belittling the hegemonic identity by associating it with or assigning feminine attributes to it was one of the strategies used by the young men in this study. Another strategy employed by the young men, was to construct the hegemonic identity of their context as 'abnormal'. In this way they would problematise and undermine the hegemonic identity. Other strategies involved adopting some of the hegemonic identities strategies and resources and valorising their own masculine identity.

The results of this study are supported by numerous other studies that have shown how competition in some form or another was ever present in descriptions of the selves. This for me is a contradiction that exists in the construction of an alternative masculinity, for example, the ability to control your self emotionally and using tact instead of violence as a method of conflict resolution. The participants enact or display alternative masculinity but they measure the success of it against hegemonic masculine standards.

The findings and discussion in agreement with the current literature i.e. that masculinities are actively produced using the resources and strategies available in a given social setting. It is

accomplished in everyday conduct or organizational life, as patterns of social practices. Additionally, masculinities are multiple, diverse and is enacted and needs continuous negotiation. Masculinities therefore do not exist prior to social behaviour, either through programming of our genes or fixed personality structures (Connell, 2000, 2001).

5.3) LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

This section allows for reflection on the areas within the study that presented challenges and difficulties, which may prove useful for future research in this field. This study aimed to explore the strategies and resources young men used to negotiate regulatory conceptions of masculinity. Although the overall aims of the study was achieved as far as possible, the exploration of the topic is not exhausted.

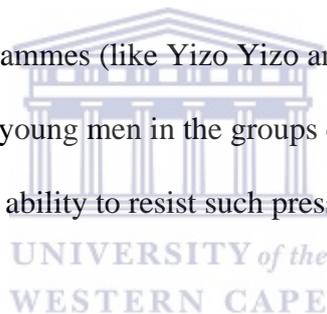
A great challenge in this study, at a theoretical side, was that the young men had difficulties in defining what it meant to be a man. It was easier to identify what is to not be a man and that manhood was something that they had not yet reached. On the methodological side it has been suggested (e.g. Shefer, Buikema, Ratele, Shabalala & Strebel, 2004) that focus groups may not be the most facilitative method to study young men and masculinities.

5.4) RECOMMENDATIONS

As mentioned earlier this study is part of a bigger study. I need to highlight that the responses of the participants towards HIV/AIDS is cause for concern. Unlike the topic of violence, the AIDS epidemic did not appear to be an immediate issue for many of the young men in the groups. While they made some references to HIV infection, and expressed an awareness of

the risks of unprotected sex, they also demonstrated many myths, stereotypes and misconceptions regarding the virus. Thus, condoms were important as protection, but they were also seen as unsafe, and girls would not use them ('unpeeled bananas'), and it was women who infected men, while the use of muti would protect against infection. There were also strong sentiments reflecting stigma toward people infected with HIV.

There was a range of factors considered to contribute toward risky behaviours. As already mentioned, peer pressure was regarded as a major influence especially in gangsterism and abuse of substances. Parents were also seen as role models, or as examples of what to avoid. Poverty and living conditions were seen to play a role, as was bewitchment and use of muti. The media too had an impact, especially regarding consumerism and desire for material goods, although educational programmes (like Yizo Yizo and Soul City) also seemed to have an impact. However, many of the young men in the groups distanced themselves from such influences, and asserted their own ability to resist such pressures.



5.5) CONCLUSION

This research has, hopefully, shed some light on how young men in different Cape Town schools deal with some of the issues and discourses in constructing a masculine identity. This study set out to explore how adolescent boys negotiate regulatory conceptions of masculinity. It was located in the broader context of research on the constructions of masculinity and its impact on risk-taking behaviours in relation to the spread of HIV/AIDS. The findings suggest that the young men, individually or as a group, drew on a range of strategies in an attempt to construct a suitable masculine identity. They used strategies like ridiculing and belittling heterosexual masculine identities that they felt they were in contest with.

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APPENDICES



APPENDICES

- A). Letter to Western Cape Department of Education
- B). Letter to the Schools
- C). Focus Group interview guide
- D). Transcript Conventions
- E). Particulars of Schools, democratic participants and definitions of assigned extract codes



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Wes-Kaap Onderwysdepartement
Western Cape Education Department
ISEbe leMfundo leNtshona Koloni

Dr Anna Strebel
Women and Gender Studies
University of the Western Cape
Private Bag X17
BELLVILLE
7535

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: MASCULINITY AND RISK-TAKING BEHAVIOUR.

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from 8th April 2003 to 26th June 2003.
6. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Dr R. Cornelissen at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number.
7. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal of the school where the intended research is to be conducted.
8. Your research will be limited to the list of schools you submitted.
9. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Education Research.
10. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:

The Director: Education Research
Western Cape Education Department
Private Bag 9114
CAPE TOWN
8000

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards,


HEAD: EDUCATION
DATE: 2003.04.03



University of The Western Cape

Women and Gender Studies Programme

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29 April 2003

The Principal and staff

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Research Project on male adolescents and risk-taking behaviours

I am writing to request your permission to conduct research at your school. I am the project leader of a 2-year study which focuses on how young male adolescents, at Western Cape schools, understand their masculinity and how this links with risk-taking behaviours, including substance abuse, violence and unsafe sexual practices. The project is a collaboration between the Gender Studies and Psychology Departments at the University of the Western Cape, and Women's Studies at the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands.

We would like to visit the school during the month of August 2003, and run three focus groups with the same group of scholars over a period of three weeks. We would require you to provide a group of 8-10 males who are between the ages of 15-16 years old, and will be available for 3 meetings of one to one and a half hours. We would also require your assistance in the provision of a small room with a TV and video (if possible, if not we will bring our own). The focus groups will be video-taped for analysis. We will be happy to share our findings with you through a written or verbal report, but obviously the actual data will be highly confidential to protect the participants and in order to adhere to research ethics.

We hope you will be able to participate in this research project. We have already received permission to carry out the project with the Department of Education, see attached letter. We appreciate your assistance.

Sincerely

Tammy Shefer
Professor of Psychology
Director of Women and Gender Studies

(C)

SANPAD PROJECT FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW GUIDE

QUESTIONS FOR SESSION 1

What did you think of the music video?

What type of men did you see being portrayed in the video?

What does it mean for you to be a boy / young man?

What does the notion of masculinity mean?

What have been / are the influences on your identity as men?

What do you like / not like about being a man?

How does sexuality relate to being a man?

What do you find pleasurable / distasteful about sexuality?

What have been / are the influences on your sexuality?

Alternative notions of masculinity and sexuality?



UNIVERSITY of the

QUESTIONS FOR SESSION 2 WESTERN CAPE

What did you think of the music video?

What type of men did you see being portrayed in the video?

What's risky about being a young man today?

What are the attractions of such risky behaviours?

What's off-putting about doing these things?

How do you decide what to do about risky behaviours?

What influences you in how you respond to rb?

How do women fit into your responses to risky behaviours?

Are there other things you would like to do about rb?

QUESTIONS FOR SESSION 3

What did you think of the music video?

What type of men did you see being portrayed in the video?

Are there alternative ways of being male?

What kind of man would you like to be?

What would you need to make this happen?

Are there other forms of sexuality that appeal to you?

What would need to change to make this behaviour possible?

What would you like to change about the risks you take in your life?

Would you need any support to achieve changes?

How would you deal with pressure from peers / girlfriends?



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WESTERN CAPE

(D)

Appendix

Transcription Conventions

... = pauses/silences

[] = inaudible

(text) = explanatory text

P1, P2 = refers to different participant voices

F = facilitator



UNIVERSITY *of the*
WESTERN CAPE

(E)

School A

Participants		Grade	Age	(Present for all Sessions)
Participant 1	9	16	X	
Participant 2	9	15	X	
Participant 3	9	16	X	
Participant 4	9			
Participant 5	9			
Participant 6	9		X	
Participant 7	9	16		
Participant 8	9	16	X	
Participant 9	9	16	X	
Participant 10	9	16		
Participant 11	9	16		

School A is one of the 14 high schools in Khayelitsha. It serves the predominantly working class, urban, "Black" and IsiXhosa speaking community.

School B



Participants Name Surname	Age	Grade	(Present for all sessions)
Participant 1	16	8	X
Participant 2	16	10	X
Participant 3	16	8	X
Participant 4	16	8	X
Participant 5	16	11	X

Interviewed 25 February 2004.

School B is situated in a peri-urban area on Cape Town's periphery and serves a predominantly working class, "Black" and IsiXhosa speaking community.

School C

Participants

Name Surname	Age	Grade	(Present for all sessions)
Participant 1	16	8	X
Participant 2	16	8	X
Participant 3	16	8	X
Participant 4	16	8	X
Participant 5	16	8	X
Participant 6	16	8	X

Interviewed 8 March 2004-06-03

School C is situated in a rural area and serves a predominantly working class, "Black" and IsiXhosa speaking community.

School D

Participants	Grade	Age	(Present for all sessions)
Participant 1	9	15	X
Participant 2	9	15	X
Participant 3	9	14	X
Participant 4	9	15	X
Participant 5	9	15	X
Participant 6	9	14	X
Participant 7	9	15	X
Participant 8	9	16	X
Participant 9	9	15	X
Participant 10	9	14	X



School D is an ex Model-C suburban school. It serves a predominantly white, middle class community.

School E

Participants	Grade	Age	(Present for all sessions)
Participant 1	9	15	
Participant 2	10	16	X
Participant 3	9	14	X
Participant 4	11	16	X
Participant 5	9	14	
Participant 6	11	16	X
Participant 7	11	16	X
Participant 8	11	16	X
Participant 9	9	14	
Participant 10	9	16	X
Participant 11	10	16	X

School E is situated on the Cape Flats and serves a predominantly working class, "coloured" community.

School F

Participants	Grade	Age	(Present for all sessions)
Participant 1	9	15	X
Participant 2	10	16	X
Participant 3	9	15	X
Participant 4	9	15	X
Participant 5	9	15	X
Participant 6	10	16	X
Participant 7	10	16	X
Participant 8	10	16	X
Participant 9	10	14	
Participant 10	9	15	
Participant 11	9	15	X
Participant 12	9	16	X

School F is situated on the Cape Flats and serves a predominantly coloured, working class, Muslim community.

Total 55

In total we had 55 boys from 6 schools in the Western Cape who took part in this study. Four of the schools are situated in the Cape Metro pole one from the surrounding rural area and one in a peri-urban area. One school is a formally Model-C two coloured and three black. Of the participants 14 were Muslim and the rest Christian and/or other.

Extract codes

The codes I assigned to the extracts are used to identify the school and the session from which the extract is taken. The first letter in the code identifies the school while the remainder indicates which session it is taken from. For example C s1 means School C session one. The names of the schools and the participants have been omitted as to ensure the anonymity of the participants.