Discourses of love and relationship in the construction of a group of heterosexual, white Afrikaner women's sexuality

Student Name: **Antoinette van Wyk**

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Masters degree in Clinical Psychology, University of the Western Cape, 2004.

Date submitted: **May 2004**

Supervisor: **Prof. Tamara Shefer**

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work, unless specifically indicated to the contrary in the text.

.....

A. van Wyk

ABSTRACT

In South Africa, recent sex research which informs HIV prevention campaigns, has focussed almost exclusively on young people of colour, whilst the sexual experiences of older, white and specifically Afrikaner women have remained largely undocumented. These gaps have to be addressed for at least two reasons. Firstly, an understanding of the ways in which older, white Afrikaner women construct their sexuality will enhance our understanding of female sexuality in general. More specifically, the high prevalence of HIV infection in the white South African population (in comparison to other countries such as Australia, France and the USA, where the prevalence among the white population is 1% or less) needs urgent attention.

This study attempted to address these gaps in South African research by exploring the construction of five white, middle-class, Afrikaner women's sexuality and the relevance thereof to women's protective sexual behaviour with regard to HIV/AIDS. The respondents' ages ranged from twenty-eight to forty years. A critical challenge in this study was to problematise the connections between constructions of female sexuality and love/relationship, as much popular discourse as well as socio-biological and (some) radical feminist and psychological writings on female sexuality have reduced this relationship to one of monolithic essentialism. This study therefore focussed on an exploration of the contradictory subjective discursive positionings and the implications for theoretical and empirical work on sexual negotiation and for HIV/AIDS interventions in this country. In order to do this, one focus group discussion and five individual in-depth interviews were conducted with the five respondents. Interpretative discourse analysis developed by Hollway (1984, 1989, 1995, 1996) provided the feminist, post-structuralist and psychoanalytic tool to explicate and analyse the discourses of female sexuality that surfaced in the study. Underpinning many of these discourses was an understanding of men and women as inherently different and "other" to each other. Furthermore, the data indicated that the connections (and dis-connections) between love/intimacy and sex for the women who participated in this study were far more complex than suggested in mainstream academic literature. Discourses of love and relationships intersected with discourses of race, age and culture and with discourses that psychologise women's desire. Together these discourses operate to entrench the imperative for women to be sexually active without acknowledging or challenging power inequalities in heterosex. These findings raise important questions concerning South African HIV/AIDS awareness and education campaigns aimed almost exclusively at the youth with little or no

focus on older and particularly older *white* women and men. As expected, discourses of love and relationship were utilised as strong motivating forces for women's sexual activity. Contradictory to this, love was also perceived by many women as dangerous, which in turn led to positioning in the male sexual discourse (i.e. sex activity motivated by the absence of love). I have suggested that participants' accounts of intimate sex talks with their fathers which were largely informed by the male sex drive discourse, goes some way in explaining the investment in this discourse. It is furthermore hypothesised that participants were invested in simultaneously positioning themselves within these contradictory discourses, given the pay-offs they provide. The implications of these findings for sex education (in schools and at home) are noted. Firstly, a new language of women's sexual agency is needed which does not merely reproduce male defined constructions of heterosex. Secondly, the construction of men as biologically and psychologically driven by their uncontrollable sexual urges needs to be challenged.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge the following people for their contributions to this thesis:

- Firstly, I wish to thank my supervisor, Tammy Shefer, for her thoughtful guidance and support in the supervision of this thesis.

- Secondly, I want to thank my family, friends and partner who supported me through this financially and emotionally difficult time of "thesis writing".

- Thirdly, and most importantly, I am particularly indebted to the five women who participated in this study and who contributed so freely and openly of their thoughts and experiences. Without them, this research would not have been possible.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Empirical work on the difficulties women experience in the negotiation of safer sex in heterosexual relationships, continually stresses the connections for women between sex and love, intimacy or emotions. For men sex is what it is, for women it represents something different, especially when it is connected with notions of love and relationship. It is argued that these ideologies reinforce women's vulnerability and men's dominance in the sexual sphere and in turn affect and even subvert the negotiation of safer sex within heterosexual relationships. Turning to the inequality of gender power-relations as a critical feature for impacting on women's health-related behaviour in general and on women's protective behaviour with regard to HIV/AIDS in particular, Reid (2000) points out that most of this research is underpinned by two assumptions. Firstly it is predicated on the notion that women are ignoring the risk of HIV infection for the sake of maintaining heterosexual relationships. Secondly, this research assumes that women are at greater risk for HIV infection due to their failure to assert themselves in their relationships with men.

Reid (2000) argues that the first assumption becomes problematic when we have to explain why women are deliberately placing themselves in harm's way. Either we have to accept that women, shown to be low risk takers, are willing to risk their lives to a greater degree than researchers have previously asserted, or we have to accept that women refuse to acknowledge the extent of the risk they face. If we accept the second assumption, we are also suggesting that the only way for women to avoid risk is to individually accomplish what the women's movement as a collective has been struggling for years to achieve, i.e. they have to assert themselves in their relationships with men. In both cases, the possibility for women's agency in heterosex is not explored.

Although I do not wish to deny the importance of love and relationship in women's sexual behaviour, nor the subsequent difficulties women experience in negotiating safer sex, I will argue that it becomes problematic when it is assumed that this is the *only* reality for women in sexual encounters.

Becoming increasingly disillusioned with the literature on heterosex which seems to offer women little recourse other than meekly assuming a position of victimhood and vulnerability (e.g. Dworkin, 1987; Kitzinger & Wilkinson, 1993; Patton & Mannison, 1998), I began to move my focus away from an analysis of the power differential in heterosexual relationships, to an exploration of the possibilities of agency and pleasure for women in heterosex. This is not to say that moments of female agency and success within heterosex are not ones of struggle and negotiation, subject to social constraints within a system that is admittedly not tailored around women's sexual empowerment. What I am claiming is that no structure, force or patriarchy is so firmly and finally fixed as to allow no room for shifts, disruptions and moments of subversion.

Coming across feminist writing that speaks of empowerment, pleasure, desire and agency for women within the realm of the sexual (e. g. Hollway, 1990; 1995; Roiphe, 1994; Vance, 1984) confirmed what my own tentative experience has already intimated – i.e. that *all* sex is not coercive, *all* women are not powerless victims, and that feminism should and does have something to say about heterosex as empowering and purely pleasurable for women.

The problem however was finding a feminist theoretical framework within which to situate work on women's experiences of heterosex, which allowed for change and resistance.

As I was pondering this dilemma, I did come across some feminist theorists who argue that we need to simultaneously continue to challenge directly the victimisation of women and to disrupt the discursive construction of women as passive sexual objects and inevitable victims. One way of doing this is by documenting, celebrating, and theorising women's successful resistance. In promoting competing discourses about women's agency, independence and strength, one can contribute in a different way to the promotion of women's safer sexual practices by not denying, but disrupting our assumptions about women's vulnerability to sexual coercion (Gavey, 1995).

Expecting to find discourses of love *and* desire, of pleasure *and* coercion in women's sexual narratives, I became increasingly interested in a study of women's sexuality, which documented the "full range" of women's experiences" (Hollway, 1995, p. 87) and allowed for contradictions and shifts in their accounts, and ultimately for negotiation and agency.

Another focus of the study was introduced after reviewing the spate of local research on young people's sexuality ever since the beginning of the 1990s (e. g. Abdool Karim, Abdool Karim & Preston-Whyte, 1992a; 1992c; Abdool Karim, Preston-Whyte & Abdool Karim, 1992b; Akande, 1994; Lesch, 2000; Shefer, 1999; Wood & Foster, 1995; Wood, Maforah & Jewkes, 1996; Wood & Jewkes, 1998). Whilst this research is seen as necessary given the current high incidence of HIV infection amongst young people, and particularly adolescent women (Family Care International and WHO, cited in Weiss, Whelan & Gupta, 1996) alarmingly little has been said about the sexuality of older sexually active women and particularly white women in this country and the impact thereof on the negotiation of safer sex.

Arguing, as many other local and international researchers have, that a positive discourse on women's sexuality is central in addressing women's negotiation in (hetero)sexual practices (Holland, Ramazanoglu, Scott, Sharpe & Thompson, 1990, 1991; Kippax, Crawford, Waldby & Benton, 1990; Hollway, 1995, 1996; Wood & Foster, 1995) I hypothesised that the value of this research would have a direct bearing on women's ability to negotiate safer sex.

In addressing questions of women's agency in heterosex, the present study therefore is a qualitative exploration of the histories and experiences of a group of white, Afrikaans-speaking, educated, sexually active women between the ages of twenty-eight and forty. Of particular interest is the collision between female sexuality and discourses surrounding love and relationship and how this impacts on women's negotiation of their heterosexualised identity as well as the negotiation of their heterosexual experiences (heterosex) within intimate relationships. The ultimate aim was to not only to identify the dangers and vulnerabilities but also the possibilities of negotiation and change in the accounts of this group of women.

1.2 CHAPTER ARRANGEMENT

A review of the literature will be spread over the following two chapters. In Chapter 2, I will attempt to situate the study in relation to theoretical currents and contexts. This lays the foundation for the thesis and for the positions that I take up more explicitly in Chapter 3.

Chapter 4 examines methodological issues for the present study. This includes discussing the research objectives and the rationale behind employing a qualitative approach as well as the participants, instruments and procedures used during the collection of data. Reflexivity issues and the method used in analysing data will also be discussed.

Chapter 5 offers women's accounts of their sexual experiences with male partners. Discourses emanating from these findings are discussed comprehensively by linking them with existing literature and findings. Chapter 6 provides conclusions, central findings, contributions and reflections upon the study. It also evaluates the significance of this study and whether objectives have been met or not. Lastly I will attempt to explore meanings attached to these findings in order to make recommendations.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter falls into two parts. The first part serves as a contextual introduction to the development of the theoretical framework presented in the following chapter. In this part of the chapter, I aim to introduce and outline the relevant theory, clarify terminology and flag issues, which will be more closely explored in Chapter 3. The second part of this chapter serves as an overview of the current empirical literature on sexuality.

2.2 CLARIFICATION OF KEY TERMINOLOGY

Within this study I aim to explore the "talk" used to express a group of heterosexual women's understanding of their sexuality and more specifically the impact of discourses of love and relationship on the construction of their sexuality.

From above, a host of terms emerge which need further clarification. This is no easy task however as the terms *discourse*, *sexuality* and *love* map onto complex debates circulating within psychology, feminism, postmodernism, post-structuralism and social constructionism concerning the constitutive and constituted nature of sexuality and love; the relationship between sexuality, love and identity and between sexuality, love and sexual behaviour; and ultimately the relationship between the individual and society. Although I will be grappling with these debates throughout this dissertation, I will now attempt to unpack the key terms, which will be used and discussed in the following chapters. At the same time, I will highlight the key theories, concerns and debates relating to sexuality in the literature.

2.2.1 Discourse: The "turn to language" in the social sciences

The use of the word discourse in the title of this thesis already places the study in an anti-essentialist position (see Fuss, 1989) and, as such, reflects the philosophical and methodological shifts that have occurred in the social sciences over recent years. Both feminism and psychology are central to the thesis. Both these disciplines were traditionally

dominated by Enlightenment values and thus driven by an "attempt to reveal general, all-encompassing principles which can lay bare the basic features of natural and social reality" (Nicholson, 1990, p. 2). Postmodern theory brought a radical scepticism of the Enlightenment endeavour for true knowledge and its attempt to establish universalised laws of human relations, identities and behaviours (Sarup, 1993). Enlightenment's claim of a "stable, coherent self" (Flax, 1990a, p. 41) was rejected and subjectivity was redefined as constituted in discourses, which is contextually bound, giving rise to an understanding of "the self as a multiplicity of I positions" (Hermans & Kempen, 1993, p. 44).

Central to these, theoretical shifts have been alternative conceptions of power put forward by Michel Foucault (Shefer, 1999). Foucault's analysis of power challenges the conception of power as a purely negative or repressive force applied from the top down. He states in this regard:

> We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it "excludes", it "censors", it "abstracts", it masks, it "conceals". In fact power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to his production (Foucault, 1980b, p. 25)

From a Foucauldian perspective, sexuality is one such "specific domain of truth" (Foucault, 1980a, p. 69) by way of which subjects are controlled and disciplined through discourses, which produce and reproduce hegemonic constructions of sexualities and sexual objectivities (Foucault, 1980a).

Like any other field in social sciences, psychology has been touched by the "linguistic turn" – a movement placing emphasis on the interdependence of "truth(s)" within the language systems that are used to construct and (re) produce them (Anderson 1995, p. 8). Authors such as Henriques, Hollway, Urwin, Venn and Walkerdine (1984a) for example, have criticized psychology as a scientific discipline embedded in and therefore reproducing dominant power interests and hegemonic ideologies of modernity.

Aforementioned "linguistic turn" is informed by three (related, overlapping) theoretical approaches, namely postmodernism, post-structuralism and social constructionism that all fall under the rubric of approaches which centralise discourse and language. None of these approaches is easily definable. As Weedon (1989) points out, there is no fixed or final

meaning for what these terms finally signify. Furthermore, although these approaches overlap (Gavey, 1997) it is not clear to what extent and in precisely which way they differ. Despite these difficulties, I will briefly outline these theoretical approaches before considering the implications of a discursive stance for sexuality.

2.2.1.1 Postmodernism

Postmodernism manifests itself in many fields of cultural endeavour – architecture, literature, photography, film, painting, video, dance, music and elsewhere. The term actually originated amongst artists and critics in 1960s New York (Sarup, 1993). In the 1970s the term was embraced by European theorists – most notably by Jean-Francois Lyotard (Sarup, 1993).

In its broadest form, postmodernism represents a critical stance on the modernist project of the Enlightenment, in particular the idea that there are objective truths which reason can uncover (Sarup, 1993). In postmodernism the notion of truth is rejected as a fallacy – according to postmodernism there are only multiple and fragmented truths and realities. In general terms it takes the form of a self-conscious, self-contradictory, self-undermining statement (Hutcheon, 1989). As Hutcheon (1989, p. 2) explains, "it is rather like saying something while at the same time putting inverted commas around what is being said". Postmodernism's distinctive character lies in this kind of commitment to duplicity. In many ways it an "even-handed process" because ultimately postmodernism reinforces as much as it undermines presuppositions it appears to challenge (Hutcheon, 189, p. 2). Nevertheless, to say that postmodernism's initial concern is to "de-toxify" the dominant features of our way of life: "to point out that those entities that we unthinkingly experience as 'natural'. . . are in fact cultural; made by us, not given to us" (Hutcheon, 1989, p. 2).

In this sense then, it is difficult to separate the 'de-toxifying' impulse of postmodernism from the deconstructing impulse of what has been labelled post-structuralist theory (Hutcheon: 1989). A symptom of this inseparability can be seen in the way in which postmodernists speak about their 'discourses' – by which they mean to signal the inescapable political contexts in which they speak and work. When discourse is defined as the "system of relations between parties engaged in communicative activity" (Sekula 1982, cited in Hutcheon, 1989, p. 2), it illuminates politically loaded constructs – like the expectation of shared meaning – and it does so within a dynamic social context that "acknowledges the inevitability of the

existence of power relations in any social relations" (Wellbery 1985, cited in Hutcheon, 1989, p. 2).

2.2.1.2 Post-structuralism

Deconstruction is sometimes called post-structuralism because it offers a corrective of classical structuralism in the sense that it invites a rethinking of typical structuralist notions. Postmodernist and post-structuralist theory are overlapping and in many respects coterminous. Post-structuralism however is less of a cultural and artistic movement than an intellectual and theoretical school. Post-structuralist theory comes in many guises and forms, most of which differ in their political implications and particular practices (Weedon, 1987). What stand as common across the various unique post-structuralist positions, however, are some fundamental assumptions regarding language, meaning and subjectivity (Weedon 1987). The primary occupation of post-structuralism is language – language is heralded as the construction site of identity, subjectivity and social structure (Weedon 1987).

Deconstructive critique sets out to undermine Western meta-physics by contesting and undoing binary oppositions, revealing their idealism and reliance on an essential centre or presence. A deconstructive reading of a text never arrives at a final or complete meaning, since meaning is never self-present but is a process continually taking place. The author is no longer taken to be the source of meaning for a text, and Roland Barthes accordingly announced "the death of the author" in his essay of that title (Barthes, 1977).

2.2.1.3 Social constructionism

The basic argument of social constructionism, as described for example by Gergen (1985), one of the classic pioneers of this approach, is that knowledge, scientific or otherwise, is not obtained by objective means but is constructed through social discourse. Hence the study of dialogue and discourse and text become extremely important. No single point of view is more valid than another, because all points of view are embedded in a social context, which give them meaning.

Within this general outlook of social constructionism there are a number of important differences. Greer (1997) suggests that we should distinguish between constructionists and

constructivists. The constructionists (like Kenneth Gergen and John Shotter) advocate a more anti-realist, while the constructivists (like Rom Harré, James Averill and Donald Polkinghorne) believe that while knowledge is to a large extent a social artefact, there is still a "reality" beneath, behind and between our discourses about it.

Danziger (1997), on the other hand, makes a distinction between light constructionism and dark constructionism. Light constructionism says that "among those points of view which do not claim a monopoly on the path to the truth, which do not prejudge the nature of reality, tolerance must be the order of the day" (Danziger, 1997: 410). Dark constructionism says that discourse is embedded in relations of power. Talk and text are inseparable from manifestations of power. While light constructionists such as John Shotter emphasise the ongoing construction of meaning in present dialogue, dark constructionists emphasise the dependence of current patterns of interaction on rigid power structures established in the past and protected from change by countless institutionalised practices and textual conventions.

From the foregoing discussion it becomes clear that the concept social constructionism encompasses many theories and viewpoints, particularly with relation to reality and power. This, together with social constructionism insistence on multiple truths, has resulted in a basic theoretical dilemma for social constructionism. As Gergen himself states in this regard:

> While constructionist critiques may often appear nihilistic, there is no means by which they themselves can be grounded or legitimated. They too fall victim to their own modes of critique; their accounts are inevitably freighted with ethical and ideological implications, forged within the conventions of writing, designed for rhetorical advantage, and their "objects of criticism" constructed in and for a particular community. The objects of their criticism are no less constructed than the traditional objects of research, nor do their moral claims rest on transcendental foundations (Gergen, 1997, p. 739).

2.2.1.4 Conclusion

Reconsidering above discussions of the three linguistic-oriented theoretical approaches referred to as postmodern, post-structuralist and social constructionist, one can conclude that they share many common ideas and understandings. For the purposes of this thesis, these terms will be treated as approximate and I will subsequently explore their collective implications with regards to conceptualising the construction of sexuality.

2.2.2 The social construction of sexuality: An overview of the theoretical literature

Parallel theoretical directions taken in both American and British anthropology and psychology, starting in the late 1920s, resulted in a disciplinary departure from the study of sexuality as such (Tuzin, 1991). Sharing the prevailing cultural view that sexuality is not an entirely legitimate area of study and that such study necessarily casts doubt not only on the research, but also on the motives and character of the researcher, sex-research became marginalised in mainstream disciplines. The absence of a scholarly community engaged in the issues of sexuality, in turn, prevented the field from advancing (Vance, 1984). Given these discentives, it is not surprising that the development of a more non-essentialist discourse about sexuality sprung, not from the centre of the social sciences, but from it periphery (especially history) and from theorising done by marginal groups (e.g. the homosexual community and feminists).

The topic of sexual representation received new energy and intellectual direction during the 1970s when feminist scholars started to examine theoretical issues related to notions of gender and sexuality. This theoretical re-examination led to a more general critique of biological determinism, in particular, and of received knowledge about the biology of sex differences. Social construction theories – which gained strength from the 1960's onwards, argue that sex is not a seething mass of natural drives and urges that our society has repressed. It is not fixed and essential, but rather constructed within a specific political, social, cultural, historical and personal context. Naus (1987, p. 39) puts it as follows:

> From a constructivist perspective, "human sexuality has no essence or nature that transcends historical and cultural circumstances, but rather encompasses a diversity of sexualities that are made and constructed as a result of personal, social, economic and political factors.

In addition, historical and cross-cultural studies undermined the hitherto unchallenged notion that women's roles were caused by seemingly uniform human reproduction and sexuality. The ease with which these theories became accepted, suggested that science was mediated by powerful beliefs about gender, which in turn provided ideological support for current social relations. The increased sensitivity to the ideological aspects of science led to a wide-ranging

inquiry into the historical connection between male dominance, scientific ideology and development of Western science and biomedicine.

The "new scholarship" (Rubin, 1984, p. 276) on sexual behaviour gave sex a history and created a constructionist alternative to sexual essentialism. In this way it gave rise to a more cultural and non-essentialist discourse about sexuality. This was largely engendered by work done by marginal groups, particularly feminists and gay rights activists, but was also informed by the prevalent theoretical and philosophical approaches in vogue since the 1970s and prior to the advent of AIDS in the 1980s, particularly the constructionist, the psychoanalytic (associated with the re-interpretation of Freud initiated by Jacques Lacan (1968) and elaborated by Juliet Mitchell (1974)) and the historical (taking as its starting point the work of Foucault). Although the "new scholarship" (Rubin, 1984, p. 276) has largely contributed to important shifts in our understanding of sexuality, these "alternative" positions have also been fraught with theoretical contradictions and difficulties, which will be flagged for further discussion in Chapter 3. In section 2.3.1 of this thesis, I will illustrate how AIDS impacted on sex research and resulted in a revival and strengthening of essentialist and cultural-influence models of sexuality.

2.2.1.1 Sexuality and feminism

Relating feminism to theories of sexuality is no simple task. Feminism is a complex set of theories, positions and goals and is not easily definable (Burman, 1996). In fact, feminist theory is not even a discipline, if this is defined as a delimited area of intellectual discourse in which general consensus exists among its practitioners as to "subject matter, appropriate methodology and desirable outcomes" (Flax, 1990b, p. 20). There is lively controversy amongst persons who identify themselves as feminist theorists on each of these components. Nonetheless it is possible to identify underlying goals, purposes and constituting objects in feminist theorising. Flax (1990b) suggests that a fundamental goal of feminist theorists is to analyse gender. The study of gender includes but is not limited to what are often considered the distinctively feminist issues: the situation of women and the conditions that produce women's subordination. Seen from this perspective, it is not surprising that sexuality has always been central to feminism as historically women's sexuality has been socially regulated in a way which men's has not (Jackson & Scott, 1996). In making sexuality a political issue,

feminists conceptualised it as changeable, and therefore challenged the prevailing assumption that sexual desires and practices were fixed by nature (Jackson & Scott, 1996).

The term "gender" was therefore adopted by feminists to accentuate the social shaping of femininity and masculinity, as well as to challenge the idea that relations between men and women are "natural" (Jackson & Scott, 1996). The second wave of feminism (referring to Euro-American feminism beginning in the 1960s/1970s) advocated increased sexual autonomy for women, but still within the confines of a patriarchal system. As a result many women came to feel more visible and sexually vulnerable (Vance, 1984). Furthermore, the second wave of feminism largely focussed their critique on male sexual violence, highlighting the complicity of state institutions and the cultural ideologies that justify it (Vance, 1984).

However, feminism in the eighties started increasingly to newly appreciate the intra-psychic effects of a gender system that places pleasure and safety in opposition for women (e.g. Vance, 1984). As Vance (1984, p. 4) points out: "sexual constriction, invisibility, timidity, and uncuriosity are less the signs of an intrinsic and specific female sexual nature and more the signs of thoroughgoing damage". The resulting polarisation of male and female sexuality was seen as a likely product of the prevailing gender system, which is used to justify women's need for a restricted, but supposedly safe space and highly controlled sexual expression.

Although historically it was very important for feminists and other social scientists to distinguish categorically between gender and sex and to establish gender as a social construction, feminists such as Braidotti (1997) started to critise mainstream feminism's focus on gender which, according to her, led to a separation of gender and sexuality, to the extent that the issues of sexuality have been silenced in feminist debate or seen as a lesbian feminist concern only. Other femiminists such as Kitzinger and Wilkinson (1993) asserted that the splitting off of the sexual from gender has reproduced a heterosexism within feminist theorising, which, in turn, manifested in a failure to theorise the heterosexualisation of gender. As the concept 'heterosexual" started receiving more attention, feminists also increasingly started to call for a feminist understanding of sexuality which is not predicated upon denial and repression, but which acknowledges the complexities and ambiguities of sexuality (e.g. Vance, 1984; Echols, 1984).

Indeed, as a result of the dialogue and conversations between feminism and postmodernism, the acknowledgement of difference(s) between women has become *the* major issue that feminist theory has been engaged with over the last decade (Barrett & Phillips, 1992; Campbell, 1993; Gavey, 1993; Mohanty, 1994; Nicholson, 1990; Vance, 1984). As Second Wave feminism was increasingly criticised for speaking with a voice that assumes a universal woman's experience that is common and representative of all women, the marginalisation, invisibility and continued silencing of "other" women (black, poor, Third World, lesbian) has been increasingly challenged both locally and abroad (e.g. Collins, 1990; De la Rey, 1997; Espin, 1984; hooks, 1990; King, 1990; Reid, 2000). This critique has also been informed by postmodern views of subjectivity. Shefer (1999) points out that these debates have had an important impact not only on feminism in general, but also more specifically on the theorising of the construction of gender and sexuality. Furthermore, the recognition of difference on the one hand emerges as an understanding of the complexity and the locatedness of the construction of genders and sexualities. On the other hand, it has also constituted what might be seen as a "crisis" in feminist thinking and action.

The danger that some feminists are alerted to by such an acknowledgement and line of reasoning is the potentially immanent dissolution of the subject "woman" and consequently the movement of feminism itself. This dilemma is central to the theoretical dilemma I elaborate upon in Chapter 3, namely: how does one embrace postmodern, post-structuralist and constructionist notions of (female) sexuality as multiple and contradictory, whilst at the same time maintaining the notions of agency and change?

2.2.2.2 Sexuality and Queer theory

Since the early eighties, a sophisticated historical and theoretical scholarship started to challenge sexual essentialism both explicitly and implicitly. Gay history, particularly the work of Weeks (1985) greatly influenced this critique. Distinguishing between homosexual behaviour which he considered universal and homosexual identity which he viewed as historically and culturally specific, Weeks showed that homosexuality as we know it is a relatively modern institutional construct. This work spearheaded a proliferisation of theorising about contemporary institutionalised forms of heterosexuality in Western Northern cultures in the 1980s and 1990s, with a range of edited collections, books and special editions in journals, specifically addressing sexuality, with a focus on critiquing the privileging of

heterosexual cultures and discourses (including feminist and critical discourse) and a scrutiny of the practice itself (see as example of edited collections, Feminist Review, 1987; Vance, 1984; Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 1993).

As this exploration highlighted the complexities and contradictions inherent in women's lives, academics turned to post-structuralism and postmodernism as a potential for feminist theorising (Jackson & Scott, 1996). Once appropriated by feminist and gay theorists, and applied to sexuality, this ultimately led to the development of queer theory. Rather than setting up categories such as "lesbian" as the basis of political identities, "Queer" sought to destabilise the binary oppositions between men and women and straight and gay. Radical lesbian perspectives were regarded as essentialist in that they cast lesbianism as a fixed point outside of, and in opposition to, patriarchal relations (Fuss, 1989). Politically the aim of Queer theory is to demonstrate that gender and sexual categories are not given realities but are "regulatory fictions" and products of discourse (Butler, 1990).

In the meantime, older debates have not gone away, although the recent spate of writing on heterosexuality engage to some extent with Queer theory and politics (e. g. Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 1993). As Shefer (1999) points out, the lesbian/heterosexual debate is still prevalent in feminist circles, particularly when heterosexuality is the topic of discussion. Other than the immobilising impact of the debate, the terms themselves are symptomatic of theoretical problems within theorising sexuality "as it has been framed in a dichotomous notion of essential, static sexualities, thus reproducing the dominant discourse of the binary-opposite, rigid categories of heterosexual vs. homosexual, with the allowance of bisexuality as a third option" (Shefer, 1999, p. 86 – 87).

2.2.2.3 Upsurge of interest in psychoanalysis: The symbolic and unconscious aspects of sexuality

Since the 1970s considerable attention has been paid by feminists to psychoanalytic models of sexuality and subjectivity (Weedon, 1987). Influenced by Freud and the French psychoanalyst, Jacques Lacan, many feminists have attempted to make psychoanalytic theory the key to understanding the acquisition of a gendered subjectivity by advocating psychoanalytic theory as a way of understanding the structures of femininity and masculinity under patriarchy, together with the social and cultural forms to which these structures give

rise (e. g. Frosh, 1987; Gallop, 1982; Grosz, 1990). The attraction of this perspective is its emphasis on the cultural and linguistic structures in which we are positioned in becoming sexed subjects, and its representation of feminine sexual identity as a precarious accomplishment (Jackson & Scott). Despite this, Lacanian theory remains androcentric in its insistence on placing the symbolic phallus at the centre of culture (Jackson & Scott, 1996) and therefore many feminist theorists influenced by Lacan have sought to find alternative formulations. One such alternative was proposed by Luce Irigaray in her essay "This sex which is not one" (in Jackson & Scott, 1996). Irigaray challenges phallic privilege by exploring the possibility of a female sexuality founded on women's bodily specificity rather than defining it in terms of male sexuality.

Furthermore, the influence of psychoanalysis, in particular feminist, Lacanian and post-Lacanian reworking of Freud in post-structuralist theorising of subjectivity is noteworthy. As Weedon (1987) points out, the theory of the unconscious is central to the notion of post-structuralist subjectivity. While classical psychoanalysis reduced the unconscious to an a-historical, biologically driven psyche, Weedon (1987) argues that it is possible to conceive of the unconscious as contextual and historical. Juliet Mitchell's *Psychoanalysis and Feminism* (1974) is seminal in this regard. As Shefer (1999) points out, however, a tension remains between acknowledging the subject as never fixed, and yet still steeped in unconscious, unreachable desires. In an attempt to address this tension, another Lacanian feminist, Julia Kristeva, theorises masculinity and femininity as aspects of language. Kristeva proposes that masculinity signifies the rational realm, and femininity the non-rational realm (Weedon, 1987). Kristeva argues that both the rational and non-rational aspects are present in language, and open to all, irrespective of their biological sex. Kristeva asserts that it is the non-rational aspects of language and subjectivities that opens up the potential for change and that the repression of the feminine (the non-rational) both perpetuates the apparent stability of the subject and reproduces meanings attached to masculinity (the rational). Although Weedon criticises Kristeva for an a-historical construction of femininity and masculinity as universal aspects of language and particularly for equating the feminine (even if not attached biologically to women) with the irrational, Shefer (1999) points out that Kristeva's theory is useful in facilitating an understanding of the role of the unconscious in subjectivity whilst at the same time viewing the subject "as an inherently unstable effect of language" (Weedon, 1987, p. 91).

2.2.2.4 The discursive production of sexualities

Forms of discourse analytic work range widely; from the primarily linguistic (such as Stubbs, 1983) through conversation analysis and ethnomethodology (such as Atkinson & Heritage, 1984) to semiotic, psychoanalytic and post-structuralist/postmodern variants (such as Henriques, Hollway, Urwin, Venn and Walkerdine, 1984a). Extreme postmodernists have stressed the fragmented nature of self – an issue that has caused great concerns amongst feminists (e.g. Widdicombe,1995; Gill , 1995). Despite these objections, Wilkinson and Kitzinger state in 1995 that discourse analysis has become very popular among feminist psychologists as evidenced "in the numerous discourse analytic papers published in the international journal *Feminism and Psychology"* (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 1995, p. 1).

Broadly speaking, discourse analytic work within postmodern/constructionist theory falls in one of two categories (Hekman, 1995). These include semiotic and psychoanalytic approaches as put forward by Jacques Derrida and Jacques Lacan. The second flows predominantly from the work of Foucault. The project of the first branch of theories has been to deconstruct the transcendental, phallocentric self, to the point where subjectivity becomes the result of a "play of meaning within language" and nothing remains outside of textual games (Hekman, 1995, p. 78). The second tradition following from the work of Foucault has been advocated by some feminists as being more conducive to feminist goals, both abroad (e. g. Faith, 1994; McNay, 1992; Ramazanoglu, 1993; Sawicki, 1991) and locally (e.g. Levett, Kottler, Burman & Parker, 1997).

Central to Foucault's work is his radical conceptualisation of the notion of power and of subjectivity. A Foucauldian view of subjectivity is of a self "torn in different directions by competing discourses", and of a fragmented discursive space that "sabotages the hope of internal coherence at the very moment that it attempts to grasp it" (Levett, Kottler, Burman & Parker, 1997, p. 4). In his *History of Sexuality* (1980a), Foucault criticises the traditional understanding of sexuality as a natural libido yearning to free itself from social constraint and argues that desires are constructed in the course of historically specific social practices. As Levett, Kottler, Bruman & Parker (1997) explain: "Our own investment in the discourses is emphasised when we consider who would promote and would oppose these discourses" (p. 4). From a Foucauldian perspective, different forms of subjectivity are incurred through the

emergence of dominance of different discourses – which does go some way in explaining the historical variation in understandings and expressions of sexuality (Rubin, 1984).

Foucault's conception of power has been widely criticised by feminists as "ever expanding and invading" (Hartsock, 1990, p. 167), and a conception of discourses as "prisons of subjectivity" (Burman, Kottler, Levett & Parker, 1997, p. 4). This has particular relevance for this thesis, because although I am theoretically firmly planted within above post-structuralist line of argument concerning sexuality and subjectivity, I am also concerned with possibilities of agency and change. This dilemmas will be elaborated upon in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

2.2.2.5 Conclusion

In the foregoing paragraphs I have traced the central arguments proposed by what Rubin (1984, p. 276) has referred to as the "new scholarship on sexuality". As a discursive practice/s, the new scholarship has been shown to reproduce gendered subjectivities and power inequalities within patriarchal cultures. On the other hand, it is also important to acknowledge that the terms in the debate seem to be shifting. Feminist authors such as Kitzinger and Wilkinson (1993), Rich (1981), Richardson (1996) and Vance (1984) have continually pointed to the heterosexism and heterocentricity of social analysis, whilst feminist theorists such as Henriques, Hollway, Urwin, Venn and Walkerdine (1984a) for example, have attempted to highlight the contradictions in the dominant discourses on sexuality as a way for men and women to resist and challenge power inequalities. These arguments will be taken further in Chapter 3.

2.2.3 Sex. love and eroticism

In his seminal work on love and eroticism, Paz (1996, cited in Featherstone, 1999) explores the complex interaction between sex, eroticism and love – three closely related terms, yet so different that each needs a separate language to define it. Paz (1996, cited in Featherstone, 1999, p. 1) asserts that when we speak of love and eroticism, "we cannot but be aware of their association with the absent third term, sexuality". Paz argues that sexuality is the primordial source, with eroticism and love the derivatives. He asserts that whereas animals always copulate in the same way, humans have woven around this act a wide range of practices and institutions. Eroticism is then said to be the "cultural processing of sex"

(Bauman, 1999, cited in Featherstone, 1999, p. 1). According to Paz, love on the other hand, "goes beyond the desired body and seeks the soul in the body and the body in the soul : the whole person" (Paz, 1996, cited in Featherstone, 1999, p. 2).

But how are we to understand these terms within the postmodern era and particularly from a feminist and a postmodern perspective? How do the terms love, eroticism and sex differ, and more importantly in the context of this thesis, how do they overlap?

For Paz, the emergence of romantic love in the twelfth century France is inextricably linked to the rise in status of women. As Paz asserts: "There is no love without feminine freedom" (Paz, 1996, cited in Featherstone, 1999, p. 3). Thus, according to Paz, "love" depends on the capacity of the woman both to attract as well as to reject men and that this was a right "reserved to the upper strata" (Featherstone, 1999, p. 3). At the same time, in the Western tradition, there is much attention to the dangers of romantic love, which is seen as trapping women in false expectations and crippling demands (Evans, 1999).

Illouz (1999) argues that if love and sexuality have become increasingly separated in the 20th century. Since the 1960s, Illouz (1999) alleges that there has been a democratisation of the affair, with both sexes participating on a more equal basis. Affairs increasingly reflect the consumer culture balance between lifestyle choice and consumer rationality, the sort of calculating hedonism associated with the new middle class. According to Illouz (1999), the overexposure and disenchantment of romantic passion in the mass media and consumer culture, along with the emotional and value pluralism and the therapeutic ethos, have generated a deep seated suspicion of the possibility of lasting love. Although, Illouz's (1999) comments are valuable in relation to an understanding of love and sexual acts as socially constructed and historically and culturally specific and malleable, it says nothing about the gendered aspects of love, eroticism and sexuality and therefore offers little to feminist politics.

In feminist discourse, love is seen as captured by the discourse of romance, which is seen to be gendered (Hollway, 1995). It is a story that, typically, women are supposed to want and men to reject. In popular culture, women are supposed to do the romance in relationships and men are supposed to do the sex. As Wetherell (1995) points out, however, romantic discourse is frequently contradictory on the issue of power. On the one hand, romance seems to erase

power in its image of mutuality. But on the other hand, men are often represented as the initiators of romance and women as the receivers. Radical feminist theorists' (e.g. Hartsock, 1985; Jeffreys, 1996; MacKinnon, 1989; Rich, 1981) work on the eroticisation of the passive, subordinate, dependent female versus the dominant aggressive, assertive male in patriarchal society led to feminism's rejection of romance as reinforcing of women's submission and a radical critique of "heterosexual desire". As Jeffreys points out:

> The desire for gender, often a visceral excitement is a crucial component of heterosexuality as a political institution . . . The desire for gender is not just to conform and fit in, though that has a powerful effect, but an excitement felt as sexuality in a male supremacist culture which eroticises male dominance and female submission (Jeffreys, 1996, p. 75).

Other feminist theorists (e. g. Modleski, 1982, cited in Wetherell, 1995) on the other hand have argued that the power dynamic in romance is much more complex than it might appear. According to the cited author, for example, romance can be read as "a fantastical way of getting back at men, at rewriting their power plays, which become like the feeble efforts of the rabbit on the highway, ducking and diving but still magnetised by the headlights of the approaching car" (Wetherell, 1995, p. 142). Evans (1999) similarly attempts to highlight the complexity of the power dynamic in romance by arguing that the history of romantic love in post-Enlightenment Europe has been highly contested. Evans (1999) asserts that on the one hand, love has been criticized as irrational, feminising and thus inferior. On the other hand, the goal to achieve love has been linked to the domestication of men and the achievement of female autonomy. According to Evans (1999) the paradox is that love has at the same time been a weapon of the powerless and a vehicle of oppression. She argues that the association of romantic fiction with women, although it is empirically correct, does not account for the tradition of narrative fiction in which women are seen to be as critical of romantic love as men (Evans, 1999).

The theme of the separation of sex and love and the intricate ways in which it relates to the gendered aspects of love and the power dynamic underpinning it, is taken further by Wouters (1999) who makes a detailed analysis of self-help manuals and women's magazines in Holland since the 1960s. Wouters (1999) argues that in the past there was lust-dominated sexuality for men and a romantic love or relationship-dominated sexuality for women. The balance between love and sex has shifted for women, especially since the 1960s with notions

of passivity replaced by a higher expectation of active sexual pleasure. More specifically Wouters (1999) sees a series of swings between phases of increasing equality between the sexes, such as the 1960s and 1970s, and phases of greater concern with intimacy and love, such as the 1980s and 1990s. He relates these swings to broader social changes. In the 1960s and 1970s entire groups were socially rising and there was strong pressure below against old authoritarian relations. According to Wouters (1999), this phase is more egalitarian with individual desires and interests given more importance and legitimisation.

In the 1980s and 1990s there is an increasing pressure from above and the project of collective emancipation recedes. According to Wouters (1999), this process is characterised by complex shifts of power between the sexes. Wouters (1999) concludes that both women and men have increasingly become subjected to a tug of war between the old and new ideals and to related feelings of ambivalence. Most men react in accordance with the dynamics of established relationships: "therefore they will use the gender-strategy of appealing to a woman's *old* identity underneath, trying to restore it, whereas most women will appeal to a man's *new* identity, trying to enforce it and make it sink in" (Wouters, 1999, p. 208). Hence, sex and love no longer can be seen as given facts, but as "talents to be exploited" (Wouters, 1999, p. 208).

Although Wouters's (1999) account is valuable in that it explores the separation of sex and love within a gendered framework, it is problematic for several reasons. The first is that this research is very universalising and does not take into account differences *between* women's (and men's) experiences. The second dilemma concerns what Hollway (1984, p. 238) has referred to as "investment": Why do women position themselves in discourses of romance and why do they do so (if they do) more often than men? The third concern relates to feminist politics: If women and men are the passive objects caught up in the kind of gender dynamics described by Wouters, what are possibilities for change and agency?

It is precisely these issues which are central to current theoretical feminist debates about heterosexuality, which in many ways serves to reinforce the power inequalities in patriarchal society.

One approach that goes beyond a simple revealing of bias or stereotyped images is offered by Walkerdine (1984) who appropriates Lacanian theory to explain how discursive relations

enter into the very production of desire in the first place. By looking at comics for young children, Walkerdine argues that romance fiction's emphasis on strategies for getting and keeping a man is *preceded* by social practices and cultural forms (such as children's books, comics and films), which prepare young girls for a romantic resolution to the problem given centrality in Lacan's developmental account: i.e. separation from the mother and the transfer of desire to the father. According to Walkerdine, this is effected by the positioning of girls within discourses involving caring, helpfulness and selflessness. Walkerdine's argument has been taken further by other post-structuralist, psychoanalytic feminists such as Hollway (1984, 1989, 1990, 1995) and will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

In conclusion it can be said that although there are (few) accounts of agency and pleasure in heterosexual sex (e.g. Hollway, 1989; 1990; 1995; Roiphe, 1994; Vance, 1984) and even fewer in romance (Walkerdine, 1984; Wetherell, 1995) these works do suggest shifts in theorising about sexuality, love and gender. Despite these theoretical shifts, an overview of the empirical work on sexuality discussed in the next section provides "evidence" for theoretical arguments made by feminisms, particularly radical theories deconstructing heterosexuality.

2.3 CURRENT SEX RESEARCH: AN OVERVIEW OF THE EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

A focus on sexuality and sexual behaviour in empirical research has emerged (both locally and abroad) over the last decade. This has been spurred on by the feminist discourses on patriarchal power relations and the ensuing public attention on male violence against women, but much of the contemporary empirical literature has also been stimulated by the spread of HIV infection and the social urgency to challenge it.

2.3.1 The (negative) impact of HIV/AIDS on sex research

HIV/AIDS appeared in the early 1980s as a new and serious health problem. Its apparently incurable and untreatable nature posed a major challenge to biomedical technology. Medicalising discourses of HIV/AIDS provided images of an invisible and silent epidemic, invariably leading to a painful and drawn-out death, undetectable without sophisticated medical tests, and with no prevention or cure. The focus of research became the quest for

reliable tests, vaccines and effective treatment drugs. In the face of so few biomedical answers, social scientific research into *preventing* HIV infection expanded (Strebel & Lindegger, 1989).

Since 1992, 84% of all HIV infections in the UK have been acquired through sexual activity, 27% of the total having been acquired heterosexually (Taylor, 1995). In South Africa, the primary method of HIV transmission is heterosexual intercourse (McGreal, 2002). According to Parry and Abdool-Karim (2000), whilst there is no reliable source of data on modes of transmission of HIV in South Africa, infection through heterosexual transmission is estimated to be as high as 85%. As policy makers and scientists became increasingly alerted to the spread of HIV into the heterosexual population, notions of negotiation and the role thereof in effecting behaviour change proliferated much of the popular discourse on safe sex. Thus, the adoption of safer sex practices both locally and abroad has been advocated as the main way in which the spread of HIV can be reduced. HIV programmes internationally and locally have focussed on STD management, condom distribution and traditional information-based health education approaches (Webb, 1997).

Together with the focus on sexual behaviour, a realisation of the impact of AIDS particularly on heterosexual women has generated valuable data on gender power relations in heterosexuality. Despite the value of this research, the implications and effect thereof have been deeply problematic, particularly for women.

As McFadden (1992) points out, one of the major consequences of this research focussing on gender power relations in heterosexuality, is that female sexuality is being reconceptualised in even more fixed and guilt-ridden terms than before. Because sexual activity is seen as the primary cause of HIV infection, moralising and prescriptive discourses have emerged that advocate the practice of monogamous heterosexuality or the use of condoms, with women instructed to enforce such morality and prescriptions. Through its focus on women, the construction of women as responsible for male pleasure and male protection has been powerfully reproduced (Hart, 1993; Waldby, 1993).

As researchers have increasingly acknowledged the need to move beyond the relatively narrow and decontextualised variables of knowledge of, and attitudes towards HIV the importance of paying attention to the broader concept of sexuality as a complex socially

negotiated process embedded within norms and values rather than the result of informed decision making is increasingly advocated. This broader understanding is seen to be crucial in the implementation of effective interventions (e.g. MacPhail, 1998). Although the authors are concerned with highlighting and challenging gender inequality, these messages do however ironically serve to reproduce dominant gender stereotypes. As I will attempt to illustrate in the following sections, in much of the empirical literature on sexuality, as in the theoretical literature on sexuality, women are constructed as powerless, as inevitable victims and men as the perpetrators. As I have continually pointed out, it is the aim of this thesis to point out the inequalities and dangers for women in their heterosexual experiences but also to illuminate the women's investments and agencies in both reproducing and resisting prescribed subjectivities and dominant discourses.

Shefer (1997) points out that the discourse of difference in which men and women are assumed to be immutably "Other" to each other, underpins much of women's difficulties in the negotiation of their subjectivities and the negotiation of (hetero) sex. This discourse reproduces gendered sexualities within the constraints of the binarisms of masculinity/femininity and the rigid structure of relationships between sex, gender and sexuality.

In spite of meta-analyses that refute much of the evidence for the claims of gender differences (Hyde & Linn, 1986), the belief in these stereotypes remains widely held.

Shefer points out that the social sciences have played a large role in perpetuating the notion that men and women are deeply different psychical beings. This is evident in the large corpus of scientific endeavour devoted to gender studies. In addition, an overview of the current empirical data on gender differences in sexuality seems to suggest substantial 'scientific evidence' that the nature of development of sexuality is indeed different for women and men (e.g. Baumeister, 2000; Garnets & Kimmel, 1991; Sprecher & McKinney, 1993).

2.3.2 Empirical research on love and sexuality

Increasingly, empirical research within diverse theoretical orientations have suggested that love and intimacy are more important for understanding women's sexuality than

understanding men's sexuality (Baldwin & Baldwin, 1997; DeLamater, 1987; Golden, 1996; Taris & Semin, 1997; Townsend, 1998; Weinrich, 1987); that men are more likely to "sexualise" and women to "romanticise" the experience of sexual desire (Regan & Berscheid, 1996). Furthermore, researchers have also found that these gender differences appeared in both heterosexual women and lesbian women (Bailey, Gaulin, Agyei & Glaudue, 1994; Leigh, 1989).

It is precisely within the ideologies of femininity and masculinity (as different and mutually exclusive) that the power which men exercise arises, and is maintained. The ideology of femininity equates sex with romance, love and lasting relationships, with 'feminine' women being constructed as gentle, nurturing and sensitive (Christopher, 1987). The "positive" images of women in the media and society tend to identify their social relationships linked with men as girlfriends, wives or objects of love (Holland, Ramazanoglu, Scott, Sharpe, Thompson, 1991), such as in television soaps and teenage and woman's magazines, where men are also portrayed as the initiators of relationships. However, the use of advertising and sexual images of women to promote sales of all manner of things from cars to alcohol causes women to internalise views of themselves as sexual objects which are reinforced by photographs in tabloid newspapers and pornography, which portray women as objects of men's desire (Coveney, Jackson, Jeffreys, Jaye & Mahoney, 1984).

Masculinity, however, is more highly regarded, having higher status in society and is associated with strength, aggression and assertiveness (Christopher, 1987). Many feminist writers equate "masculinity" with male dominance (Segal, 1990). Through socialisation in the home and schools, through the media and though peer pressure, there are many images of male domination which influence young people. These range from harassment of women by sexual gestures, innuendoes and jokes (Coveney, Jackson, Jeffreys, Jaye & Mahoney, 1984) to rape. These images remind women of men's power and women's vulnerability, and so may undermine their self-confidence and self-esteem (Taylor, 1995).

Even though women nowadays seem to be allowed just as much freedom in the expression of their sexual desires, researchers such as Shefer (1999) have warned that while women's inequality is challenged within education and the media much of the challenge is still underpinned by the notion of different, but equal. Although women are voicing a degree of autonomy with regard to their sexuality, with a cluster of related concepts being expressed

such as the ideas that sexual freedom and free erotic expression are desirable, positioning in this discourse still affords little opportunity for negotiation of safer sex or for free exploration of sexual pleasure (Hollway, 1984). Ultimately men still control initiatives in relation to erotic contact and using condoms (Otis, 1997). Women's sexuality is still constructed as centred on love and tenderness, still wanting and expecting a sense of emotional connection – and therefore, as ultimately different and opposite to that of men.

In a similar vein Hynie, Lydon and Taradash (1997) argue that the widespread acceptance of pre-marital intercourse nowadays does not necessarily mean that the sexual double standard for woman no longer exists. Instead, the old double standard – which allowed and even encouraged pre-marital sex for men, but derogated women for it (Reiss, 1971) – has given way to a *conditional* double standard: sex outside marriage is tolerated within more restrictive circumstances for women than for men. Specifically, pre-marital sex for women appears to be allowed only within the context of a relationship. Central to this double standard is the notion that sex for women is bound up with relation and love. Women are constructed as more in control of their physical urges than men and as needing a committed relationship in order to safely express their sexuality. Thus for men "sex for the sake of it" is accepted and condoned, whilst for women, sex (should?) represent something over and above physical pleasure, particularly an enmeshment with 'love', emotions and relationships (Holland, Ramazanoglu, Scott, Sharpe & Thompson, 1990; Shefer, 1999; Wood & Foster, 1995; Wood & Jewkes, 1998). Women are not as sexual, or should not appear to be as sexual as men. Women's domain is love and relation, not sex.

2.3.3 Implications for safer sex negotiation

Arguing that people are strongly motivated to present self-images that will be perceived favourably by others, that will result in favourable outcomes, and that are consistent with our ideal selves (Baumeister, 1982; Leary, 1993; Muehlenhard, 1991), researchers have suggested that this drive to make positive impressions is so compelling that it can lead individuals to engage in behaviours that are associated with serious health risks.

One area of human interaction that may be particularly susceptible to impression motivations is that of sexual behaviour (Leary, Tchividjian & Kraxberger, 1994). The implications for safer sex negotiation are clear: if it is important for women to "act" the "love" part, she has

to silence her sexual desires and position herself as passive and receptive in sexual negotiation with men, even if it means risking unsafe sexual practice (i.e. sex without a condom).

The frequent discussions on women's difficulties in refusing sex with a male partner when she does not desire it, points to the role that the 'relationship' discourse plays in the negotiation of sexuality. It is a woman's desire to maintain a relationship that is frequently used to explain behaviour in sexual negotiation, in particular her lack of resistance to male (mis)behaviour, such as infidelity, and male demands for sexuality. As many local and international studies suggest (Chance, 1998; Hawkins, Gray & Hawkins, 1995; Loyd, 2000; Shefer, 1999; Strebel, 1993; Wood & Foster, 1995; Wood, Maforah & Jewkes, 1996), it is women's fear of loss of the male partner and her investment in the relationship that is believed to be implicated in women's inability to negotiate safer sex, therefore resulting in coercive and unsafe sexual practises. The traditional role of women is centred on caring for male needs and to ensure that he will not leave to seek better satisfaction elsewhere. The studies cited above found that women desist making demands for safer sex out of fear of alienating the male partner, based on their rendition of how men will interpret such a request. For these women, foregoing insistence on safer sex, means protecting their male partners from an experience of discomfort, in order ultimately to protect themselves from loss (Shefer, 1997).

Similarly, Holland, Ramazanoglu, Scott, Sharpe and Thompson (1991) found that many young women experience social pressure to define their sexual relationships as "steady", supported by the ideologies of romance and love. On the one hand the contraceptive pill is highly symbolic of trust and commitment to a relationship, with young women explaining "I went on the pill for him". Therefore long-term condom-use is problematic within the context of the need to define a relationship as "steady".

2.3.4 Conclusion

Given the findings of the empirical studies cited in the foregoing paragraphs, the question that arises on a meta-analytical level is this: If we accept that gender is constructed, and that it is within the ideology of gender that men (by defining themselves in opposition to that which is *not* masculine/male) exert and maintain their power over women, and that this inequality of

gender power relations in turn make it difficult – virtually impossible – for women to negotiate safer sex – what are the possibilities of change? Put differently: in researching women's sexuality, as this study proposes to do, how does one theorise (female) sexuality (and ultimately employ a methodology) that allows for change or resistance?

In examining the usefulness of psychologists' focus on (heterosexual) relationships as the critical factor for affecting women's protective behaviour with respect to HIV/AIDS, Reid (2000) makes the important comment that the roles women play typically depend on what they perceive as suitable for the situation. Women's roles within heterosexual relationships are not totally defined by the individual; society has also described and prescribed what is appropriate. Either psychologists and other health care practitioners can help to shape and redefine the options presented as women's caring and loving function or they can "buy into this role" as an unyielding representation of how women make choices and how they take health risks.

Reid's (2000) criticism is useful in that it enables the recognition of the interpenetration of the cultural, social and ideological into the personal geography of gendered self-identity.

Crawford (1995) has a similar viewpoint when she criticises social scientists for looking to gender when examining women's sexual coercion. According to Crawford, questions of difference invariably locate gender in individual subjects rather than in social relations and processes. For Crawford, it either serves to blame women for their supposed linguistic deficiencies (as in assertiveness training, viewed by Crawford as an ill-founded re-socialisation programme) or to minimise conflicts of interest between women and men by re-defining them as 'communication problems' (as in some approaches to prevent rape on college campuses). Crawford argues that in each case, individuals (in practice, usually female) are urged to monitor and adjust their problematic behaviour while structural inequalities go unaddressed. Roiphe (1993) has a similar argument to that of Crawford in her groundbreaking work entitled *The morning after*.

The problem with this line of argument, however, is that it tends to view women as passive dupes who are largely determined by roles/discourses, which seem to be inflicted on them by greater social powers or structures. For change to take place, the social reality/social institutions need to be changed and structural inequalities addressed.

As intimated in the introduction to this study, I want to suggest another way of looking at the construction of women's sexuality – one that offers the potential for change. The search for such a theoretical framework is the focus of the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Within this chapter I will be concerned with explicating and mapping a theoretical framework that is able to accommodate questions surrounding change and agency for women in the sexual realm as well as the roles played by social constructionist, psychoanalytic and post-structuralist conceptions of sexuality.

3.2 THEORETICAL DILEMMAS

As I have flagged in the previous chapter there are problematic issues raised by research that are both explicitly aligned with post-structuralist and social constructionist approaches to knowledge and subjectivity whilst at the same time thinking of agency and change.

The term discourse features prominently in recent analyses of the production of knowledge. Used in its most general sense, it refers to "any regulated system of statements" (Henriques, Hollway, Urwin, Venn, Walkerdine 1984b, p. 105). In an uncontentious way, this can be applied to everything that can be said and runs the risk of being too all-inclusive and too impressive to be of much use. As has been pointed out in the previous chapter, discourse in this general sense has a long ancestry. Furthermore, a technique of analysing utterances that calls itself discourse analysis, already exists in psycholinguistics. It is not by reference to these usages that I define discourse, but within modern semiotics and post-structuralist accounts of knowledge. For example, while psycholinguistics is theoretically based within structural linguistics (with its emphasis on structural analysis and its relative neglect of content) discourse in the literature I will be signalling here, is centrally concerned with content. Even so, the concept is not unproblematic. Part of the difficulty in clarifying this concept is that the usage to which it currently alludes is tied to a variety of theoretical work, stretching from semiotics to the philosophical themes developed by Derrida and Deleuze and to histories of knowledge (Foucault). It also includes more specific analyses of discourse in its relation to the subject and to ideology, as in the work of Kristeva.

In the following paragraphs, I will attempt to highlight the central defining characteristics of discourses as well as point out the main difficulties or dilemmas before turning to a more detailed discussion of the theoretical frame employed in this thesis.

3.2.1 Discourses

The post-structuralist conception of subjectivity is based on the fluid and fragmentary conception of the self that is largely constituted in and through discourse (Weedon, 1987). As Wetherell (1995, p. 134) points out, discourse analysis "emphatically privileges the social/linguistic over what has been conventionally understood as the psychological; it argues that experience, and thus subjective psychological reality, is constituted through language and the process of representation".

The first distinctive characteristic of discourse therefore is that it denotes a particular set of ideas and practices, constituted in and by language that is reflected in written and spoken texts (Gavey, 1993). It is underpinned by the post-structuralist understanding that representation (language) does not reflect experience, but rather that experience, or the feeling (love) is inevitably identified, labelled and constructed through narrative, language and stories. The language and narrative in turn, are "second-hand, already in circulation, already there, waiting for the moment of appropriation" (Wetherell, 1995, p. 134). This said, it is also important to note that silences in texts are as important as words spoken, for they signal the oppressive revelations and marginalised discourses and are potential spaces for challenge and change (Parker, 1992; Shefer, 1999; Strebel, 1993).

The second feature of discourses is that they are constituted and constitutive. Henriques, Hollway, Urwin, Venn and Walkerdine (1984b) for example, argue that discourses delimit what can be said, whilst providing the spaces – the concepts, metaphors, models, analogies – for making new statements within any specific discourse.

Thirdly, discourses are imbued with power. As has already been pointed out, Foucault draws attention to the inseparable relationship between discourse and power. As has been mentioned, Foucault's conceptualisation of power, however, diverges radically from the traditional formulation of critical political theory that conceptualises power as a repressive force that acts to coerce individuals into dominant ways of thinking, feeling and behaving.

Foucault urges that power be reconceptualised from a repressive to a productive force that also *produces* reality, domains of objects and rituals of truth.

Fourthly, discourses are grounded in a social and historical context. Therefore discourses are multiple, shifting and ever-changing and are the result of social and historical developments that involve certain powers and practices, which are inextricably intertwined with an individual's reality (Gavey, 1993).

From this above understanding of discourse, three dilemmas are of concern here. The first has to do with the implications of such an understanding of (hetero)sexuality(s) for psychology, the second is related to implications for feminist politics and the third to the implications for research. I will discuss each in turn.

3.2.2 Implications for psychology

If experience, from a post-structuralist perspective, is constituted through language, it follows that self-knowledge and self-accounts are discursively produced as well (Wetherell, 1995). It also implies that identity is always a construction, "a melding and meeting point of discourses" (Wetherell, 1995, p. 135). As Burman and Parker (1993) point out, in discourse analytic psychology, "instead of studying the mind as if it were outside language, we study the spoken and written texts . . . – the conversations, debates, discussions where images of the mind are reproduced and transformed" (p. 2).

There are a number of implications here. Firstly, if we accept this position, then we also have to accept the ambivalence and fragmentation it implies, because the discourses through which individuals construct their subjectivity are multiple and contradictory and "embody the relics of many different social and ideological struggles" (Connell, cited in Wetherell, 1995, p. 135).

On the other hand, there is a continuous dimension to human experience that does not fit with the postmodern claims of fragmentation and dissolution. Hall (1988, cited in Wetherell, 1995, p. 135) has made an important contribution to this theoretical dilemma by arguing that identity "is formed at the unstable point where the 'unspeakable' stories of subjectivity meet the narratives of history, of a culture". This implies that identity is not fixed, but rather

constantly in process and in dialogue with other selves, structures and discourses. On the other hand, because we do from time to time settle on one version of ourselves, and often maintain this version for a considerable length of time (or, indeed, find that others have settled on one version for us), identity for Hall (1988, cited in Wetherell, 1995) is as much about closure (albeit unfinished) as it is about change and flux. As the feminist post-structuralist Galop (1982, cited in Wetherell, 1995) points out: As part of a feminist politics, identity must be both asserted *and* called into question.

As Wetherell (1995) argues, the psychologist's issue then shifts from a position of authority and authenticity of unquestionable experience, to a position of interrogation: Why do we embrace certain discourses? In the context of this thesis the questions are: Why do women embrace romance discourse? How does this frame our (hetero)sexual practices and desires? Why do women want it, if they do, more than men?

The question of investment or attachment is important and complex, and "one solution is to place discourse analysis in some relation with psychoanalysis – most commonly in studies of romance to some version of object relations theory and/or Lacanian psychoanalysis" (Wetherell, 1995, p. 136).

The post-structuralist work done by Wendy Hollway (1984, 1989, 1995, 1996) is seminal for its attempts to think about the aforementioned questions. According to Hollway (1984), discourses are comprised of positions and selves take these up, in the process rewriting them and being simultaneously rewritten as selves. Hollway's (1984, p. 238) contention is that selves take up positions because they are invested in them. There is some kind of reward received for these selves by their continued placement within these positions. Hollway states: "By claiming that people have investments in taking up certain positions in discourses . . . I mean that there will be some satisfaction or pay-off or reward for that person".

According to Hollway (1984, 1989) it is usually in the realm of relationships that selves receive their payment for positioning themselves within certain discursive spaces. As will be explained in section 3.4 of this thesis, Hollway (1989) draws on Lacanian psychoanalysis to explain the complex meeting of personal histories and discourses, and ultimately, of the social and the individual. As this thesis is concerned with straddling the boundaries between

subjectivity and politics, I advocate a discourse perspective that is at once psychological (psychoanalytic), post-structuralist and feminist.

3.2.3 Implications for feminist politics

According to Wilkinson and Kitzinger (1995, p. 6) there is " a growing feminist literature arguing that discourse analysis/postmodernism is antithetical to feminism". While there is no necessary coincidence between the interests of feminists and discourse analysts (Burman & Parker, 1993), the value of feminism's engagement with discourse analysis has been professed by other theorists (e. g. Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 1995). According to Wetherell (1995, p. 135), discourse analysis together with feminism "produce a radical and liberating scepticism". Gill (1995) also argues that discourse analysis has much to offer feminism. She states: "It offers a principled and coherent means by which feminists can study talk and texts of all kinds – shedding light on old questions and provoking new ones. It has the potential to revitalise feminist studies of language . . ." (Gill, 1995, p. 167).

Despite these comments, the debate as to whether discourse analysis is of value to feminist political purposes still continues. On the one hand, theorists such as Bohan (1993), Hartsock (1990) and Wick (1996) argue that social constructionism's view of multiple truths makes action based on one version of the truth impossible. Researchers, particularly feminists, who want to interrogate existing "truths" or social "realities", clearly face a dilemma here. According to Gergen (1997) the view that accounts or experiences are neither true nor false, but merely reflections of multiple truths, does not obliterate empirical science but rather negates its privilege of claiming truth beyond community. In terms of the (feminist) political goal, Gergen (1985) furthermore notes that the acceptance of multiple truths does not negate the researcher's social responsibility. Precisely because sexualities and identities are viewed as products of a certain history and culture, they can therefore also be challenged and changed (Lees, 1987; Tiefer, 1995; Vance, 1984, Weeks, 1986, Worth, 1989).

I embrace this particular strand of post-structuralism and social constructionism and believe as many of the cited authors in the foregoing paragraphs do, that discourse analysis in conversation with feminism, can contribute much to an understanding of sexuality, which acknowledges the personal and the political.

3.2.4 Implications for research

Tiefer (1995) argues that, from a social constructionist perspective, theories and concepts must be utilised that explain how sexuality is constructed differently in different historical and cultural settings. To this end, researchers should use multiple methods and theories. Stanley and Wise (1990) have set out a more detailed set of principles or sites within the research process that should be attended to by feminist researchers:

1. Researcher – researched relationship
2. Emotion as a research experience
3. Autobiography of researchers
4. Management of the differing realities and understandings of researchers and researched.

Above cited principles, allude to the power dynamic inherent in the research process. The issue of differences in identity between researched and researcher has been fiercely debated within feminist politics in South Africa. De la Rey (1997) asserts that this debate first became public at the *Women and Gender In Southern Africa Conference* in Durban in 1991. She elaborates as follows:

> One of the issues that angered black women was the observation that most of the papers were researched accounts of the lives of black women analysed by white women, thus rendering black women the objects of study under the gaze of white privilege. The subsequent debate among feminist researches pivoted on the question of the political and methodological validity of having researchers situated in a position of socio-political privilege analysing the lives of the oppressed. (De la Rey, 1997, p. 193)

In this thesis, I have tried to accommodate for the inevitable power dynamic in research in several ways: Firstly, I have chosen to explore the experiences of a specific group of South African women who are in many ways very closely aligned to my own position in terms of class (middle class), gender (female), race (white) and sexual orientation (heterosexual). I have also attempted to be constantly self-reflective of not only my own investment in the research but also of my own sexual experiences and history as participant in the group

discussions and interviews. I will elaborate further on the specific methodological framework employed in this thesis in the next chapter.

The importance of theorizing our own positions as researchers in the research process has been well documented in both feminist and discourse analytic research (e.g. Burman & Parker, 1993; Hollway, 1989). Heeding De la Rey's (1995) warning that self-reflexivity is too often reduced to the acknowledgement of an identity – for example owning such a label as white, middle-class and female, I will attempt to outline my position, personal investment and goals of the research in the following Chapter. I will also attempt to reflect on the discursive dynamics, which emerged in the focus group discussion and interviews that are reproductive of power inequalities of the participants in this study (see Chapter Five and Six).

3.3 CONCLUDING FRAME

In the foregoing discussion, I have attempted to motivate for a theoretical framework which is at once feminist, post-structuralist and psychological. Such a framework is proposed by Wendy Hollway (1984, 1989, 1995, 1996) and will constitute the primary framework that I will draw from in this study.

3.3.1 Hollway's contribution

I have chosen the work of Hollway (1984, 1989, 1995, 1996) as a broad framework for the analysis of the data obtained in this study. The work was selected specifically for two reasons. The first concerns its discursive account of sexualised gendered subjectivities. The second is related to its overt concern with the problems of dialogue in heterosexuality, as well as its political potential.

Hollway's work (1984, 1989, 1995, 1996) is concerned with the way in which heterosexual women and men construct their gendered subjectivity in relation with each other. As such, her research is similar to other discourse analytic research in that it is not concerned with "facts" but rather with "talk" (Shefer, 1999). Thus, she explores the various discourses that impinge on sexuality, and the ways that men and women take up complimentary positions within them. The three strands of the discourses of sexuality that Hollway (1984) explores are

designated: 1) the male sexual drive discourse; 2) the have/hold discourse; and 3) the permissive discourse. According to Hollway (1984, 1989) it is within these three discourses and at their intersections that negotiation is played out. The particular discourses set limits on the forms the negotiation may take.

The first of these discourses, the male sexual drive discourse, is centred around the key tenet that men's sexuality is an innate, biological drive; that it is uncontrollable and aggressive. Women are seen as the boundary keepers for these impulses.

Although both men and women are interpolated by the have/hold discourse, in practice, the drive to procure a man in a committed partnership is applied more stringently to women. This is similar to the discourses of love and relationship explored in the previous chapter that are said to be particularly connected to women's construction of sexuality. Hollway argues that this discourse co-exists with the male sexual drive discourse in the construction of male sexuality, having in common the assumption of sexuality as linked with reproduction, but raising obvious contradictions for men. Hollway argues that men resolve the contradiction through the whore-Madonna (mistress-wife, whore-virgin) split which historically divides women into two types but more recently expects women to be both, allowing men to position themselves in relation to such discourses. The implication of the coexistence of these two discourses is that women are constructed as object to male sexuality, both in stimulating and in responding to male sexual urges. Given the power and status attached to being able to attract men, women are however also subject in the have/hold discourse, taking up an object position in order to "get" a man.

Within the permissive discourse theoretically the woman has equal access to the position of subject and hence to sexual desire. It is the scenario of egalitarian sexuality. Hollway maintains that this discourse is the offspring of the male sexual drive discourse given its assumption of a "natural" sexuality that needs to be liberated and is a logical extension of the idea that sex is purely physical. She states: " The effect of this principle is to permit the suppression of emotions concerning relationships (need, love, dependence, commitment) through their displacement on to the principle of sexual drive" (Hollway, 1989, p. 57).

These three discourses do not coexist easily, a situation to which Hollway attributes their mutability or negotiability. The aim of this thesis is to examine the difficulties but also the

possibilities of pleasure and agency in (hetero)sexuality, suggested by the contradictions contained in participants discourses. These depend for their operation on the complementary positioning of the masculine/feminine as either subject or object. This positioning is neither mechanical nor automatic and is rendered unstable by the erratic operation of desire. Hollway (1984) states in this regard:

> The positions that are available in discourses do not determine people's subjectivity in a unitary way. Whilst gender differentiated positions do overdetermine the meanings and practices and values which constitute an individual's identity, they do not account for the complex, multiple and contradictory meaning which affect and are affected by people's practices (Hollway, 1984, p. 251).

According to Hollway (1984) there is an investment for reasons of an individual's history of positioning in discourses and consequent production of subjectivity. Hollway also applies Lacanian psychoanalytic theory to explain intrapsychic dynamics that interact with discourses to construct particular subjectivities. According to her account, this is an investment in exercising power on behalf of a subjectivity protecting itself from the vulnerability of desire for the "Other". Hollway (1989, p. 60) states in this regard: "Over and over again in my material, I found that the positions that people took up in gender-differentiated discourses made sense in terms of their interest in gaining them enough power in relation to the other to protect their vulnerable selves . . . it led me to think that it was not so much desire but power which is the motor for positioning in discourses."

Particularly significant about Hollway's work is her illustration of the contradictions emerging in participants' discourses. According to Hollway (1984, p. 259), the "circle of reproduction of gender differences involves two people who's historical positioning, and the investments and powers this has inserted into subjectivity, complement each other". Thus, Hollway argues, it is when contradictions emerge in complimentary positioning that the moment for challenge and reproduction of such gender reproduction is possible. According to Hollway (1984), change is not achieved by new discourses replacing old ones. She states in this regard:

> . . . (change) is accomplished as a result of contradictions in our positionings, desires and practices – and thus in our subjectivities – which result from the coexistence of the old and the new. Every relation and every practice to some extent articulates contradictions and is therefore a site of reproduction (Hollway, 1984, p. 260).

3.3.2 South African feminist, post-structuralist discourse analytic work

A number of South African research studies have explored discourses of sexuality within the context of challenging AIDS and understanding barriers to "safe sex" practice (e.g. Miles, 1992; Shefer, 1999; Strebel, 1993, 1997; Wood & Foster, 1995)

In her study, Strebel (1997) concludes that women are constructed as responsible for preventing the spread of HIV whilst at the same time being "positioned in discourses of gendered power relations" (Strebel, 1997, p. 116). This contradiction, according to Stebel, "powerfully restrict their abilities to insist on safe sex" (Strebel, 1997, p. 116).

Miles's (1992) study with young heterosexual black and white women found that both men and women were subject to a male sexual drive discourse. She suggests that this may be linked to the permissive discourse, with women also speaking of "uncontrollable sexual urges" (1992, p. 7) Although Miles found resistances to the dominant discourses, she concludes that black women drew less than white women on feminist discourses and drew rather on "struggle discourses".

In the studies done by Wood and Foster (1995), Wood, Maforah and Jewkes (1996), and by Wood and Jewkes (1998), the female participants constructed their sexuality in response to and in service of male sexuality. While young women were critical of the power inequalities within discourses of love and sexuality, the researchers conclude that there is little opportunity for resistance given peer pressure and male violence.

Shefer's (1999) feminist, post-structuralist study of a group of black, predominantly young male and female students, many of working class, rural backgrounds, largely confirmed the findings of other international studies, such as that of Kippax, Crawford, Waldby and Benton (1990) which assert that the construction of sexuality, AIDS, and discourses of sexuality and gender impact on practices of safer sex in such a way that safer sex is not easily negotiated within heterosexual relationships. One area of identifiable difference was that in her study, there appeared to be more adherence to traditional versions of masculinity and femininity and less dominance of the feminist resistance to male power than in international or European studies.

In addition to the aforementioned studies, there is also a growing body of research in South Africa that has focussed specifically on the construction of male sexuality, e.g. as collected in *Changing men in Southern Africa* (2001), edited by Robert Morrell. The fact that this thesis has not incorporated the construction of male sexuality in South Africa will be discussed as a serious shortcoming. In addition, a number of discourse analytic studies have focussed more specifically on the construction of sexual identity (e.g. Blumberg & Soal, 1997; Potgieter, 1997; Hayim, 2000), in which mainly homosexual subjectivities have been explored. This research articulates resistances to heterosexist normative practices as well as alternative (albeit still marginalized) discourses on sexual subjectivities. As Blumberg and Soal (1997) point out however, these discourses are still evident of the pervasiveness of dominant discourses and warn that these alternative discourses may, in fact, serve to "construct additional self-regulating values and standards" (Blumberg & Soal, 1997, p. 94). Despite this finding, the exclusion of participants who construct their sexualities within the margins of dominant discourses will also be discussed as a serious shortcoming in this study.

3.3.3 My thesis

Using Holllway's identified three discourses as a starting point, my method will be to proceed thematically. I will start the analysis by what I call the "sexual drive discourse", and then examine other discourses on sexuality, love and relationships, which emerged within the group discussion and interviews. In addition, I will tentatively explore issues of investment, personal histories and intersubjectivity in the analysis of the data. A more detailed outline of my methodology will be presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4
METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The style of research adopted in a particular study is often motivated by the nature of the problem as well as the researcher's training and conviction (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). My own theoretical background and training, together with my own personal investment in the study (outlined in section 4.8 of this chapter) as well as the exploratory nature of the present study therefore naturally lend itself to a qualitative mode of doing research.

4.2 METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

As has been pointed out in Chapter 3, theoretical frameworks that collapse the individual/social separation and understand the social context as structured by language and discourse, enable a view of the influence of social context "at an intimate subject-producing level" (Phillips, 2001, p. 49). It is my belief that this framework is most useful in exploring the construction of women's sexuality in view of identifying possibilities for change with regard to women's protective sexual behaviour (Gilfoyle, Wilson & Brown, 1993).

Methodology that aims to identify and explore the regulatory function of discourses on subjectivity focuses on the "circulating cultural discourses within which people living in a culture participate" (Phillips, 2001, p. 51). Understood from this perspective, women, for example, can only exist and act within the language that is available to them. They understand themselves and attach meaning to their experiences through "the available language that is deployed by the discourses within which they participate" (Phillips, 2001, p. 51). In utilising the available language, women are also the subjects of the frameworks of knowledge that the discourses reproduce and circulate (Phillips, 2002). The primacy of language as a site for investigating subjectivity and social practices, underpins all post-structural psychoanalytic discourse analysis research and has been well documented (Butler, 1993; 1997; Fairclough, 1995; Hollway, 1984, 1989). Subjectivity, from this perspective, is a performance of multiple, complex, and contradictory positionings in discourses and are influenced by lived history in available language (Butler, 1990, 1993; 1997; Henriques, Hollway, Urwin, Venn, Walkerdine, 1984a; Hollway, 1984; 1989). The discourses which

construct hegemonic norms of sexuality and marginalized sexualities together "constitute the context within which subjectivity is continuously produced and projected into an already constituted social milieu" (Philips, 2001, p. 52).

The post-structural and psychoanalytical philosophic perspective underpinning this methodology, conceptualises participants as radically social (Henriques, Hollway, Urwin, Venn & Walkerdine, 1984a; Hollway, 1984; 1989). As such, this theoretical perspective assumes no division between the subject and the social (Philips, 2001).

Discourse analysis is both theory and methodology (Phillips, 2001). This methodological approach thus enabels an exploration of similar and contradictory discourses that construct understandings, and subjectivities, whilst at the same time acknowledging the reproductive force of all knowledge on available discourses (Fairclough, 1995; Hollway, 1984; 1989; Wetherell, 1995; 1997).

As has been argued in the foregoing chapter, the primary goals of discourse analysis informed by feminist, post-structural, and psychoanalytic positions are to analyse the production of knowledge within relations of power, such as gender, race, class, and age, and to explicate the social relationships and ideologies that are reproduced or are silenced or obscured. Hollway argues that the aims of discourse analysis are "to produce an account which acknowledges contradictions, to describe the details and diversity of events, and to analyse experiences in terms which go beyond the unitary, rational subject" (Hollway, 1989, p. 81).

Following this framework, I have attempted to explore how a specific group of South African women understand and construct their sexuality and to identify the range of discourses they utilise, to map their accounts in relation to prevailing constructions of women's sexuality and to identify the consequent constraints and opportunities for the negotiation of safer sex. The aim is not to deny male dominance and the pervasiveness of women's sexual vulnerability, but to disrupt the analysis at the same time as I use it, by highlighting, promoting and theorising competing discourses which offer positions of resistance to women.

4.3 AIMS

This research, by way of discourse analysis, has as its objective:

1. To develop a better understanding of how the sexuality of women are constructed in and through discourse, by analysing, in a particular context:
    a) The dominant and co-existing contradictory discourses, which construct this group of women's sexuality
    b) Sites of resistance that emerge from within these discourses.

Specific research questions asked included the following:

1. Why and how do participants position themselves within discourses of love and relationship?
2. Why and how do participants position themselves within discourses of desire and pleasure?
3. Which discourses contradict each other and how do they overlap?
4. Where are the "gaps" and the "silences"?
5. What are the implications for women's protective sexual behaviour?

4.4 PARTICIPANTS

Since the participants of the study required disclosure of their intimate, personal lives, this necessitated a degree of trust between them and myself. This led me to think that the sample and researcher should be homogenous in terms of common access to experience and discourse. As I was not only facilitator, but also participated in the discussions and interviews, I decided that the group should comprise of friends and acquaintances – women who see themselves (and the researcher) as their equal.

Recruited by word of mouth, the sample in this study comprised of five white middle-class women between the ages of twenty-eight and forty. Guided by the methodological process documented by Hollway (1989), I felt comfortable with five women, since the "information derived from any participant is valid because that account is product (albeit complex) of the social domain" (Hollway, 1989, p. 15). The women are all well educated and successfully engaged in various artistic, educational, and other occupational pursuits. They all spoke

Afrikaans as a first language and the focus group discussion and individual interviews were all conducted in Afrikaans. Although two of the women who participated in the study were previously married, all of the participants were unmarried at the time the research was conducted. Three of the women were involved in committed relationships and two were single. They were included in the study based on their interest in exploring their sexuality, with the understanding that this was not meant to be a therapeutic experience. Another important inclusion criterion for the women was their ability to "articulate their lived experience of their sexuality" (Colaizzi, 1978, cited in Daniluk, 1993, p. 56).

Gender, age, social class, education and ideology were then the orientating axes of the study. I have chosen the group participants as outlined above, for three reasons. The first concerns accessibility and identification. The second is that most of the HIV/AIDS research done in this country focuses on black women of the lower socio-economic income group. On the one hand many researchers have commented on the danger of white women 'speaking for' black women or engaging in qualitative research with the "Other" (e.g. De la Rey, 1997; Hollway, 1989; Levett, Kottler, Walaza, Mabena, Leon, Ngqakayi-Motaung, 1997). On the other hand, I believe that this particular (neglected – in terms of research) group of South African women needed to be given a voice and would contribute towards a better understanding of the construction of South African women's construction of sexuality more generally. Thirdly, I decided to focus on sexually active adult women as one would expect these women to have greater freedom to engage in 'sex' rather than 'love' (i.e. to position themselves in discourses of desire and pleasure) and to demonstrate more responsibility and skill in negotiating safer sex than for example inexperienced younger women who may be more inclined to call upon 'love' to justify their sexual behaviours, given societal proscriptions against expressing sexual desire for this group of women.

4.5 INSTRUMENTS

Two primary methods of data collection were used:

I selected a group format as the first (and central) method of data collection. Focus group discussions are used extensively in discourse analytic research as they are conceptualised as significant interactive social sites where power relations may be reproduced as the

respondents adopt different positions in multiple and often contradictory sexual discourses (Stewart & Shamdasni, 1990). Firstly they allow the researcher to capture the widest possible variations in accounts (Gilbert, 1980). Unlike the individual interviews, which may be biased by the a priori assumptions of the interviewer, meaning within a group can be accessed and negotiated, and "members can nurture each other's thoughts to maturity" (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986, p. 221). Potter and Wetherell (1987) point out that the advantage accruing from this record is that people undermine each other's versions in these documents in a way that is illuminating. As emphasized by Rogers (1985), it is through the telling of one's story and discussion with others that words and insights develop.

As a second method of data collection, individual in-depth interviews with the five women who participated in the group discussion were held (Fontana & Frey, 1994). A semi-structured interview guide was used for this purpose. This consisted of a specific set of open-ended questions that were explored during the interview. On the one hand the open-ended nature of the questions allowed participants to reflect upon and present experiences in their own words (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor & Tindall, 1994; Jolley & Mitchell, 1986; Patton, 1990). On the other hand, this tool provided me with a framework within which questions could be asked and sequenced. Because I did not have to formulate questions on the spot, this facilitated a spontaneous flow of conversation and enabled me to focus on the emergence of unexpected new perspectives.

In both the focus group discussions and the individual interviews, I assumed the role of participant-observer. More than a facilitator or passive observer, I participated in the topic being studied and disclosed my own experiences and thoughts to the group. By participating in the discussion group, as well as in the individual interviews, I hoped to thereby equalise the power associated with nondisclosure. Coyner (1988 – 1989, cited in Daniluk, 1993, p. 56) states that this approach is consistent with a feminist research paradigm, "locating both researcher and research on the same critical plane."

4.6 PROCEDURE

Data was obtained by audiotaping the open-ended focus group discussion (of about two to three hours in duration), as well as the five individual, in-depth interviews (each of one to two hours in duration). The audiotapes were then transcribed by myself.

The focus group discussion was initiated by a vignette (see Appendix 1) and was held at my home one evening during the first week of November 2003. The discussion was held informally within the context of having supper. The one to two hour semi-structured interviews with each participant of the focus group discussion were conducted in the second week of November 2003, also in the evenings and also within the context of sharing a meal. Open-ended questions around the participants' personal sexual histories and their individual experiences of their sexuality functioned as an interview guide (see Appendix 2).

The focus group discussion and individual interviews were conducted and transcribed in Afrikaans. Only the quotes used in the analysis of the data (see Chapter Six) were translated into English.

4.7 ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The analytic process involved gaining familiarity with the data through repeated reading of the transcripts. Interpretative discourse analysis developed by Hollway provided the feminist, post-structuralist and psychoanalytic tool to explicate and analyse the discourses of female sexuality that surfaced in the study. The analysis shows an understanding of the discourses available to these participants and should not be considered representative of all heterosexual women. Furthermore, the accounts of participants were not viewed as fixed and enduring, or a representation of their true selves, rather the texts were viewed as "transindividual" (Parker, 1992, p. 7) and dynamic.

Hollway (1989; 1995) describes four 'strands' in such an analysis:

1. Determine and describe the discourses of sexuality as well as the positions the participants take up in them, the power these conferred and the contradictions produced.

2. A reanalysis of the same accounts, adding a psychodynamic explanation for participants' emotional investment in specific positions. This analysis is necessary to understand the reproduction of gender-differentiated discourses.

3. An analysis of the part played by individual history, both conscious and unconscious, on subjectivity (Hollway, 1989; Hollway, 1995). Individual histories in discourse, Butler (1997) argues, continually structure the unconscious through interiorisation of the psyche and, thereupon, are implicated in the constitution of subjectivities. In this way, discourse analysis can show how persons may be positioned similarly in a discourse but also situated differently because of individual histories within discourses and power relations.

4. An emphasis in each of the above analyses on intersubjectivity as formative in the ongoing reconstruction of self, in past and in present (Hollway, 1995, p. 93) This analysis explicates how subjectivity is produced continually in relation to others or, rather, in relation to how others are produced and positioned.

Whilst I recognise the importance of such a thorough analysis as proposed by Hollway, I was limited by practical restrictions of space in writing this dissertation. Although this constitutes an important shortcoming of this study, I have therefore decided to focus largely on unpacking the discourses as they emerged in the data and furthermore to explore the issues of investment, personal histories and intersubjectivity across cases, rather than by way of detailed case studies.

4.8 REFLEXIVITY ISSUES

Given the centrality of self-reflexivity in feminist and discourse analytical research (see Chapter 4), it is appropriate to briefly outline my positions and history here, as these are reflected at all stages of this study – from research topic and theoretical frames to methodology.

As a thirty-three year old, white, middle-class Afrikaans speaking woman, my interest in white, heterosexual women's "sex talk" was prompted in part by my own ambivalence around the operation of sexual liberation in my personal life. My own personal relationship

history with men has been fraught with difficulty and contradictions, especially with regard to the negotiation of my own feminist identity within a heterosexual relationship as well as with regard to safer sex negotiation. Whilst doing this research, I was intimately involved with a (white, Afrikaans-speaking) man eleven years my senior who had very fixed ideas about femininity, female sexuality and safer sex. Whilst I was painfully aware of the difficulties I experienced in negotiating safer sex and my own feminist beliefs and goals within the context of this relationship, I was also aware (and further confused by) the moments of pleasure and enjoyment I did manage to derive and negotiate. These are contradictory experiences, discourses and positions, and I struggled personally trying to reach some reconciliation and resolution between them.

From conversations with friends and acquaintances on the subject, I was also alerted to similar difficulties women – who described themselves as committed to feminist politics and ideals – were experiencing in heterosexual relationships and sexual encounters.

Furthermore, I became increasingly alarmed by the apparent absence of white, Afrikaans-speaking, middle-class South African women's voices in the body of research done in the field of sexuality and safer sex negotiation in this country. Given the particular history of this country as well as the present realities of the "rainbow nation" this is understandable to a certain degree. As Levett, Kottler, Burman and Parker (1997) point out, whilst many recent issues in the *South African Journal of Psychology* have contained articles that draw on discourse analysis or examine the complexities of subjectivity, issues of gender have only had a nominal place in published South African research, taking a second place to the political and intellectual struggle around apartheid and issues related to ethnic difference and poverty. There is a particular danger for research on women's sexuality and for research aimed at effective HIV preventative intervention in these absences or silences. Firstly it assumes that all women experience heterosex in the same way. Secondly, it assumes that only women of colour and of a particular class are implicated in intervention programmes. This study aims to address these silences in the research. In keeping with postmodern theory, which emphasises the significance of local knowledge and "little theory" (contrasted with "grand theory"), the importance of generating local and centralised data is foregrounded (Shefer, 1999).

Whilst my personal history of relationships with men undoubtedly influenced my motivation to do this research, it will also have impacted on my findings. My personal investment in the

research inevitably shaped and structured my research and findings. It is salient to note however that discourse analysis does not claim to free me from the confines of discursive regimes. With its emphasis on reflexivity it creates a space in which critical distance from discourse can be established. This allows for a critical reflexivity on the part of the researcher, in order that personal investments, in particular discursive positions, are made explicit and are highlighted in analysis (Burman, 1991).

Furthermore, my own theoretical roots, commitments and interests are diverse. Firstly, I have been a student of psychology for a number of years, and have just completed my internship in clinical psychology. On the hand therefore, my roots and commitment lie within psychology and particularly psychoanalytic theory. On the other hand I am also personally committed to gender equity and social justice. Alongside these feminist commitments, lie theoretical interests within the post-structuralist turns. These investments are directly reflected in the choice of theoretical frames and methodology of this study. Positioning myself within a feminist tradition, means being committed to non-exploitative methods and a self-consciously reflexive style of writing and reporting (Burman, 1994). It also means a responsibility to guard against potentially losing the political aims and priorities of a feminist agenda (Wilkinson, 1997).

4.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Qualitative researchers are entrusted with an ethical responsibility of protecting participants' integrity, especially when working with such personal and sensitive information. In this study, this process was honoured by not only obtaining the participants' consent to participate in the study, but by also informing them about the purpose of the study and how data will be used. Confidentiality and anonymity were ensured and I also offered to share findings with them on completion of the study. It is conceivable that asking people about their sexual experiences may make them aware of personal problems in this regard, e.g. abuse or relationship problems. Contact telephone numbers of counselling services were therefore provided to account for this possibility. Respondents were also given the assurance that they can leave the group or end the interview at any time should it become too difficult or painful for them to continue their participation.

4.10 CONCLUSION

The broad focus of this study is the way in which a specific group of South African women construct their sexualities and sexual experiences with men and more specifically the impact of discourses of love and relationship on these constructions. Although the topic was introduced as sex, love and relationships, the focus group discussion and individual interviews spanned a wide range of topics, including parents, the Afrikaner ideology, HIV/AIDS and pregnancy. I have attempted to capture the dominant and marginalised discourses as they emerged in the following chapter under different headings/themes.

It should be noted at the outset that the aim of the group was not to test knowledge on AIDS or to educate the participants about HIV/AIDS (although the discussion and interviews revealed differing degrees of knowledgeability about the "facts" on AIDS and the transmission of the HI virus). Rather, I was interested to see the extent to which positioning in specific discourses might influence negotiation in heterosexual practices.

Finally, because of the qualitative nature of the methodology employed (which does not provide for quantitative methods such as random sampling), I do not claim broad representativeness for the study, which is an exploratory, pilot study. At no point do I wish to imply that what the women said can be taken as a simple reflection of reality in general. I did however feel that what they said has a shared, though hidden organisation that structures, indeed produces, these cultural meaning through which they relate to the world, their partners and each other and through which they construct their own sexual identity.

What then follows (Chapter 5) is *my* interpretation following a reading and several re-readings of the transcriptions and marking what I considered important areas of meaning. The analysis was informed by theoretical readings in feminist studies (particularly on sexuality) and in cultural theory, but also by my own experience in heterosexual relationships.

CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

A critical challenge in doing work on women's sexuality is to problematise the connections between constructions of female sexuality and intimacy. As has been discussed in previous chapters, much popular discourse as well as socio-biological, evolutionist, and (some) radical feminist and psychological writings on female sexuality have reduced this relationship to one of monolithic essentialism. Whilst love or intimacy is likely to constitute one aspect of female sexuality, defining it solely in these terms radically oversimplifies the process involved in the constructions of female sexuality as "naturally" and "instinctively" centred on love and intimacy. In this chapter, I draw on the empirical data in which a group of white, Afrikaans-speaking women between the ages of twenty-eight and forty years, living in two middle-class (white, predominantly Afrikaans) Northern suburbs in the Western Cape, discuss their experiences of sexual encounters and relationships, in order to explore connections between love and intimacy and notions of female sexuality that are predominant among this group of women.

As has been pointed out in Chapter 4, the focus in this study will be to unpack the dominant (and marginal) discourses of sexuality as they emerged in the focus group discussion and individual interviews. I will also attempt to highlight the subject or object positions taken up by participants and the contradictions between them. In addition, I make a few general statements regarding participants' emotional investment in specific positions, the role of individual histories and intersubjectivity as formative in the ongoing reconstruction of self, in past and in present.

As a thorough analysis such as the one proposed by Hollway requires an analysis of each participant's narrative in detail as a case study and I am restricted in this study by space, I have chosen to analyse the data across cases.

In this chapter, excerpts and quotes[1] from the focus group discussion and individual interviews will be used to illustrate theoretical assertions. It must be kept in mind that I was both interviewer and participant in the focus group discussion and my contributions as participant are therefore also indicated with the letter P in the transcript. Furthermore, as the focus group discussion and interviews were conducted in Afrikaans, I considered it important to include the Afrikaans excerpts alongside the English translations[2] thereof as much of the meaning of the colloquial Afrikaans words was lost in translation. Lastly, the reader needs to be reminded that the focus group discussion of between two and three hours in duration and the five individual interviews of between one and two hours in duration, generated a wealth of data. The intention of this chapter is not to reflect all that has been said by the participants but rather to present a theoretical argument that synthesises, explains and interprets the data.

5.2 DISCOURSES OF SEXUALITY

After reading and re-reading the texts several times, I identified six discourses of female sexuality expressed by participants. The male sex drive and the have/hold discourses described by Hollway (1984, 1989) were identifiable in the obtained data. Particularly in the focus group discussion, the permissive discourse identified by Hollway (1984, 1989) was at once silenced, obscured and marginalized on the one hand and "psychologised" on the other. I will therefore discuss Hollway's (1984, 1989) permissive discourse under the headings of "the silencing of female pleasure" and what I refer to as "discourses of self-esteem" alternatively. Although the permissive discourse was more pronounced in the individual interviews, it interlinked with another set of discourses that separate sex and love. In addition, a psychologised construction of male and female behaviour emerged thereby reproducing the essentialist notions of the masculine/feminine and male/female divide. Lastly, I will illuminate the discourses of change/resistance articulated by participants. Each will be discussed separately in the following sections. In addition to these discourses on sexuality, I have also identified an additional discourse that emerged in this study, namely the

---

1: The quotes in this thesis utilises the transcription conventions as proposed by Shefer (1999). These are:
   a) The use of [ ] to indicate where text has been omitted.
   b) The use of an ellipse (. . .) to indicate silences and hesitation.
   c) In the excerpts from the focus group discussion, the interviewer is indicated with the letter *I* and the participants with the letter *P*. In addition, the letter *P* is numbered 1 to 6 to distinguish between contributions from participants. In the individual interviews, participants are indicated by the initials *MB*, *AJ*, *S*, *C* and *M* respectively.

2: Translations are indicated by single brackets: the symbols [and] at the beginning and end of the translation resepctively.

construction of the "Other" in relation to HIV/AIDS. Although this discourse represented a major shift in focus, I include it in a separate section as I feel that the beliefs and ideas expressed by participants in relation to HIV/AIDS are important in the context of this study and may offer valuable contributions to HIV/AIDS intervention campaigns in this country.

On a cautionary note it should be pointed out that the identified discourses do not co-exist easily and do not fall into neat categories, but emerged as a complex and intricate web of intersecting and contradictory discourses. Thus the very act of "categorising" has the potential to lose sight of the complexity and richness of the obtained accounts. I will attempt to show the inter-linkages and contradictions in the discourses as they emerged.

5.2.1 The male sexual drive discourse

The focus group discussion as well as the individual interviews drew strongly on the male sex drive discourse as described by Hollway (1984, 1989). The male sex drive discourse also emerged as a central explanatory discourse for women's sexuality in international and local studies (Gilfoyle, Wilson& Brown, 1993; Kippax, Crawford, Waldby & Benton, 1990; Miles, 1983; Shefer, 1999; Strebel, 1993; Wood & Foster, 1995). Underpinning this discourse is the social construction of sex as a biological drive, a social given which propels men into uncontrollable and irrational practice and passionate arousal that is irresistible once they're in its power. Male desire is constructed through what several authors have characterised as the hydraulic model of sexuality. Here the male sexual drive is presumed to be powerful, beyond conscious control and liable at any moment to be set in motion by erotic stimuli in a primitive, neo-Pavlovian way (Jeffreys, 1990):

> [*Following a discussion about faking orgasms which several participants admitted to]*
> P1: Ek dink nie 'n man kan fake nie.
> P6: Ek dink ook nie so nie.
> P1: Dis interessant van mans – as hulle verby 'n sekere punt kom dan kan hulle nie stop nie. Ek kan tot op point ninety-nine gebring word in seks– maar as iets my afsit dan's dit over.
> P4: Ek is presies soos jy.
> P1: Hy kan daai golf ry dat ek later dink ek gaan van my kop af, maar as iets my afsit dan's dit nie meer lekker nie.
> P4: Ja, absoluut, soos as die foon lui . . .
> P2: Ja, dan dit soos in: Next!
> I: Wat gebeur dan?
> P1: Ag, dan laat jy hom maar klaarmaak en partykeer dan fake jy, partykeer nie.
> I: Hoekom fake ons?
> P1: Want mans moet voel hulle het jou 'n orgasm gegee. Dis vir hulle belangrik. Hulle het jou laat kom! (Focus group)

[P1: I don't think a man can fake.
P2: I also don't think so.
P1: It's interesting about men – when they get past a certain point then they can't stop. I can be brought to point ninety-nine in sex – but if something puts me off, then it's over.
P4: I'm exactly like you.
P1: He can ride that wave until I eventually think I'm going to go insane, but if something puts me off, then it's not pleasurable anymore.
P4: Yes absolutely, like when the phone rings . . .
P2: Yes, then it's like: Next!
I: What happens then?
P1: Oh, then you let him finish and sometimes you fake, sometimes not.
I: Why do we fake?
P1: Because men must feel that they have given you a orgasm. It's important to them. They made you come!]

In the foregoing excerpt, men's sexual desire is constructed as a biological drive and thus as something over which they have no control. Female sexual desire, on the other hand, is constructed as being at the opposite end of the coin as it is imbued with a sense of consciousness – she can be in the throes of passion, but anything can "put her off" at any time. At the same time, women understand that men are invested in providing pleasure (constructed here as an orgasm) to women, resulting in incidents where women fake orgasm to protect their partners' sense of masculinity. In this way, the construction of female and male sexuality as different and in conflict with each other inadvertently facilitates an acceptance of women's lack of sexual satisfaction. Given the assumption of the insurmountable differences between male and female sexuality, the ways in which women and men seek sexual pleasure also go unchallenged. In addition, the particular dynamic set up between them in which male urgency appears to take precedence over female desire is condoned and accepted. Central to this is the notion that heterosexual desire is "spontaneous" and "natural" (Weeks, 1985). To be capable of being constructed as "natural", with all the concomitant associations with that which is instinctual, sexual behaviour must hence be *spontaneous* and *unpremeditated.*

The construction of condoms as a "passion killer" which emerged in the participants' accounts, revolve around the aspects of consciousness and premeditation, which condoms unavoidably bring into the sexual encounter, thus impacting in undermining the urgency of male sexuality. As one participant responded to a discussion of condoms:

P1: I think it is an uncomfortable thing, because I don't like condoms and I think it to be an absolute passion killer. Ek bedoel, wanneer praat jy daaroor? Want jy gaan dit mos nou nie pre-empt en as julle twee op die couch sit en vry, skielik sê: "Sorry, have you got condoms – just in *case* we are going to have sex?" nie.

P2: You don't want the mud on your face.
P1: Presies. So wanneer raise jy die issue? Mos nie voor die actual passion begin nie. Because at that point you are not sure: Is it actually going to go there? Do I want it to go there? Is this what he wants? (Focus group)

[P1: I think it's an uncomfortable thing, because I don't like condoms and I think it to be an absolute passion killer. I mean, when do you speak about it? Because you are not going to pre-empt it and when the two of you are sitting on the couch making out, suddenly say: "Sorry, have you got condoms – just in *case* we are going to have sex?"
P2: You don't want the mud on your face.
P1: Exactly. So when are you going to raise the issue? Surely not before the actual passion begins. Because at that point you're not sure: Is it actually going to go there? Do I want it to go there? Is this what he wants?]

The implicit notion expressed in the above excerpt is that talking about condoms before the "actual passion" (i.e. the act of penetrative sex?) would be tantamount to assuming that it is "actually going to go there". In this account, raising the issue of condoms signifies premeditation and the idea expressed here is that passion should be spontaneous and unpremeditated – a construction which is necessarily undermined by talk of "safer" sex or condoms. A second related notion, which underpins the foregoing excerpt, is that sex should be driven by men and that women should be cautious of expressing desire before there is some certainty (reflected in the statement "you don't want the mud on your face"). This also powerfully reproduces the silencing of female desire which will be elaborated upon further in section 5.2.2 of this thesis.

The construction of heterosexual desire and heterosex as instinctual, spontaneous and irresistible also underpins another participants' account of her experience of condoms::

Weet julle, ek het tot twee weke gelede nog nooit 'n kondoom gebruik nie en ek was op medikasie gewees toe sê ek vir my boyfriend die kontrasepsie wat ek gebruik is nou nie veilig nie, toe sê hy moenie worry nie, ek het 'n kondoom. En ek het nie geweet hoe dit werk nie en hy het dit toe aangesit en hy het alles gedoen. En dit was vir my aaklig gewees, want tussendeur dan stop alles en dan vroetel hy en as ek vra wat hy doen dan sê hy voel net of die ding nog aan is. Dan gil ek: "Wat!?". Want dis nie vir my hoe seks moet wees nie – dat jy in die middel van alles moet stop om te voel of die ding nog aan is nie. [ ] Ek meen toe hy moet voel of die ding nog aan is. Dit het net 'n demper gesit op alles. En dis vir my aaklig. Ek het daarna gesê nooit in my hele lewe sal ek weer 'n kondoom gebruik nie.
(Focus group)

[You know, until two weeks ago I have never used a condom and I was on medication and I told my boyfriend that the contraceptive I'm using is not safe now, and then he told me not to worry he's got a condom. I didn't know how it works and then he put it on and he did everything. And to me it was horrible because in between, then everything would stop and then he fiddles and when I ask what he's doing then he says he is just feeling if the thing is still on. Then I shout: "What"!? Because to me that's not how sex should be – that you have to stop in the middle of everything to feel if the thing is still on. [ ] I mean when he had to feel if the thing is still on. It just placed a damper on everything. And to me it's horrible. Afterwards I said never again in my life do I want to use a condom.]

Significant in the foregoing excerpt is the extent to which this woman has "bought into" the construction of heterosex as "hydraulic". Implicit is the notion that to "stop in the middle of everything" is somehow wrong or unnatural: it's "not how sex should be". Also significant in the above mentioned account is that it is the *male* partner who has to "stop in the middle of everything". One can assume that, given the hegemonic construction of men's rampant sexual urges and hydraulic sex drive, this signifies something "unnatural" and the woman in the excerpt concludes that she "never again" wants to use a condom. In addition to this, this particular construction of heterosexual desire is one way in which passion is seen to override conscious knowledge:

> P5: Ek is AIDS educated maar dit is nog steeds moeilik om te sê, sorry, ek wil 'n kondoom gebruik, want op daardie oomblik dink jy net: Ag what the hell! En dit is soos jy gesê het, partykeer is jy needy, jy wil net die desire hê. En jou selfbeeld is laag en dis hierdie oomblik . . . en jy dink dit gaan alles spoil deur nou van kondome te praat.
> P2: Ja absoluut! The passion overrules the education.
> (Focus group)

> [P5: I am AIDS-educated but is still difficult to say sorry, I want to use a condom, because at that moment you just think: Oh, what the hell! And it's like you said, sometimes you're needy and you just want desire. And your self-esteem is low and it's just this *moment* . . . and you think it's going to spoil everything by talking about condoms.
> P2: Yes, absolutely! The passion overrules the education.]

Underpinning the above statement that "passion overrules the education" is the Western binary logic which juxtaposes "instincts" (passion) and conscious knowledge (education) which alludes to the body/mind split in Western thinking. The presence of the one precludes the presence of the other. As it is articulated here, women appear to occupy a subject position in the sex drive discourse. Upon closer inspection, it becomes clear however that women's "passion" is constructed as something women receive from men. Here it is the "desire to be desired" that constitutes the female "passion". In this way men are thus constructed as the active subject of heterosex, with women as the passive object.

Another aspect of the immutable difference between men and women, is the imperative for women to be emotionally invested in sex:

> P4: Die ou (R) met wie ek was, was ongelooflik, ek dink hy is enige vrou se droom, en ek het soveel kere orgasmes gefake, en ek weet nie hoekom nie.
> P2: Maar hoekom het jy met hom gefake? Hy was dan so gentle . . .
> P4: Ja, dit was eintlik perfek . . .
> P1: Maar ek het ook al baie gefake . . .
> P2: (*Directed at P4*) Maar hoekom het jy gefake?

P4: Want dit was eintlik nie veronderstel om te wees nie. En dit bring my terug by een van die goed wat iemand netnou gesê het: Ek dink as jou emosies nie totaal daar is nie . . . hy's 'n soulmate, maar dit was nie veronderstel om te wees nie. Want daar was soveel dinge wat nie in 'n verhouding behoort te gewees het nie: Hy was meer as dertig jaar ouer as ek, hy was getroud . . . Verstaan jy? Ek dink tog emosies moet daar wees.
P1: Maar hoekom is dit vir mans anders? You must feel something, but that feeling can be sexual attraction, it can be chemistry, but it doesn't have to be emotional, because men I know, don't need emotions.
(Focus group)

[P4: The guy (P) that I was with was unbelievable, I think he is any woman's dream, and I faked orgasms so many times, and I don't know why.
P2: But why did you fake? He was so gentle?
P4: Yes, it was actually perfect . . .
P1: But I've also often faked . . .
P2: (*Directed at P4*) But why did you fake?
P4: Because it was not supposed to be. And that brings me back to the point someone else made earlier: I think if your emotions aren't totally there . . . he's a soulmate, but it was not supposed to be. Because there were so many things that were not supposed to be in a relationship: He was more than thirty years my senior, he was married . . . Do you understand? I think emotions must be there.
P1: But why is it different for men? You must feel something, but that feeling can be sexual attraction, it can be chemistry, but it doesn't have to be emotional, because men, I know, don't need emotions.]

P4's explanation for why she "faked orgasms" is that "it (the relationship?) was not supposed to be." She then goes on to explain that "her emotions were not totally there" One can hypothesise that what this woman is trying to say is that the societal constraints placed on the relationship, made it difficult for her to freely express herself sexually or even to experience sexual pleasure, resulting in little or no sexual satisfaction. Orgasms are faked, presumably to protect the vulnerable male ego. Nevertheless, articulated in this manner, this excerpt is illustrative of the way in which physical sexual pleasure and emotions are conflated in hegemonic discourses of female sexuality. Male sexuality is constructed as independent of emotions and therefore "biological" and "instinctual". The imperative for women to be emotionally invested in sex thus provides the explanation for the absence of physical pleasure, thereby invisibalising the actual practices men and women engage in to achieve sexual physical sexual pleasure.

Closely related to these notions of male sexuality is the idea that men are the constant and active pursuers of sexual pleasure and instinctively unfaithful, whilst female sexuality is constructed as being committed and loyal:

P3: Maar dink julle nie mans het ander behoeftes nie? 'n Vrou kan vir die res van haar lewe seks met dieselfde ou hê, maar mans nie. My ervaring is dat – they need the hunt. Tot hulle op 'n plek kom waar dit nou nie meer die hunt is nie, en dan moet hy aanbeweeg.

P1: I don't think it's hard and fast rule. Ek dink, as ek nou na A kyk, hy was quite a gigolo op sy jong dae, hy het vir vier jaar in London gebly en hy het my stories vertel wat my hare laat regop staan het. En as jy nou so 'n ou kry wat nou kon grootword and who has sown his wild oats. [ ] Met die eerste ou met wie ek getroud was, hy as vier jaar ouer as ek, was dit nou anders, want hy het nie die field gespeel nie. He didn't have a young life – he did not shag everything that doesn't have balls or has balls for that matter. Whatever his preference is.
(Focus group)

[P3: But don't you think men have different needs? A woman can have sex with the same guy for the rest of her life. My experience is that – they need the hunt. Until they reach a point where it not the hunt any longer and then they must move on.
P1: I don't think it's a hard and fast rule. I think, when I look at A, he was quite a gigolo in his young days, he lived in London for four years and he has told me a few stories that made my hair stand on end. And if you find a guy like that, who has grown up and who has sowed his wild oats. He doesn't need it anymore, because he's been there and done that. [ ] It was different with the first guy I was married to, he was four years my senior, it was different, because he did not play the field. He didn't have a young life – he did not shag everything that doesn't have balls or has balls for that matter. Whatever his preference is.]

Two different (but related) notions emerge in the foregoing excerpt. The first is the familiar metaphor of men as hunters, with sexuality as a game in which women are, by implication, the "prey" to be "conquered". For men, the pleasure lies in the hunt itself. Once the man has the woman (the prey) in his possession, the activity is no longer pleasurable and he moves on to the next "target". Thus the hegemonic discourse of men as "instinctively" unfaithful is reproduced. This corresponds to other research which highlights "the lack of trust between partners" (Shefer, 1999). Underpinning the second construction of male sexuality as articulated by P1, is the notion that men are driven by a need to "shag everything that doesn't have balls or has balls for that matter". Although, implicitly, resistance to men's unfaithfulness is expressed in the derogatory way the women describe these practices, they expect it, given the assumption of men's uncontrollable sexual needs. As constructed in the second excerpt cited above, the only way to ensure a man's faithfulness, is to allow him to "sow his wild oats" in his youth and thereby curtail his instinctively rampant sexual urges (to one partner?).

The extent to which the women participating in this study have naturalised the male sexual drive discourse became particularly evident in a part of the discussion in which the possibility of abstinence for men and women in a previously sexually intimate relationship was explored:

P1: Ek dink oor die algemeen is dit vir 'n man baie moeiliker om sonder seks oor die weg te kom, maar ek dink ook wie en wat sy fokus is, and how in touch with his feminine side and how much he explored his own mind intellectually, speel alles 'n rol.

P5: Ek dink ook dit sal vir my te moeilik wees. Nie omdat ek elke dag wil seks hê nie, maar net omdat ek dink, as daar nie meer seks in die verhouding is nie, gaan ek onmiddellik dink, ek is nie desirable vir hom nie, en hierdie verhouding het skielik geskuif na 'n ander vlak. So waar gaan hy seks kry? Met wie gaan hy seks hê, en hoekom nie met my nie? En obviously is daar iets moerse fout in die verhouding, en natuurlik gaan hy saans uit en hy het seks met ander vrouens. No, I wouldn't be able to handle that. Dan kom hy bedags huis toe en ons sit en chitchat? Terwyl ek wonder saam met wie hy slaap? Nee.
P6: In die Fair Lady is daar 'n artikel oor getroude vrouens en die cliché dat getroude vrouens nie wil seks hê nie. En in hierdie artikel sê die vrouens dit is nonsens, ons raak bekommerd as ons nie ten minste drie keer 'n week seks het nie. Ons is getroud, ons moet seks hê, dit is ons versekering dat dinge nog OK is.
P5: My verhouding van twee jaar is nou op die rotse. Maar weet julle, die afgelope vier maande al het ek agtergekom dat iets moerse groot fout is. Want skielik is ek die een wat heeltyd seks inisieer. Vantevore was hy die een wat dit inisieer het of soms ek, maar skielik was dit net ek. Toe dink ek daar is moerse fout.
(Focus group)

[P1: I think generally it more difficult for a man to get along without sex, but I also think who and what his focus is, and how in touch with his feminine side he is, and to what extent he has explored his own mind intellectually all contribute.
P5: I also think it will be too difficult for me. Not because I want sex every day, but just because I think, if there isn't sex in the relationship anymore, I am immediately going to think I'm not desirable to him anymore, and this relationship has suddenly shifted to another level. So where is he going to get sex? With who is he going to have sex, and why not with me? And obviously there is something wrong in the relationship, and obviously he goes out in the evenings and has sex with other women. No, I won't be able to handle that. Then he comes home during the day and we sit and chitchat? While I'm wondering who he is sleeping with? No.
P6: In the Fair Lady there's an article about married women and the cliché that married women don't want to have sex. And in this article the women say it's nonsense, we get worried if we don't have sex at least three times a week. We are married, we must have sex; it's our guarantee that things are still OK.
P5: My two-year relationship has just ended. But you know, for the past four months I already started noticing that something is wrong. Because suddenly I am the one who initiates sex all the time. Previously he was the one to initiate sex and sometimes I would initiate it, but suddenly I was the only one. Then I thought something is wrong.]

In this excerpt, P1 equates celibacy with femininity, thereby reproducing the hegemonic discourse which links sexual activity with masculinity. Also significant is the notion that if a man does not indicate an immediate desire to have sex, the relationship itself is placed under suspicion. The extent to which women have naturalised this construction of the male sexual drive is underscored by the way in which the "(scientific) findings" in a popular women's magazine is cited as validation for this particular construction: married women need to have sex at least three times a week as it is their guarantee that "everything" (the relationship/marriage) is still "OK". In this sense, the relationship/marriage is constructed as a complex "exchange" between sex and commitment. As long as men want sex, women are assured of their commitment to the relationship. In this way the hegemonic discourses of the male sex drive (in which men are actively positioned as the subject) and the have-hold discourse in which women are the (more) active subjects, are reproduced.

Women's naturalisation of the male sex drive discourse and the resulting negative implications for women's agency in the sexual realm was also particularly evident in one women's articulation of her fear of initiating sex with her male partner:

> [ ] Ek dink net daar kan nie 'n meer horrible ding wees as dat jy toenadering soek by 'n man en hy sê nee dankie nie. O, nee – I can't imagine what it will feel like! Ek het dit nog nooit experience nie . . . Dit sê vir my dat hy jou nie physically desire nie. Vir my, en dis net my persepsie, is dat wat het mans almal in gemeen? Hulle sal enigiets spyker wat 'n rok dra. So, if sex is being offered to them, and they refuse . . . why would men ever turn down sex when it's offered to them on a platter? So if I had to initiate sex and he says, ek is nie lus nie, of my kop is seer, dan gaan ek dink: Fuck, something's wrong! Because that's the most basic of male nature. Ek weet nie, ek dink dis wat dit is. Jy dan sekerlik êrens in jou lewe . . . alle mans het al ten minste een keer 'n girl gespyker een aand na 'n dronknes . . . ons skryf songs daaroor . . . waar hy die volgende oggend wakker word en haar sien en dink: God! Wat het hier gebeur?! Nou ek meen as hy dit kan doen, why can't . . . [ ]
> (Individual interview, M)

> [[ ] I just think nothing can be more horrible than to make overtures to a man and he says no thank you. O no – I can't imagine what it will feel like! I've never experienced it . . . It tells me that he doesn't physically desire you. To me, and its only my perception, is what do all men have in common? They will nail (literal translation, in colloquial Afrikaans signifying male penetration) anything that wears a dress. So, if sex is being offered to them, and they refuse . . . why would men ever turn down sex when it's offered to them on a platter? So if I had to initiate sex and he says he doesn't feel like it or that he's got a headache, then I think: Fuck something's wrong! Because that's the most basic of male nature. I don't know, I think that's what it is. You can surely somewhere in you life . . . all men have at lest once in their lives nailed a women after a drunken brawl . . .we write songs about is . . . where he wakes up the following morning and he sees her and he thinks: God! What happened here?! Now I mean, if he can do that, why can't . . . [ ]]

Underpinning foregoing excerpt is the assumption of men's rampant sexual urges as the "most basic of male nature". When a man does not express an immediate desire for sex, it signifies that he doesn't find the woman sexually desirable. It is precisely the risk of being rejected sexually and what it signifies to the woman in the above excerpt, that ultimately makes it difficult for her to initiate sex and therefore to actively express her sexual needs to her male partner.

The masculinity/femininity binary, which underpins male and female sexuality as immutably different, became particularly evident in a part of the focus group discussion that focussed on male homosexuality. One of the participants (P3) asked the group how one knows whether your partner is gay or not. As one of the women in the study (P4) was romantically involved with a gay man as a student – the group directed the question to her. P4 responded by stating that she knew he was gay because they never had sex, thereby reproducing the male sex drive discourses. What follows is the rest of the discussion:

P3: Ja, maar OK – afgesien van die fisiese. Wat is die telltale signs?
P4: Dat hy absoluut emosioneel intiem is met jou. Dat julle saam na 'n fliek kan kyk en julle kan na mekaar kyk en presies weet wat die ander een dink. 'n Man wat saam met jou kan loop en dit begin reën en dis vir hom so mooi en hy vat net so aan jou arm. Dan weet jy – hy's 'n suster!
P1: Nou weet ek ten minste my boyfriend is nie gay nie! (*Laughter from the group*) As dit begin reën sal hy net vooruit sprint terwyl hy oor sy skouer skree: "Ek kry jou daarbinne!" (*More laughter*)
(Focus group)

[P3: Yes but OK – apart from the physical. What are the telltale signs?
P4: That he is absolutely emotionally intimate with you. That you can watch a movie together and you can look at each other and know exactly what the other one is feeling. No straight man . . . I've never come across a straight man that I've experienced can do that to that extent. A man that can walk with you in the rain and to you it's so beautiful and there's magic in the air and he suddenly just pulls you close and holds you. If he can go into your soul and know what you are feeling. Then you know – he's a sister! (*Laughter from the group*)
P1: At least now I know my boyfriend isn't gay! (*Laughter from group*) If it starts to rain, he'll just sprint ahead and shout over his shoulder: "I'll see you inside!" (*More laughter*)]

Given the popular conflation of homosexuality with femininity, the notion expressed in the above excerpt (albeit implicitly) is that a "real" man (heterosexual) is not emotionally intimate and therefore not feminine. In the same way as sex and masculinity are conflated, so are emotionality/intimacy and femininity to the extent that expressions of emotionality and non-sexuality become the defining axis for non-masculinity, i.e. homosexuality. The relieved response from another participant (P1) reinforces the hegemonic "sex is male and emotionality is female" discourses which in turn, are underpinned by essentialist notions of the masculinity/femininity binary split in Western thinking.

5.2.2 The silencing of female pleasure

In as much as the women in the study have naturalised the male sex dive discourse, the focus group discussion illustrates that there is a strong imperative to at least act the "a-sexual" or "relation" part in sexual encounters, even if such encounters occur outside the confines of a relationship. Thus the women participating in the focus group discussion repeatedly articulated their motivation for engaging in sex outside the confines of a relationship as hoping that it (the one-night stand) would ultimately lead to a relationship.

P3: [ ] Ons het seker so drie of vier weke nadat ek hom ontmoet het vir die eerste keer saamgeslaap. [ ] Elke sekonde wat ons kon, was ons bymekaar en dit het 'n verhouding geword.
P2: Toe julle die eerste keer saamgeslaap het, het dit die pad oopgemaak vir 'n moontlike verhouding?
P3: Ja, maar dit was nie vir my 'n kwessie van, "I want to have a night of sex" nie. Hy was net vir my 'n nice ou. I would like to know him better.
I: Was dit hoekom jy saam met hom geslaap het?
P3: Beide, met die hoop dat daar iets verder van sal kom.
(Focus group)

[P3: [ ] We slept together for the first time probably about three or four weeks after we met. [ ] Every second we could, we were together and it became a relationship.
P2: When you slept together for the first time, did that open the way to a possible relationship?
P3: Yes, but to me it wasn't a question of "I want to have a night of sex." To me he was just a nice guy. I would like to know him better.
I: Was that why you slept with him?
P3: Both, with the hope that something will come of it.]

P3's insistence that it was not a case of "I want to have a night of sex" is indicative of the moralising discourses, which regulate free erotic expression for women. The motivation for "sleeping with" her partner is rather constructed as predicated on feelings of emotional intimacy ("To me he was just a nice guy. I would like to get to know him better.") and the possibility of a relationship ("with the hope that something would come of it."). Also significant is the use of the colloquial euphemism "sleeping together" to signify the sexual act. Presumably the term "sleeping together" with its concomitant connotations of intimacy and passivity serves both to legitimise this experience to the group and reproduce the hegemonic discourse of female sexuality as passive and predicated on intimacy.

Alternatively, one-night stands were also commonly constructed as a way of "getting over" a break-up. Having a one-night stand for a woman then is an act in response to the hurt caused by her ex-partner, rather than an act of her own desire. As one participant states:

P4: Die eerste keer toe ons seks gehad het, het ek net oor 'n vorige verhouding probeer kom. Ek het oor my verhouding met A probeer kom, want dit was absoluut patologies. So, ek het vir R absoluut gebruik as 'n instrument. Terwyl hy my soen en uittrek, het ek gedink: Ek is besig om vry te kom. Hy gaan my help om af te kom van hierdie man af. Ek het gedink dit gaan net die een keer wees, en dan is ek fine.
I: En dit, was dit beskermde seks gewees?
P4: Nee, op daardie stadium was dit in die kantoor, op die lessenaar, soos in die movies . . . en dit was absoluut 'n geval van being needy . . . needing to be desired . . . hy het al daai behoeftes vervul . . . want in daai stadium het A my nog gereeld kom sien en dan druk hy my vas en probeer my soen en sê vir my goed soos ek is die enigste vrou vir wie hy sal straight word . . . en toe hy my probeer vasdruk toe't R alles gesien en toe roep hy my na sy kantoor toe daai selfde middag en toe . . . toe gebeur dit. Toe dink ek – daar is dit nou. Nou gaan ek vir A wys. Ek gaan dit een of twee keer doen, dan's dit verby en dan's ek gecure.
(Focus Group)

[P4: The first time we had sex, I was just trying to get over a previous relationship. I was trying to get over my relationship with A, because it became pathological. So, I absolutely used R as an instrument. While he was kissing me and undressing me, I just thought: I am becoming free. He is going to help me to get off this man. I thought it will only be that one time, then I'm fine.
I: And that, was that protected sex?
P4: No, at that stage it was in his office, on the desk, like in the movies . . .and it was absolutely a case of being needy . . . needing to be desired . . . he fulfilled all those needs . . . because at that stage A still regularly came to see me and then he would hold me and tell me things like I am the still the only woman for whom he will become straight . . . and when he tried to hold me, R saw everything and then he called me to his office and that same afternoon, it . . . it happened. Then I thought – there you go. Now I'm going to show A. I'm going to do it once or twice, then it's over and then I'm cured.]

In the above account, it appears that this woman has positioned herself in the subject position in the permissive discourse ("I absolutely used him as an instrument"). Upon closer inspection, however, it becomes clear that this "empowerment" fails to allow her to recognise or challenge male power in this encounter. In the individual interview with this participant, she described this sexual experience as "the most horrible thing":

> [ ] en toe hy my soen, toe't ek net gevoel: Kom weg van my af. Ek wou dit nie hê nie. En toe ons die eerste keer seks het! Ek het dit gehaat. Dit was vir my die aakligste ding. Maar ek het absoluut besluit dis al manier hoe ek oor A gaan kom. Want, weet jy hoekom? Want R het my aanbid. Hy het my aanbid. Ek kan dit nou nog nie glo nie [ ]
> (Individual interview, AJ)

> [[ ] and when he kissed me, then I just felt: Get away from me. I didn't want it. And the first time we had sex! I hated it! To me it was the most horrible thing. But I absolutely just decided this is the only way I was going get over A. Because do you know why? Because R worshipped me. He worshipped me. I still can't believe it [ ]]

In this excerpt, the construction of the need to feel desired ("worshipped") appears to override this participant's expressed feelings of extreme reluctance, discomfort and dislike of the sexual encounter with this particular man (R). AJ's psychological investment in this discourse appears to be a result of her previous male partner's (A) sexual rejection of her and the sexual act itself is thus constructed as offering her some emotional reparation for the pain caused by him. At the same time, the dominant hegemonic discourse which constructs women as the passive recipient of male sexual desire is powerfully reproduced.

In one part of the focus group discussion that dealt with one-night stands, only one participant related a sexual experience, which was described to be centred purely on desire, but also articulated concomitant feelings of guilt or shame:

> P3: En is dit norm vir julle om one-night stands te hê?
> P2: Nee, nie norm nie nee.
> P4: Nee, ek is nog nie gereed daarvoor nie.
> P3: Nee, nie gereed nie, ek vra of dit norm is vir julle om one-night stands te hê?
> P5: In my geskiedenis het ek ook 'n hele paar one-night stands gehad. Dit was in 'n tydperk toe pas uit 'n lang verhouding gekom het.
> P3: En hoe beweeg jy aan?
> P5: Dit was moeilik. Dit was aaklig. Dit was maar meestal 'n geval van meeting someone, and there's potential for something and you go home and have sex, but afterwards nothing happens. From his side.
> P3: O, OK so dit was nie 'n geval van doelbewus besluit jy gaan uit om 'n one-night stand te hê nie?
> P5: Nee, dit was maar net een keer so dink ek. Ek het geweet ek wil nie 'n verhouding met die ou hê nie. Maar ek was baie aangetrokke tot hom. Dit was 'n swart ou. Die ou was van Kenia. Baie aantreklik en sjarmant en slim. Ons het beskermde seks gehad en ek het ok gevoel die volgende oggend.
> P2: Ek het nog nooit so 'n experience gehad nie. Ek het altyd maar gehoop daar kom iets van voordat ek seks gehad het. Maar ek het ook 'n hele paar one-night stands gehad.

P1: O! Dis 'n klomp slette wat ons hier het!
(Laughter from group)
P3: Nee, maar dink jy jy's 'n slet as jy uitgaan en besluit ek wil vanaand 'n one-night stand hê?
P5: Ja, dit was altyd in my agterkop. Want ek is so grootgemaak. Want dis wat my ma sê. Jy slaap nie net saam met 'n man vir, vir . . .
P6: Jou eie plesier nie.
P5: Nee.
(Focus group)

[P3: And is it the norm for you to have one-night stands?
P2: No, not the norm, no.
P4: No, I'm not ready for that yet.
P3: No, not ready, I'm asking if it's the norm for you to have one-night stands?
P5: In my history I have also had a few one-night stands. It was in a period when I had just come out of a long relationship.
P3: And how do you move on?
P5: It was difficult. It was terrible. It was mostly a case of meeting someone, and there's potential for something and you go home and have sex, but afterwards nothing happens. From his side.
P3: Oh, ok, so it wasn't a case of purposefully deciding that you are going to go out and have a one-night stand?
P5: No, it was only like that once, I think. I knew I didn't want to have a relationship with the guy. But I was very attracted to him. It was a black guy. The guy was from Kenya. Very attractive and charming and clever. We had protected sex and I felt ok the next morning.
P2: I've never had an experience like that before. I always hoped that something would come of it before I had sex. But I have also had a few one-night stands.
P1: Oh, it's a bunch of sluts we have here!
(*Laughter from the group*)
P3: No, but do you think that you are a slut if you go out and decide tonight I want to have a one-night stand?
P5: Yes, was always at the back of my mind. Because I have been brought up that way. Because hat's what my mother says. You don't sleep with a man for, for . . . .
P6: Your own pleasure.
P5: No.]

In the excerpt cited above, women's experiences of "one-night stands" are constructed as predicated on the possibility of the sexual encounter leading to a relationship. In this way, female pleasure is silenced and the experience thereby validated to the group. Only one participant (P5) in the focus group discussion described a single sexual experience centred purely on lust or sexual pleasure and as such voiced a marginal discourse in relation to women's sexuality. As is evident from the ensuing debate following this "disclosure", however, this discourse (which is similar to the permissive discourse) was eventually also successfully silenced or obscured within the group and is illustrative of the extent to which women regulate their sexuality amongst themselves. Firstly, women seemed to buy into the stigmatising Whore/Madonna discourse that values women's loyalty and commitment (Madonna) and devalues women's exploration of sexual pleasure in the absence of emotional commitment and construct them as "sluts". Although there is some resistance to this stigmatising discourse evident in the foregoing excerpt, P5 herself utilises this discourse in an attempt to "dilute" her experience to the group when she admits to feelings of shame and

blame. Also significant in this excerpt, is the way in which the disclosure of the experience of pleasure without commitment, is said to have occurred in a context in which the possibility of a relationship was excluded. Discourses which separate love/relationship and sex emerged strongly in the individual interviews and will be discussed further in section 5.2.6. Suffice it to say here that the very fact that this participant felt the need to justify and explain her behaviour is illustrative of the power dynamic within the group and the way in which women themselves silence and regulate each other's experiences of sexual pleasure. As P5 goes on to explain later:

> *(Following a discussion of the way women experience one-night stands as intrinsically different to the way in which men experience one-night stands)*
> [ ] Ja, ek dink dis moeiliker vir vroue. Maar ek dink ook – ag ek weet nie. Die feit dat ek daai keer seks gehad het en vir my was dit net 'n one-night stand? Miskien was dit makliker omdat die man swart was. Ek dink ek het nog altyd 'n fantasie gehad om met 'n swart man seks te hê. Dit was soort van die fascination van die unknown en waar ek vandaan gekom het, die forbidden. Maar dit sou net te complicated gewees het om 'n verhouding te hê. Ek was baie jonk. So hy was ook eintlik out of reach. En daarom veiliger. Ek sou nie seerkry nie.
> (Focus group)
>
> [[ ] Yes, I think it's more difficult for women. But I also think – oh, I don't know. The fact that I had sex that one time and for me it was just a one-night stand? Maybe it was easier because the man was black. I think I've always had a fantasy to have sex with a black man. It was kind of the fascination of the unknown and where I came from, the forbidden. But it just would have been too complicated to have a relationship. I was very young. So, he was also actually out of reach. And therefore safer. I wouldn't get hurt.]

Several issues arise from this excerpt. The first is that the construction of female sexuality as it emerged in the focus group is predicated on "difference", i.e. different to the construction of male sexuality that privileges the male sex drive as healthy and appropriate. By positioning herself as subject in the permissive discourse, P5 inadvertently admits to an experience that is not "natural" for women. She consequently also faces the threat of ostracism and therefore the imperative to justify her experience to the group. Thus the notion of the "Other" (being black) in this excerpt is utilised in this (racialised) justification of her experience of sexual pleasure in the absence of love or commitment. As the possibility of a relationship was "out of reach" (because the man in question was black and it would be "too complicated" for a white woman to have a relationship with a black man), a "safe" space was provided to freely explore sexual pleasure. Significant here, is the need for sexual pleasure and love or relationship to be separated in order for the sexual experience to be "safe". This is illustrative of the Western binary logic which juxtaposes safety/danger and intimacy/pleasure with regard to women's sexuality. Also important within the context of this study, is that this disclosure,

in turn, elicited a complex debate regarding the connection between sex and love/emotions for women:

> P3: Ek dink dit moet fabulous wees om in so 'n state of mind te kan wees waar jy net can sê – that's a cute guy, I want to have sex with him tonight and wake up tomorrow morning and feel nothing.
> P6: Maar is dit regtig, is dit regtig possible?
> P5: Wel ek het dit gedoen. Dan seker nou maar net vir die seks. Maar ek het so half skuldig gevoel. Oor dit gevoel het of ek die ou gebruik het vir seks.
> P3: It's very selfish, but it's good.
> P2: Ja dis great!
> P4: Maar weet julle ek het 'n manlike kollega wat ook sulke one-night stands het – maar dis met vroue op dieselfde personeel. En hy het vir my gesê: dit gaan net vir hom daaroor om vroue op te tel. Toe sê ek vir hom: wel jy sal my nooit kan optel nie want ek is te swaar.
> P3: Maar dink julle dat one-night stands vir mans en vroue verskil? Om te kan sê: ek doen dit nou net vir die seks?
> P4: Ja ek dink dit is. Dis makliker vir mans. Hulle het nie al hierdie baggage nie. They do it all the time. Ek kan dit nie doen nie.
> P4: Ja, dis seker meer as net 'n mindset. Dis complicated. Dis baggage soos jy sê.
> *(Agreement from the group).*
> (Focus group)

> [P3: I think it must be fabulous to be in such a state of mind where you can say – this is a cute guy, I want to have sex with him tonight and wake up tomorrow morning and feel nothing.
> P6: But is it really, is it really possible?
> P5: Well, I did it. Then probably just for the sex. But afterwards I felt kind of guilty. Because it felt like I used him just for the sex.
> P3: It's very selfish, but it's good.
> P2: Yes, it's great!
> P4: But you know, I have a male colleague that also has such one-night stands – but it's with women on the same staff. And he told me that it just about picking up women. Then I told him: Well, you'll never be able to pick me up because I'm too heavy.
> P3: But do you think that one-night stands are different for men and women? To be able to say I'm doing it now just for the sex?
> P4: Yes, I think is. It's easier for men. They don't have this baggage. They do it all the time. I can't do it.
> P4: Yes, it's probably more than just a mindset. It's complicated. It's baggage like you said.]

In the foregoing excerpt the possibility of experiencing sexual pleasure in the absence of emotions is expressed as an ideal. This articulates a significant resistance to the dominant discourses that conflate love and sex for women. Despite it clearly being valued (such an experience or the possibility of such an experience is described as "fabulous" and "great"), it is simultaneously labelled as "selfish" and imbued with feelings of guilt and blame. Ultimately, women express their inability to successfully position themselves in the subject position in the permissive discourse because of the (emotional?) 'baggage" they bring to the encounter. This reproduces the hegemonic discourse of sex belonging to the male domain and "emotions" belonging to the female domain and as such, is illustrative of the Western binary logic that underpins it. These discourses echo what Gough (1998:32) refers to as pessimism regarding change, which he states, serves to construct "a crucial distinction between equality

in theory and in practice". Whilst equality is supported in theory, it is ultimately rejected as unattainable in practice.

5.2.3 Discourses of self-esteem

Although sexual activity was articulated as an imperative for women, particularly in the focus group discussion, most of the women in this study referred to the centrality of "self-esteem" in understanding their sexual experiences with men, thereby "psychologising" women's sexuality:

> (*Following a description of a one-night stand that later led to a relationship. The account was furthermore articulated in the context of a particularly painful break-up three years before*)
> [ ] Maar toe dink ek: Ag what the hell. En ek was letterlik op die plek van: Whatever will be, will be. En hy het saam met my huis toe gegaan en ons het saamgeslaap. Want dis ook – ek het goed gevoel oor myself op daai stadium. Ek het 'n moerse klomp gewig verloor and I was feeling good about myself for the first time. Jy weet mos as jy uit 'n verhouding kom dan dink jy: I'm over it! En Here, dan *ploeg* jy weer neer en dan *lê* jy. Maar ek voel toe nou *consistently* goed. En toe gebeur dit. [ ] It was for me almost a celebration of I'm actually OK.
> (Focus Group)

> [[ ] But then I thought: O, what the hell. And I was literally at a place of: Whatever will be will be. And he went home with me and we slept together. Because it's also – I felt good about myself at this stage. I lost a hell of lot of weight and I was feeling good about myself for the first time. You know that when you come out of a relationship then you think: I'm over it! And God, then you just *plough* down again and then you just *lie*. But I then I was feeling *consistently* good. And then it happened. [ ] It was for me almost a celebration of I'm actually OK.]

Central to the foregoing excerpt is the notion that "feeling good" about oneself is a prerequisite for engaging in sex for its own sake. At the same time, these potentially liberating discourses of self-esteem are powerfully linked to the intricate prescriptions of the culturally ideal female sexual body, propagated in countless ways, but especially, in the post-industrial Western society, through the media. Thinness, as Coward (1984) notes, is absolutely central – women should be "without a spare inch of flesh" (Coward, 1984: 40). The sexual act itself is then described as "a celebration of I'm actually OK". Underpinning this statement are two separate but related discourses: On the one hand, the excerpt as it is articulated here alludes to the popular feminist discourses that advocate equal sexual pleasure for women (permissive discourse). On the other hand, it also links with discourses that construct women as the passive objects of male desire, and men as subjects of the desire and the initiators of action (Berger, 1972). The sexual act is then constructed as both a recognition of being desirable and the ability to (sexually) respond to such (male) desire, rather than an

action resulting from women's desire. Articulated as such, it therefore affords women little opportunity for sexual agency.

The extent to which women internalise and reproduce hegemonic discourses of the ideal female body and are judged by men in terms of this ideal was particularly evident in the obtained data. Particularly illustrative in this regard was MB's description of a relationship, which was emotionally and sexually unsatisfactory:

> My eerlike opinie nou in retrospek is . . . kyk, hy is mos agtien jaar ouer as ek, en ek het nie regtig kennis van mans se performance levels en waar hulle biologies op daardie stadium van hulle lewe is nie, maar my eerlike opinie is, he just could not get it up. Maar hy het dit op my blameer. Hy het vir my vertel dit is omdat ek oorgewig en onaantreklik is en dis daarom dat hy nie seks met my wil hê nie. Maar êrens het iets begin click . . . êrens in my agterkop het iets begin click dat dit nie waarheid was nie, want . . . Omdat ek nie die liefde, aandag en security by hom gekry het nie, het ek daardie kere wat ander mense in my belanggestel het, absoluut daarvoor geval. Ek het . . . om die waarheid te sê drie one-night stands gehad terwyl ek met hom in die verhouding was. En ek kon nooit verstaan waarom dit nie vir hulle 'n probleem was nie maar wel vir hom. Miskien wou hy gehad het dat ek soos Cindy Crawford lyk, maar sorry, dit was darem nou regtig nie net my responsibility nie. En dit was vir my cruel. [ ] Terwyl ek in die verhouding was het ek geglo dit is ek. Meeste van die tyd het ek geglo dit is ek. Dit *is* my skuld dat ons nie seks het nie. Ek is vet, ek is undesirable. En dit was so half die strewe van ek gaan nog maer word, en ek gaan vir hom wys, hy kan trots wees op my, en ek gaan so mooi lyk vir hom. [ ]
> (Individual interview, MB)

> [My honest opinion, now in retrospect, is . . . see, he is eighteen years older than I am, and I really don't have much knowledge about men's performance levels and where they are biologically at that age, but my honest opinion is, he just couldn't get it up. But he blamed it on me. He told me it's because I'm overweight and unattractive and that's why he didn't want to have sex with me. But somewhere something started to click . . . Because I never received love, attention and security from him, the times other people were interested in me, I absolutely fell for it. To tell you the truth, I had three one-night stands while I was in the relationship with him. I could never understand why it wasn't a problem for them but yet for him. Maybe he wanted me to look like Cindy Crawford, but sorry that was really not only my responsibility. And to me that was cruel. [ ] While I was in the relationship I believed it's me. Most of the time I believed it was me. It's my fault that we don't have sex. I'm fat, I'm undesirable. And it was half the striving of I'm going to be thin, I'm going to show him, he can be proud of me still, I'm going to look so pretty for him. [ ]]

Although MB expresses resistance to the internalisation of societal prescriptions of ideal beauty as well as to her partner's use of her perceived inadequacies to blame her for problems in their sexual relationship, she also acknowledges the difficulty of rationally refusing the internalisation of criticism. Other expressed notions are salient in the above excerpt. Drawing on the male sex drive discourse, she concludes that because of his age, he "just couldn't get it up anymore" thereby seeking biological explanations for her partner's lack of sex drive (although initially she colluded with his rationalisation and blame of her for her perceived physical inadequacies). Furthermore, her own sexual pleasure or desire for sexual pleasure is silenced when she explains the motives for her engagement in one-night stands and for being

unfaithful as needing love and attention. In this way the hegemonic discourse of women and men's sexuality(s) as immutably different and opposing, is reproduced.

> (*Following a description of her actions and feelings in response to a telephone call from her ex-partner in which he told her that he had that he has enough of her*)
> [ ] toe sê ek vir M: "Dit is dit, ek is nou reg om hierdie ding vanaand hier te stop. There is no reason that I should stay attached there." En ek kan onthou ek het vir M gekyk en vir haar gesê: "Ek *is* mos nou maer, so ek *gaan* mos nou iemand anders kry, sal ek nie?" En *dit* is so teen alles wat ek nog altyd geglo het voordat ek met iemand op 'n seksuele vlak betrokke geraak het die eerste keer. Tussen skool en die verhouding met die ou in die polisie was sewe jaar en daardie tyd het die meisies my geirriteer wat altyd 'n ou *moet* hê. Why do you need a man? Doen jou eie ding.
> (Individual interview, MB)

> [[ ] then I told M: That is that, I'm ready to stop this thing here tonight. There's no reason that I should stay attached there." And I can recall that I looked over at M and said to her: I'm thin now so I will find somebody else, won't I? And *that* was so against everything I believed before I became involved with somebody on a sexual level the first time. Between school and the relationship with the guy in the police was seven years and that time girls irritated me who always *must* have a man. Why do you need a man? Do your own thing.]

In the foregoing excerpt, the discourses of self-esteem and empowerment intersect and link in with prescriptive discourses of the ideal female beauty as well as the have-hold discourse resulting in negative empowerment: "I'm thin now so I will find somebody else, won't I?" In this statement the imperative for women to have a man in her life is reproduced (the have-hold discourse) as well as the discourse of women as the object of the male gaze referred to elsewhere in this study.

Discourses of self-image also emerged as a central explanatory discourse for women's roles in sexual relationships with men:

> P4: Ja, seks is daar om onsself te bekragtig.
> I: Maar is dit anders vir vroue as vir mans?
> P1: I think it is a *human* thing; men are just as insecure about sex as we are.
> P4: Ja, ja. Seks dink ek is om ons selfbeeld te boost en ons te bekragtig en om ons sterker te maak en om ons weer die dag te laat face.
> P1: Ja. Sometimes I like sex in a particular way, it depends on my mood and I think it depends on what my need is at that time.
> P4: Ja, weet jy wat dit is? Dit gaan oor die rol wat jy is, ons almal speel rolle, en soms is ek 'n slet en dan is ek net lus vir verskriklike seks op Sir Lowry's Pas. En ander kere is dit anders, dan's ek soos – hier is ek, ek's vulnerable en broos – dis soos – kan ek net beter voel oor myself: Neem my, neem my! (*Laughter from the group*)
> (Focus group)

> [P4: Yes, sex is there to empower ourselves.
> I: But do you think it's different for women and men?
> P1: I think it's a human thing; men are just as insecure about sex as we are.
> P4: Yes, yes. Sex, I think, is to boost our self-image and to empower us to make us stronger to let us face the day again.

P1: Yes sometimes I like sex in a particular way, it depends on my mood and I think it depends on what my need is at that time.
P4: Yes you know what it is? It's about the role you are, we all play roles, and sometimes I'm a slut who just feels like terrible sex on Sir Lowry's Pass. And other times it's different, then I'm like – here I am, I'm vulnerable and - it's like – can I just feel better about myself: Take me, take me!]

In the foregoing excerpt, sex is constructed as a self-empowering act. At first glance this appears to contradict discourses that repress women's sexuality and desires. On the other hand, the reference to women's "roles" buys into the whore/Madonna split that stigmatises sexual agency for women (note the term "slut" and the adjective "terrible"), thereby legitimating women's sexual vulnerability and passivity.

P5: Vir my gaan dit baie oor die ding van om begeer te word, en dit gaan baie saam met hoe goed ek oor myself voel. As ek goed voel oor myself, is ek nie so needy nie. Dan as iemand waarin ek nie belangstel nie belangstelling toon, dan kan ek sê: Ag, fok off! Maar as ek baie sleg voel oor myself en daar is 'n man wat skielik belangstel in my, dan dink ek wow . . .
P4: Hy hou van hierdie lyf! Ja, presies. Daar is minder road rage in my lewe, ek is minder bedonnerd, meer suksesvol in my werk.
P3: As jy seks het?
P4: As ek desirable voel. As 'n man my acknowledge. Ek is hierdie wonderlike mens. Die taxi's kan maar voor my inry. Ek het 'n lied in my hart. Ek is meer produktief by die werk.
P1: As jy op jou eie op 'n plek kom waar jou self-esteem goed is – then you are in position of power. Al het jou baas jou uitgekak by die werk en jou kinders is brats, whatever: Then you are not needy. Dan, as jy in 'n situasie kom where you can end up having casual sex or unexpected sex, kan jy sê: Excuse me honey, I don't need it.
P5: Dan kan jy die reëls maak. Dan kan jy sê ok, ons kan dit doen, maar op my voorwaardes. Anders is dit net half – o, enigiets wat jy sê, enigiets wat jy wil hê, is reg.
P3: Maar dink julle dis in alle kultue so?
P2: Ek dink tog . . . miskien met ander fasette . . . Maar 'n vrou is 'n vrou jong.
(Focus group)

[P5: To me it's very much about this thing to be desired and that links with how good I feel about myself. When I feel good about myself, then I'm not so needy. Then if someone that I'm not interested in shows an interest, then I can say: "O, fuck off!" But if I'm feeling terrible about myself and there's suddenly this man that's interested in me then I think: Wow.
P4: He likes this body.
P5: Yes precisely.
P4: There's less road rage in my life, I'm in a bad mood less often, and I'm more successful in my work.
P3: When you have sex?
P4: When I feel desirable. When a man acknowledges me. I'm this wonderful person. Then taxis can drive in front of me. I've got a song in my heart. I'm more productive at work.
P1: If you reach a point on your own where your self-esteem is good – then you're in a position of power. Even if your boss shat all over you at work ad your children are brats, then you are not needy. Then, when you land in a position where you can end up having casual sex or unexpected sex, then you can say: "Excuse my honey, I don't need it."
P3: But do you think it's like that in all cultures?
P2: I still think – maybe with other facets – but a woman is a woman.]

Clearly here, although subdominant discourses such as feminism and popular psychology do inform a critique of the prescriptive discourses of the culturally ideal female sexual body, one gets the sense that women's sexuality is constructed here as more than a *desire* and rather as a

psychological *need* that can be satisfied in and through men's desire of her. The implicit notion expressed in the foregoing excerpt is that women instinctively need sexual acknowledgement from men and that this in turn, constitutes an intrinsic aspect of her identity. Thus women's self-esteem is said to be linked directly to male sexual approval. Although P1's statement "if you reach a point where your self-esteem is good on your own – (i.e. independent of male desire?) then you are in a position of power" opens up a moment of resistance (articulated here in the context of "casual sexual encounters"), women in relationships are less likely to express such opposition (see have-hold discourse). At the same time, as it is formulated here, women's sexual desire is still psychologised, thus invisibalising women's physical sexual pleasure and desire, whilst also reproducing notions of intrinsic and seamless difference between men and women.

Drawing on the discourses of self-esteem and the hegemonic prescriptive discourse of ideal female beauty, one participant explains why she never had any serious relationships until the age of twenty-eight:

> Ek het nog nooit vantevore 'n kêrel gehad nie. En ek het nog nooit belanggestel nie. Jy weet ek het altyd gedink: "Wow, dis 'n oulike ou" of [ ] "Jissie, dis 'n aantreklike ou", maar nooit vreeslik . . . ek het nooit toenadering gesoek of gewys ek stel belang nie. Nooit nie. Ek was te skaam ook. Ek was baie vet gewees. Ek is nog steeds, maar ek bedoel – ek was huge. Ek het eenhonderd-en-tien kilogram geweeg. So dis groot. Dit was seker so vier jaar terug. En ek was nog my hele lewe – dwarsdeur my kinderjare vet gewees. Ek was nog altyd vet. Ek was die vetste kind in die klas gewees. Dit het 'n baie groot invloed op my gehad – op hoe ek myself uitdruk aan mense – aan mans. Ek is baie selfbewus oor my liggaam. Ontsettend. En, dit is ook 'n rede hoekom ek nie kan glo dat J so mal is oor my nie. Dit gaan my verstand te bowe. Want daar's soveel ander meisies wat sexy is en wat mooi is en goeters, maar hy hou van my net soos ek is en dit is vir my fantasties. Maar dit was een van die . . . ek dink dit was my grootste rede hoekom ek nooit kêrels gehad het nie, nooit nie. Hoekom ek nooit belanggestel het nie. Ek was onseker oor myself, ek was glad nie gelukkig met hoe ek gelyk het nie.
> (Individual interview, S)

> [I never had a boyfriend before. And I was never interested. You know, I always thought: "Wow, that's a cute guy" [ ] but never terribly . . . I never made any advances or showed that I was interested. Never. I was also too shy. I was very fat. I still am, but I mean – I was huge. I weighed one hundred and ten kilograms. So that's big. That was probably about four years ago. My whole life I've been – right throughout my childhood years, I was fat. I have always been fat. I was the fattest child in the class. That had a very big influence on me – in terms of how I express myself to people – to men. I am very self-conscious about my body. Terribly. And that's also another reason why I can't believe J is so mad about me. It's totally beyond me. Because there are so many other girls that are sexy and pretty and things, but he likes me just the way I am and to me that's fantastic. But it was one of the . . . I think it was one of the main reasons why I never had boyfriends, never. Why I was never interested. I was unsure of myself, I was not at all happy with the way I looked.]

According to Cairns (1990: 9) "women's greatest psychological and sexual barrier to intimacy . . . is an impaired sense of self". Reformulating Cairns's quote, I would assert that

for the women in this study, part of the legacy of their sexual development within our patriarchal society, the discourse of an "impaired sense of self" is a dominant one available to women attempting to articulate their sexuality and operates to obscure and silence women's sexual pleasure and women's sexual desire.

5.2.4 The have-hold discourse

The social imperative on women to have a male partner which was identified by Hollway (1984, 1989) as the have-hold discourse was seldom explicitly articulated in the focus group discussion. Despite this, the have-hold discourse emerged throughout with great reluctance. My understanding of this is that the women in the focus group discussion drew strongly on popular feminist discourses that advocate women's economic independence as well as on popular psychological discourses that construct women who are emotionally independent as psychologically "healthy" and that these discourses in turn served to obscure the have-hold discourse underpinning it:

> P6: Maar dit gaan baie goed met ons verhouding. Behalwe . . . ek het nou vir my 'n woonstel gekoop en trek binnekort in en hy dink hy gaan by my bly, maar ek weier, daar is geen manier dat ek 'n man gaan onderhou nie. Dit is my persoonlike spasie. Ons is nie getroud of verloof nie, ons is *net* in 'n verhouding.
> [ ] Maar hoekom moet ek laat hy nou by my kom bly, want enigiets kan gebeur, en dan . . . OK, dan moet julle nou uit en . . .
> P1: Die trick is, laat hom by jou bly, want dan kan jy *hom* stuur . . .
> (Focus group)

> [P6: But it's going very well with our relationship. Except . . . I have just bought a flat and I'm moving in soon and he thinks he's going to live with me, but I refuse, there's no way that I'm going to economicly support a man. It's my personal space. We're not married or engaged, we're *only* in a relationship. [ ] But why should I let him live with me, because anything can happen and then . . . OK, then we must move out and . . .
> P1: The trick is, let him live with you, because then you can send *him*.]

Significant in the foregoing excerpt, is the construction of economic independence as a defence against the possible rejection by the male partner. In addition, economic independence is constructed as offering women power in the relationship – if you allow him to live with you, "you can send *him*". Underpinning these discourses, however, is the implicitly expressed fear of losing the male partner, which reproduces the hegemonic discourse which constructs women as being more emotionally invested (than men) to position themselves as the subject of the have-hold discourse (albeit obscured here). Similar discourses were utilised in other participants' accounts of why they preferred to live alone:

P4: [ ] Maar my ding is, as ek soort van die dag saam met die man deurbring . . . en hy gaan . . . Want ek is *mal* oor my eie plek. Ek moet 'n man hê . . . ek sal nooit trou nie . . . ek is baie seksueel – ek sal hom vernietig as hy by daai deur inloop, maar dan moet hy gaan, hy *moet* gaan.
P5: Jissie, ek was so gewees, voor hierdie verhouding. Ek het op my eie gebly en dit was vir my stunning om my eie space te hê. Maar weet jy dit was altyd verhoudings wat ek geweet het nie gaan hou nie. Dit was so half – ja, ek het geweet dit gaan nie uitwerk nie. Maar hierdie verhouding was net vir my anders, want ek het gefantaseer oor: hierdie verhouding gaan werk, hierdie verhouding gaan plekke. En dit was anders. En dit was toe half . . . ja. Daar was moontlikhede. As jy in soort van daai affairs het met 'n man wat jy weet nie gaan werk nie, dan kan ek net 'n tydjie by hom wees en dan wil ek my eie space terughê, maar nie as jy so invested is in 'n verhouding wat jy half begin toekomsplanne maak nie. Maar ek het nog steeds nie by hom ingetrek nie. Dit was my beskermingsmeganisme.
P2: Maar weet julle – hoe ek dit gepicture het toe ek op skool was . . . op hoërskool was . . . en my vriendinne gedroom het oor eendag waneer hulle nou 'n man het en kinders en so . . . was *my* prentjie wat ek in my kop gehad het: My huis – of woonstel het ek in daai stadium gedink – my eie woonstel, en alles daar is *myne*. Ek wil my eie rekeninge betaal en my eie huur betaal of my eie bond of whatever. Maar dis myne. Dis myne. Maar dit was nooit sonder 'n man nie, daar was 'n man maar hy het nie daar gebly nie.
(Focus group)

[P1: [ ] But my thing is, if I kind of spend the day with a man and he leaves . . . Because I'm *mad* about my own place. I must have a man . . . I'll never get married . . . I'm very sexual – I'll destroy him when he walks through the door, but then he must go, he *must* go . . .
P5: Jeez, I was like that, before this relationship. I lived on my own and to me it was stunning to have my own space. It was almost like – yes, I knew it's not going to work out. But to me this relationship was just different, because I fantasised about: *this* relationship is going to work, *this* relationship is going places. And it was different. And it was almost like . . . yes. There were possibilities. When you kind of have those affairs with a man that you know is not going to work out, then you only be with him for a short while and then I want my own space back. But I still didn't move in with him. That was my defence mechanism.
P2: But do you know – how I pictured it when I was in school . . . in high school . . . and my female friends dreamt about one day when they have a husband and children . . . *my* picture that I had in my head was: My house – or flat I thought at that stage – my own flat, and everything there is mine. I want to pay my own bills and my own rent or bond or whatever. But it's mine. Its mine. But it was never without a man, but he didn't live there.]

Several (related and intersecting) sets of discourses arise from the foregoing excerpt. The first is a set of discourses which articulates the need to have one's own space, articulated here as both a psychological need for emotional independence and a feminist imperative, and serves to split women into two groups: those who are emotionally and economicly dependant on men and those are economicly and emotionally independent (which is the preferred status for the modern women?). Closely interlinked to these discourses is another set of discourses that splits emotional intimacy and sex for women: the need for emotional intimacy is articulated as being predicated on the possibility of a relationship being long-term ("this relationship is going to work, this relationship is going places") and therefore "legitimate". "Affairs" (the term itself contains pejorative qualities which link with hegemonic constructions of women who freely explore their sexuality as immoral or "bad"), on the other hand, are constructed as sex without emotional investment. These discourses intersect in such a way that they

ultimately successfully reproduce the have-hold discourse whilst at the same time obscuring it. Thus, although they potentially offer resistance to women's positioning in the have-hold discourse, ultimately, for these women "there must be a man"; the "picture" is "never without a man". Thus the imperative for women to have and hold a man goes unchallenged and is, ironically, naturalised.

Although the have-hold discourse was largely obscured in the focus group discussion, it was more pronounced in the individual interviews. In their accounts of their relationship histories, women frequently expressed the imperative of having "a man" in their lives, irrespective of whether it is a satisfactory relationship or not:

> [ ] toe het ek iemand anders ontmoet en dit het toe 'n verhouding geword wat ses en 'n half jaar geduur het. Maar dit was ook eintlik 'n sad case. Ek dink ek was op die ouderdom wat ek gedink het almal het 'n boyfriend en ek wil ook een hê. [] Dit was 'n total waste of time, maar dit was net so nice om naby iemand te wees. Die special ding was om net soms by hom oor te slaap en vasgehou te word. Dit was vir my so lekker, en dit was so 'n luxury om skielik 'n wit man te hê wat so presentable is, dat ek hom aan my ouers kon voorstel. En my ouers dink dit is my eerste volwasse verhouding. [ ]
> (Individual interview, MB)

> [[ ] then I met someone and it became a long relationship that lasted for six and a half years. But it was also actually a sad case. I think I was at the age that I thought everyone has a boyfriend and I also want one. [ ] It was a total waste of time, but it was just so nice to be close to someone. The special thing was to sometimes just sleep over there and to be held. To me it was so nice, and it was such a luxury to suddenly have a white man who was so presentable that I could introduce him to my parents. And my parents thought it was my first mature relationship. [ ]]

In the foregoing excerpt, social pressure is constructed as a significant force in the imperative to have a boyfriend. Social pressure is enforced by family and peers who confer social status to a woman who has "a boyfriend". Pressure to conform ("everyone has a boyfriend and I also want one") and approval from family ("it was such a luxury to suddenly have a white man who was so presentable that I could introduce him to my parents") appears to be more significant than satisfaction in the relationship ("it was a total waste of time"). Also significant here is the emergence of a racialised discourse which intersects discourses of gender and function to mediate and legitimise the have-hold discourse.

Another reason offered by women for staying in an unsatisfactory relationship was a fear of being alone:

> C: [ ] Want toe hy van Johannesburg af terugkom, toe eendag toe praat hy oor skei. Toe was ek . . . ek het nie geweet wat om te dink nie. Want ons het baie baklei in daai stadium en obviously hy was lank weg en hy het my nie gemis nie en ek het hom nie gemis nie en toe gaan eet ons een aand uit en toe praat ons

daaroor en toe sê hy: "Dan moet ons maar skei". En obviously gaan al hierdie goed deur my kop van: Ek is 'n ouer vrou, niemand gaan vir my ooit val nie. Wat gaan van *my* word? Ek was seker agt-en-twintig toe – wat jonk is, baie jonk! Maar in my kop was ek 'n washout, 'n geskeide vrou wat niemand wil hê nie en wat dan? Maar ek moes dit *toe* al gedoen het.
I: Maar dinge was complicated vir jou. Dit was toe te moeilik vir jou om daai stap te neem? So toe bly jy maar?
C: Ek het, ja . . . ek moes regtigwaar die courage opbou om te besef om alleen te wees is nie so bad nie. En 'n volwasse genoeg mindset hê om dit te kan aanvaar. Ek bedoel, baie vroue bly in 'n huwelik omdat hulle nie alleen wil wees nie. [ ]
(Individual interview, C)

[C: [ ] Because when he came back from Johannesburg, then one day he spoke about divorce. Then I was, I did not know what to think. Because we fought a lot at that stage and obviously he was away for a long time and he didn't miss me and I didn't miss him and then we went to eat out one evening and we spoke about it and then he said: "Then we should get a divorce." And obviously all these things are going through my head of: I'm an older woman, nobody will fall for me. What's going to become of me? I was probably twenty-eight at the time – which is young, very young! But in my head I was a washout, a divorced woman who nobody wants and then what? But I should have done it then already.
I: But things were complicated for you. It was too difficult for you to take that step then? So you stayed?
C: I did yes . . . I really had to build up the courage to realise that to be alone is not so bad. I mean, many women stay in a marriage because they don't want to be alone. [ ]]

In the foregoing excerpt stigmatising discourses that operate to ostracise women of a certain age who are divorced and alone (i.e. without a male partner) emerges. These discourses both reproduce women's subject positioning in the have-hold discourse and illuminate her emotional investment for positioning herself in this discourse. To this woman the fear of being alone and stigmatised as an "older woman" who was "a washout, a divorced women who nobody wants" was more powerful than her emotional and sexual needs or feelings of unhappiness and dissatisfaction in the relationship. She was therefore willing to forfeit her own emotional needs in order to protect herself from the loss of her male partner *and* her social status.

5.2.5 Psychological discourses

In addition to the "psychologisation" of female desire discussed in the foregoing section, psychological discourses (both psychoanalytic and social psychological) also emerged in the construction of the immutable difference between male and female behaviour in relationships, thereby reproducing the essentialist notions of masculinity/femininity and male/female as binary opposites.

P1: Jy weet, wat ek begin besef het, is dat mans, is . . . what they say is what they are. Ons psychoanalyse alles. Ek en A het al gesit en praat, soos in chat, dan sê ek: "OK, kom ons gesels oor die spesies." Dan sal ons net begin praat oor hoe mans dink en hoe vroue dink. En daar lê my simpatie baie

by mans [ ] Kom ons gebruik die ou cliché van julle sit om die etenstafel en jy het nou hierdie moerse boud vleis gekook. En hy sê: "O, waar het jy hierdie vleis gekry?" Sal sy sê: "Hoekom, wat's verkeerd?"
(*Laughter from the group*)
P1: En al wat hy eintlik meen is – by watter slaghuis het jy die vleis gekoop. Of as hy sê ek is mal oor jou nuwe haarkleur, dan sal sy sê: "Hoekom, het jy nie van die oues gehou nie?" En weet jy, all his little brain can manage is: "I like it."
(*Laughter from the group*)
P1: Verstaan jy? En ons het twintig scenario's – vir hoekom en so – en ja maar, dit beteken dit, en dit beteken dat.
P3: Wie van julle – wie van julle het die movie gesien, *10 Ways to lose a man*?
P4: Ja, ja.
P1: Nee, ek het dit nie gesien nie.
P3: O. jy lag jou kop van jou lyf af – dis perfek, dit beskryf al ons foute.
P1: Ja, because I think we as women – because we have insecurities and because we have issues . . . en, dit klink na 'n ou cliché, maar ek dink soveel van dit is aangespoor deur die media – televisie, wat ons sien en lees, wat ons sien in die magazines – this is how you're supposed to look.
(Focus group)

[P1: You know, what I have started to realise is that men are . . . what they say is what they are. We psychoanalyse everything. A and I have already spoken about it, like in chat, then I say: "OK, let's talk about the species." Then we'll start speaking about how men think and how women think. And there my sympathy lies with men, [ ] Let's use the old cliché of you are sitting at the dinner table and you have just cooked this hell of roast of lamb. And he says: "O, where did you get this meat?" She'll say: "Why, what's wrong?"
(*Laughter from group*)
P1: And all he really means is – at which butchery did you buy the meat. Or if he says "I'm mad about your new hair colour", then she will say: "Why, didn't you like the old colour?" And you know, all his little brain can mange is: "I like it."
(*Laughter from group*)
P1: Do you understand? And we have twenty different scenarios – for why and so on – and yes, but this means that and that means this.
P3: Who of you – who saw the movie *10 Ways to lose a man*?
P4: Yes, yes.
P1: No, I didn't see it.
P3: O, you laugh your head off – it's perfect, it describes all our faults.
P1: Yes, because I think we as women – because we have insecurities and because we have issues . . . and it sounds like an old cliché, but I think so much of it is spurred on by media – television, what we see and read, what we see in magazines – this is how you're supposed to look.]

In the above excerpt women are constructed as lacking assertion and confidence ("insecurities") with concomitant (negative) associations of irrationality and paranoia. Although resistance is expressed to social prescriptions of the ideal female sexual body which is thought to "spur on" women's insecurities, the construction of women that emerges here is of an innate female nature which is prone to insecurity, hysterics and suspicion. Furthermore the hegemonic discourses that project blame for problems in the relationship onto women is internalised ("it's perfect – it describes all our faults") and seen as the primary cause for driving the male partner away (*10 Ways to loose a man*). Furthermore men and women are (once again) set up unitary, homogenous categories that are innately "other" to each other. The foregoing excerpt also articulates (albeit unconsciously) an important discursive

contradiction. On the one hand it draws on hegemonic discourses, which construct women as irrational and insecure, that in turn projects blame onto women for problems in the relationship. On the other hand, women are also constructed as intellectually and emotionally more mature than men ("all his *little* brain can manage is: I like it"). Although this contradiction opens up the possibility for resistance, the way it is formulated here reconstructs men's behaviour as emerging out of weakness, thus creating empathy for men. Ironically men's behaviour is condoned whilst constructions of women as responsible for taking care of their needs are reproduced:

> [ ] ek het moerse simpatie met mans. Mans van ons generation is nog deur ons soort ma's grootgemaak. Die vrou is die submissive een. Al werk sy voltyds, sy doen maar net vir 'n ekstra ou geldjie – of dit nou is om lipstick te koop of die klererekening te betaal (*Everyone laughs*). Die attitude is – die werk is om te contribute. Man is still the boss in the house. Our men of our generation were raised by those women. Dis ook hoe hulle mentally nog is. Dis hoe hulle ma's met hulle pa's is. Toe kom ons klomp vroue nou en sê maar fok dit honey – I can work as hard as you can, I can earn more money. Ek staan my plek nie alleen vol langs jou nie – ek is heelwaarskynlik nog verby jou intellectually. En guess what? Ek het ook twaalf ure gewerk vandag so maak jy self kos. Was die wasgoed, of whatever. [ ] hierdie generation waarin ons is, is vasgevang tussen twee realms. Want ek is so, I'm the first to admit it. Ek het 'n baie high pressure job, ek het 'n redelike belangrike job. Ek moet nogal fokken groot besluite en verantwoordelike besluite neem. Nou moet ek huis toe kom en nog al daai goed ook doen – I don't have the time or the energy. Maar terselfdertyd wil ek hê hy moet my rug vryf – ek wil soos 'n dogtertjie wees wat na haar pappie toe hardloop vir beskerming teen die wrede wêreld – so die fokken goed weet nie wat om te maak nie. Want die een oomblik moet hy sterk en masculine wees en die volgende oomblik moet hy kos maak en die volgede oomblik moet hy my rug vryf. So hulle voel emasculated. (Focus group)

> [[ ] I've got a hell of a lot sympathy for men. Men of our generation were still raised by our kind of mothers. The wife is the submissive one. Even if she works full-time, she only does it for a little bit of pocket money – whether it's to buy lipstick or to pay a clothing account (*Laughter from the group*). The attitude is – her job is merely a contribution. Man is still the boss in the house. The men of our generation were raised by those women. Mentally that's how they still are. That's how their fathers are with their mothers. Then we lot of women came and said: But fuck that honey. I can work as hard as you can. I can earn more money. I am probably even ahead of you intellectually. And guess what? I also worked twelve hours today so make your own food. Wash the washing, or whatever.[ ] our generation is caught between two realms. Because I'm like that, I'm the first to admit it. I have got a high pressure job, I have reasonably important job. I have to take some fucking big decisions and responsible decisions. Now I have to go home and still do all those things as well – I don't have the time or the energy. But at the same time I want him to rub my back – I want to be like a little girl who runs to her daddy for protection against the cruel world – so the fucking things don't know what to do. Because the one moment he must be strong and the next moment he must make the food and the next moment he must rub my back. So they feel emasculated.]

This quote highlights the part played by socialisation in gender inequality. While it is important to realise heterosex as part of a broader social process, socialisation is constructed here as fixed and irreversible thus "naturalising" the status quo. Also significant in the foregoing excerpt is the notion of women's responsibility in their relationships with men (albeit implicitly). This notion was echoed at various points in the focus group discussion and

the individual interviews. The woman is expected to be responsible both for her own pleasure in making requests, and communicating her needs, whilst at the same time taking responsibility for the man's needs and remaining sensitive to his vulnerable male ego. This poses enormous problems for women's agency in sexuality in its fraught contradictoriness. Responsibility implies power. Yet the responsibility taken by women is "behind the scenes". The division of labour between being unemotional, authoritative and in control (male), and being emotional, labile and sensitive to relationship needs (female) is not openly acknowledged or accepted, yet it operates. The power in this (female) position is not acknowledged. Because structurally power is given to men, the power of women operates on an unconscious level for men and produces feelings of being threatened (Hollway, 1983).

5.2.6 Discourses which separate sexual pleasure and love/relationship

Alongside repressive discourses on women's sexuality and desires, another set of discourses emerged, particularly in the individual interviews, that at first glance seemed to contradict the hegemonic male sex drive discourse and discourses that conflate love/relationship and sex for women. Although these discourses were marginal, they opened up moments of resistance and therefore justify further exploration. In these discourses sexual intimacy was isolated from emotional intimacy, thereby offering women a space to freely explore sexual pleasure. Significantly these discourses were articulated in terms of women's experiences and not in terms of their ideas, beliefs or philosophies regarding sex and sexuality. It is thus illustrative of Hollway's assertion that women may be positioned in certain discourses whilst at the same time *situated* differently in others.

One woman described a sexual relationship, which was, certainly initially, "purely about sex" and based on an "instant chemical attraction"

> I: En toe continue julle met 'n verhouding maar hy het jou later begin irriteer?
> MB: Ja, ek dink dis maar toe ek gewoond geraak het aan die seks, jy weet? Want dit het aanvanklik suiwer gegaan oor die seks. Toe seks nou nie meer vir my hierdie thrilling nuwe ding was nie. In retrospect dink ek nie ek was nooit regtig lief vir hom nie, of verlief op hom nie, for that matter . . . miskien die eerste aand – dit was magic en dit was ook meer oor die feit dat iemand belanggestel in my en my op so 'n pedestal gesit het. Die seks was later absoluut 'n addiction maar ek het geweet daar was geen manier . . . die verhouding was in elk geval skelm as gevolg van die rasseverskil . . . dit was meer soos 'n escape . . . niemand het geweet daarvan nie – seker maar soos wat dit vir 'n man is om elke naweek skelm 'n blou movie te kyk (*laughs*). Ek was ook baie sterker gewees as hy, my mind was baie sterker as syne . . . ek was heeltemal in beheer . . .
> I: Ook op seksuele gebied?

MB: Ja, absoluut. Ek het presies vir hom gesê waarvan ek hou en waarvan ek nie hou nie en ook waarmee ek wou eksperimenteer en hy het dit maar net alles gedoen . . . hy sou enigiets doen om my happy te hou . . .
I: So jy was in beheer van jou eie seksuele plesier sonder die gevoelens . . . van liefde?
MB: Ja, ek nog nooit so daarna gekyk nie vantevore. En ek dink omdat ek nie emotionally involved was nie, was ek . . . ek kon fokus net op myself.
(Individual interview, MB)

[I: And then you continued a relationship but he started to irritate you in the long run?
MB: Yes, I think it's just that I got used to the sex. When sex wasn't this thrilling new thing any longer. In retrospect I think that I never really loved him, or was never in love with him for that matter . . . maybe the first evening – it was magic and that was probably also more about the fact that someone was interested in me and placed me on a pedestal. The sex later became an absolute addiction, but I knew that there was no way . . . in any case, the relationship was conducted on the sly due to the racial difference . . . it was more like an escape . . . nobody knew about it – probably similar to a man who watches blue movies on the sly every weekend (*laughs*). I was also much stronger than him, my mind was stronger than his . . . I was totally in control . . .
I: Also sexually?
MB: Yes absolutely. I told him exactly what I wanted and what I didn't like and also what I wanted to experiment with and he just did everything . . . he would do anything to keep me happy . . .
I: So you were in charge of your own sexual pleasure without the feelings . . . of love?
MB: Yes I didn't look at it that way before. I think because I wasn't emotionally involved, I was . . . I could focus just on myself.]

The formulation of the statement ("I think because I wasn't emotionally involved, I was . . . I could focus on myself") – particularly the word "because" – indicates that to this woman, sexual pleasure can be given free reign "only if the longing for love is curbed radically" (Wouters, 1999:196). The connection of the absence of a longing for love (or the absence of the possibility of a committed relationship) with feelings of power furthermore emerges here. The implication is that to be emotionally invested in a relationship is tantamount to being disempowered sexually. In the long run however, such an "arrangement" proved to be unsatisfactory. In the excerpt cited above, the discourse of sexual pleasure in the absence of love/relationship interlinks with moralising discourses that construct women who express autonomous sexuality as "bad" and morally apprehensible (note the description of sex as an "addiction" and the comparison to men who "watch blue movies on the sly every weekend"). Wouters (1999) points out that this discourse which isolates love from sexual pleasure and at first sight appears to be the articulation of a fear of intimacy is, in fact, "another expression of the fear of freedom" (Wouters, 1999: 197) as it is predicated on another regulatory discourse: the imperative for women to repress their longing for a loving relationship in favour of sexual pleasure. In this way, love/relationship and sexual pleasure are constructed as mutually exclusive. Also important in the foregoing excerpt is the way in which race (once again) intersects with gender as one can hypothesise that at least some of the sexual power MB alludes to is predicated on her racial power.

The isolation of sexual intimacy from other forms of intimacy also emerged in another woman's description of a sexual "fling" she had just after her second divorce:

> M: [ ] Ek het 'n ou ontmoet in daai tyd wat ek 'n total sexual fascination mee gehad het . . . dit was net pure lus. En die feit dat ek dit vantevore ook nog nooit gedoen het nie, het dit aangevuur. My attraction to him was purely sexual en hy het dit onmiddellik aangevoel. Ek het hom in 'n werksituasie ontmoet en ek het 'n probleem gehad met my computer discs en hy was 'n IT expert . . . En hy het een aand gekom om nou kwansuis vir my te help met my computer, maar ons het altwee geweet where it was going. En dit was so blatant dat hy later die aand vir my gesê het: "Luister, am I going home or not? If I'm not, I should go and fetch my briefcase out of the car." En ek het vir hom gesê: You're not going home." En dit was so blatant. En ons het 'n paar keer mekaar gesien en gespyker dat ons hik, but it was absolute sex and nothing else. Maar hy was ook so . . . I think he could be a master manipulator . . . mmm . . . emotionally, op 'n vrou.
> I: En dit was vir jou OK? Dat dit net seks was en niks anders nie?
> M: Ja, dit was OK dat dit net oor seks gegaan het want ek wou nie toe 'n relationship gehad het nie . . . veral nie met hom nie.
> (Individual interview, M)

> [M: [ ] I met a guy in that time with whom I had a total sexual fascination . . . it was just pure lust. And the fact that I've done that before just fuelled it. My attraction to him was purely sexual and he sensed it immediately. I met him in a work situation and I had a problem with my computer discs and he was an IT expert . . . And one evening he came over supposedly to help with my computer, but we both knew where it was going. An it was so blatant that later the evening he said to me: Listen, am I going home or not? If I'm not, I should go and fetch my briefcase out of the car." And we saw each other a few times and we fucked like hell, but is was absolute sex and nothing else. But he was also . . . I think he could be a master manipulator . . . mmm . . . emotionally of a woman.
> I: And you were OK with that? That is was just about sex and nothing else?
> M: Yes, it was OK that it was just about sex because I didn't want a relationship . . . especially not with him.]

Above construction of *sex for the sake of it*, is in many ways, similar to what Holland, Ramazanoglu, Scott, Sharpe and Thompson (1991:12) refers to as a "male model of sexual empowerment". According to the cited authors this model may be attractive to woman who are trying to resist the passive model of female sexuality, but ultimately precludes the acknowledgement or successful resistance to male power. Significant also is the use of the word "spyker" in this excerpt – a colloquial Afrikaans term signifying the act of (male) penetration to describe the sexual encounter. This at once positions this woman in the male model of sexual empowerment *and* ironically reproduces hegemonic discourses of male sexual agency and women's passive role in sex. In addition, the beginnings of an alternative discourse on women's sexual desires is foreclosed through the reconstruction of sex without love as problematic and "dangerous" for women ("I think he could be a master manipulator . . . mmm . . . emotionally, of a woman").

In another individual interview, the participant (S) described her present sexual relationship as both her fist intimate *relationship* (with a man) and her first *sexual* experience. After some

probing and questioning, she later described other sexual experiences with men which were non-penetrative and therefore to her mind "not-sex". She described all these experiences as occurring in isolation from any emotional involvement on her part and as centred purely on her own enjoyment:

> Net mans met wie ek gevry het, ja. Maar ek het niks gevoel voor die vryery of tydens die vryery nie. Ek het dit net gedoen omdat ek hou van vry. [ ]
> [ ] Ag maar ek weet nie – dié ouens met wie ek gevry het, soos ek sê – ek het niks gevoel nie. Dit was net vry, want vry is lekker en dan daarna wil ek jou nie weer sien nie. Jy doen dit maar net vir jou eie plesier, ja . . . en dis . . . ja, dis seker maar soos 'n one-night stand. Ek weet nie of ek die verkeerde indruk daardeur geskep het nie – deur hulle terug te soen en so as ek geweet het ek wil nie 'n verhouding hê nie? Maar nou ja . . . dit het nie baie gebeur nie. Seker so een keer 'n jaar, so dis nog 'n rede hoekom ek die geleentheid gebruik het om te vry. Want ek het dit so min gedoen! (*Laughs*) [ ]
> (Individual interview, S)

> [Only men with whom I was "making out"[3] But I felt nothing before the "making out" or during the "making out". I just did it because I like "making out". [ ]
> [ ] Ag but you know – these guys with whom I "made out", like I say – I didn't feel anything. It was "making out" because "making out" is nice and then after that I don't want to see you again. You do it just for your own pleasure, yes . . . and it's . . . ja, it's probably like a one-night stand. I don't know if I created he wrong impression in doing that – kissing them back and so on, when I knew I didn't want a relationship? But, anyway, it didn't happen often. Probably about once a year, so that's another reason why I used the opportunity to "make out". Because I did it so seldom! (*Laughs*) [ ]]

In the foregoing excerpt, sexual expression is constructed as occurring without emotional involvement. Here the discourse of sexual pleasure emerges as antithetical to discourses of love and relationship. Significant however is the absence of the articulation of active sexual desire. "It was making out because making out is nice and then after that I don't want to see you again." The implicit notion expressed here reproduces the hegemonic (liberal feminist) discourse, which presupposes a "natural" inherent sexuality for women. The imperative for women to enjoy sexual advances from men and respond to them emerges as the central definitive axis for sexual pleasure. It reproduces women as the passive receptive of male desire. Furthermore the discourse links with moralising discourses which prohibit free erotic expression for women: "I don't know if I created the wrong impression in doing that – kissing them back and so on, when I knew I didn't want a relationship?"

Despite the criticisms raised above, the foregoing three quotes are significant in that they acknowledge female sexual desire and centralise female sexual pleasure. I understood the fact

---

1: "Vry" is a colloquial Afrikaans word signifying kissing and petting. I use the term "making out" for want of a direct English translation.

that these articulations occurred within the context of the individual interviews and not the focus group discussion as partly illustrative of the way in which women regulate their sexualities amongst themselves. This also raises important questions regarding methodology (particularly the exclusive use of focus group discussions in discourse analytic work), however, which will be elaborated upon in Chapter 6.

5.2.7 Discourses of change or resistance

Although I conceptualised discussion groups as postmodern consciousness-raising groups and a place or space where multiple, similar and different experiential versions of cultural discourses of sexualities would be available for resonance and resistance, this did not happen and particularly within the focus group discussion, discourses of resistance or change specifically in terms of women's sexualities, were marginal.

Although participants in the focus group discussion positioned themselves within feminist discourses, and some of the assertions that were frequently expressed, stressed the high value placed on emotional and economic independence and autonomy espoused by feminism and popular psychology reflected in repeated statements such as "I don't need a man to take care of me" and "I know who I am and what I am") these discourses of challenge, change and resistance were, ironically, restricted to the economic and, more marginally, to the emotional domains of heterosexual relationships, whilst inequalities in the construction of heterosex itself went by largely unchallenged.

One of the most salient discourses that emerged in relation to change or resistance in the focus group discussion was the culture discourse:

> P3: Ek dink nou aan my Engelse vriendinne, hulle is baie meer liberaal en hulle weet wat hulle wil hê. Hulle het hierdie kring van vriendinne and they lock together. Hulle steek mekaar nie in die rug nie. Hulle het altyd 'n superior houding. Ek weet nie of hulle net so is omdat hulle nog jonk en mooi is nie en of dit is omdat hulle Engels is en anders grootgemaak is nie. En of ons meer grootgemaak is met die idee dat jy minderwaardig is nie.
> P5: Ek dink jy het 'n baie goeie punt beet, want ek dink tog Afrikaanse vroue word grootgemaak met die hele idee van dat jy so lucky is dat jy 'n man kry, en jy moet 'n man kry. Dit is jou grootste doel in die lewe.
> P2: Maar dit laat mens nou dink, hoe human is daardie neediness nou regtig, en of dit nou ingeplant is.
> P1:Yes, it's probably your upbringing.
> P4: As ek nou moet dink, my ma is die sterker een in die gesin, sy hou die gesin bymekaar. Sy is meer intelligent as my pa, al verdien hy baie meer as sy. Maar sy sal altyd sê: Het jy met jou pa gepraat – Pa is die hoof.
> P2: O ja, Pa is God.

P4: Ek probeer heeltemal wegbreek daarvan . . .
(Focus group)

[P3: Now I am thinking about my English female friends, they're much more liberal and they know what they want. They always have a superior attitude. And I don't know if they're like that because they're still young and pretty or if it's because they're English and have been brought up differently. And if we've been raised with this idea that you're inferior.
P5: I think you're onto a very good point, because I do think that Afrikaans women are raised with the idea that you're so lucky to get a man and you must get a man. It's your biggest goal in life.
P2: But that gets one thinking, how human that neediness really is and whether it's been implanted.
P1: Yes, it's probably your upbringing.
P4: If I have to think about it, my mother is the stronger one in our household, she keeps our family together. She's more intelligent than my father, even though he earns much more than she does. But she'll always say: Have you spoken to your father – Dad is the head.
P2: O yes, Dad is God.
P4: I try and break away from that completely . . .]

In the foregoing excerpt, women's inferiority (in relation to men) and her "neediness" (the need to have and hold a man) links with the culture discourse "in which culture is seen to prescribe male dominance" (Shefer, 1999). In this particular excerpt, Afrikaner[1] culture is compared to English (white South African) culture, which is constructed as more liberal and affirming of women's autonomy. On the other side of the coin, Afrikaner culture is constructed as conservative and essentially patriarchal. The cultural discourse as it is constructed here cuts across race and is articulated rather in terms of language (Afrikaans vs. English) and is reflective of a long-standing conflict between white English speaking South Africans and Afrikaners (Du Pisani, 2001).

Significant in this study was the way in which strong resistance to regulatory and moralising discourses of "you're not allowed to have sex before marriage" and "you have to be submissive to your husband", informed by the traditional (Calvinist) Afrikaner culture and Nederduits Gereformeerde (NG) Church, was frequently expressed. I understand the considerable time spent in the focus group discussion to debate and challenge these discourses as illustrative of the force with which these discourses still operate in this particular culture. On the other hand, as Shefer (1999) points out, the use of notions of culture and tradition in legitimating or explaining gender power relations has been found fairly frequently in other local studies. In this study, strong resistance was offered to these moralising discourses that prohibit sexual activity outside of marriage and label women who

[1] Throughout this thesis, the term "Afrikaner" will refer to white, Afrikaans-speaking people. As Swart (2001) points out, although Afrikaans is the first language of many black South Africans, historically black people were economically, politically and socially excluded from membership of the "racially exclusive group which gave support to the governing National Party" (p. 87).

engage in pre-marital sex as "loose". One women's account of her resistance to these prescriptions regarding her sexuality is particularly illustrative in this regard. This particular woman, who described her mother as an English-speaking, enlightened and educated woman, therefore shifted the resistance discourse from the cultural to the *generational* domain:

> [ ] My ma was vreeslik ontsteld. Sien sy's maar net . . . vroue van haar generation . . . Volgens haar het ek geen morele waardes nie en ek is 'n ma van kinders. Hoe kan ek dan nou 'n wildvreemde man in die huis bring en saam met hom slaap. Maar ek sê toe vir haar dat die kinders van niks weet nie. 'n Mens doen dit volgens haar net nie. Want jy is mos 'n kind van die Here en jy doen dit net nie. Tot ek vir my ma gesê het: There are three generations living in this house. When I got married for the first time, I had the idea of a picket fence, en twee en 'n half kinders, and we are going to live happily ever after, but it didn't turn out to be that way, because of bad decisions I made, whatever. But the fact is, this is my life, this is how it is. I know who I am, and I cannot expect you to agree with it, but I do expect you to respect that, the same way I have to respect how you feel.
> (Focus group)

> [[ ] My mother was very upset. See, she's just . . . women of her generation . . . According to her I've got no moral values and I'm a mother of children. How can I bring a totally strange man into the house and sleep with him? But I told her that the kids know about nothing. But according to her one just doesn't do that kind of thing. Because you're a child of the Lord and you just don't do it. Until I told my mother: There are three generation living in this house. When I got married for the first time, I had the idea of a picket fence, and two and a half children and we're gong to live happily ever after, but it didn't turn out that way, because of bad decisions I made, whatever. But the fact is, this is my life, this is how it is. I know who I am and I cannot expect you to agree with it, but I do expect you to respect that, the same way I have to respect the way you feel.]

In the foregoing excerpt, the speaker is forcefully resisting the constricting and moralising discourses surrounding casual sex for women. It ironically also draws powerfully on the notion of the older "wiser" divorced woman who is disillusioned by romantic notions and therefore entitled to have sex for the sake of it (as if younger women who have not been married and divorced are not entitled to such behaviour?).

The "culture (Afrikaner) discourse" also emerged in a part of the focus group discussion that focussed on HIV/AIDS:

> P4: Daar is ouers wat wanneer 'n kind vir hulle vertel: "Ma, ek is HIV-positive" of "ek is pregnant", net sê: "My kind, solank jy net nie net nie rook nie."
> P2: Ja, jy sê dit nou seker na aanleiding van hierdie vriendin van ons – toe haar ma uitvind sy rook, toe's haar verskoning dat sy op die punt staan van skei. Toe sê haar ma vir haar: "My kind, skei dan nou maar, maar moet asseblief net nie rook nie."
> P1: Ja, dit laat my nou dink aan hierdie ou Afrikaanse grappie. Mens moet dit vertel in'n Namakwalandse aksent. Dis oor die ma wat die kinders sien speel agter die muur. Dan roep sy: "Kinders, wat maak julle daar?" Dan antwoord die een (ekskuus die taal): "Ma, Pietie speel met Sannie se poeste." Dan antwoord die ma: "O, goed so! Net nie rook nie, hoor!"
> (*Laughter from the group*)
> I: Maar sê julle dis 'n Afrikaner-ding? Dis deel van ons kultuur?
> P2: Ja, absoluut!
> P4: Die ding is, die ding is dit: As jy begin rook my kind, dan is die pad oop na dwelms, seks, motorfietse en alles.

(Focus group)

[P4: There are parents who, when their child tells them that they are pregnant or they are HIV positive, just says: My child, just as long as you don't smoke.
P2: Yes, you're probably saying that in response to one of our female friends (H) – when her mother found out that she smokes her defence was that she was on the verge of getting divorced. Then her mom told her: My child, rather get divorced then but please just don't smoke.
P1: This reminds me of that old Namakwaland joke – you must tell it in a Namakwaland accent. It's about this mother who sees her children playing behind a wall. Then she calls: Children, what are you doing there? Then one of them answers (pardon the language): Ma, Pietie is playing with Sannie's poeste[4]. Then the mother answers: O good. Just no smoking hey!
(*Laughter from group*)
I: But are you saying it's an Afrikaner thing? It's part of our culture?
P2: Yes absolutely!
P4: The thing is, the thing is this: If you start smoking my child, then it opens the way to drugs, sex, motorbikes and everything.]

The notion expressed in the foregoing excerpt is that Afrikaners are very conservative regarding sex and sexuality and that the participants are/were rather exposed to other moralising discourses surrounding activities such as smoking and drugs whilst issues of sex or sexuality and HIV/AIDS were never openly discussed or explored. Although the participants express strong resistance to the silencing of issues of sex and sexuality and of HIV/AIDS, the "culture discourse" in the foregoing excerpt also powerfully operates to explain and legitimise their ignorance or disregard of issues of sexuality and HIV/AIDS. Once again the discourse of culture is challenged by another participant (P1) who draws on the generational discourse to explain her own ignorance or disregard of issues of HIV/AIDS:

Dit is interessant, as ek kyk na my ma – my *Engelse* ma – sy is twee-en-sewentig, maar 'n verligte vrou, very well read, sy het al tydskrifartikels gepubliseer en sy's computer-literate, jy weet – sy's together. Maar haar connection in haar kop is, wanneer 'n girl buite die huwelik rondslaap, is sy 'n slet. Boef. Daar sluit dit af. En ons is nou op daai punt van as jy seks het buite die huwelik met een man wat ek nooit weer sien nie is dit OK. You have not progressed beyond that point to say: Hang on, HIV can happen to anyone. My ma, so verlig, so together as wat sy is, so cool as wat sy is vir 72 – she doesn't get that. HIV doesn't enter her frame of reference. Dis net: Maar my kind jy is 'n ma, jy het kinders, jou reputasie!
(Focus group)

[It's interesting, when I look at my mother – my English mother – she is seventy-two, but an enlightened woman, very well read, she has already published magazine articles, you know – she's together. But her connection in her head is, when a girl sleeps around outside of a marriage, she's a slut. Boef. There it closes off. And we're now at that point that when you have sex outside of a marriage with one man that you never see again, it's OK. You've never progressed beyond that point to say: Hang on, HIV can happen to anyone. My mother, as enlightened that she is, so cool as what she is for seventy-two – she doesn't get that. HIV doesn't enter her frame of reference. It's just: But my child you're a mother, you've got kids, your reputation!]

1: "Poes" is a colloquial Afrikaans word signifying the female genitalia. It is usually considered as swear word and is similar to the English word "cunt".

The foregoing excerpt powerfully expresses the complexity of the challenge these women face in their resistance to cultural discourses surrounding casual sex for women outside of marriage. As it is articulated here, the challenge for these women lies in resisting the labelling of such behaviour as "sluttish". This "resistance discourse" then, in advocating sexual activity for women (even if it is outside the confines of a relationship), resists all discourses that see such behaviour as "morally dangerous" including discourses of HIV/AIDS. At the same time no provision is made for women's agency with regard to their general sexual behaviour in relation to men and men's power in heterosex is thus left unchallenged.

In the focus group discussion, "sexual compatibility" was frequently mentioned as being central to successful sexual relationships (and marriage) and was constructed as motivation for engaging in sex before marriage:

> P4: My Engelse vriendin . . . [ ] sy's geskei van hierdie beautiful man. En weet julle wat het haar ma gesê toe sy hoor sy gaan skei? "My darling you should have had sex with him before you got married, then you would have *known* . . ."
> P6: Engelse ma's sê dit . . .
> P1: Maar nie alle Engelse ma's nie . . .
> P2: 'n Vriendin (H) het vertel van haar ouma wat in die 80 was, toe H die eerste keer 'n boyfriend huis toe neem, het haar ouma 'n punt daarvan gemaak (haar *Afrikaanse* ouma) dat sy saam met hom moet slaap voordat sy daaraan *dink* om met hom te trou. Want as sy nie dit gedoen het voordat hulle trou nie, how the hell will she know.
> P4: Ja, mens moet oppas om te stereotipeer . . .
> P6: Tog . . . ek het 'n vrou wat saam met my werk wat Engels is, en sy het vir my eendag gesê dat sy vir haar kinders sê: slaap saam met die man met wie jy wil trou, want jy moet weet of jy op daardie gebied compatible is en mekaar nog steeds interessant vind.
> (Focus group)

> [P4: My English female friend . . . [ ] she's divorced from this beautiful man. And do you know what her mother told her when she heard that she was going get divorced? "My darling you should have had sex with him before you got married then you would have *known* . . ."
> P6: English mother say that . . .
> P1: But not all English mothers . . . .
> P2: A female friend (H) told us about her grandmother who was in her eighties when H took a boyfriend home for the first time. Her grandmother made a point of it (her *Afrikaans* grandmother) that she must sleep with him before she even *thinks* about getting married. Because if she didn't do it before they got married, how the hell will she know.
> P4: Yes, one must be careful to stereotype . . .
> P6: Yet . . . a woman who works with me who is English, she told me one day that she tells her children: Sleep with the man you want to get married to one day, because you have to know if you're compatible on that level and still find each other interesting.]

In the foregoing excerpt the "culture discourse" links with the "sexual compatibility" discourse and the notion expressed here is that English mothers encourage their daughters to "sleep with" their boyfriends to determine whether they are sexually compatible or not, whilst Afrikaner mothers do not. This is contradicted by P1 who calls attention to the fact that not

all English mothers encourage their daughters to "sleep with" their boyfriends as well as by P2 who cites an example of a *Afrikaans* women who encouraged her granddaughter to sleep with her boyfriend.

Although "sexual compatibility" was constructed as central to a successful relationship (and particularly a marriage), the construct itself was never explored further and little mention was made of the ways in which women and men negotiate physical sexual pleasure in heterosexual sexual encounters. So, whilst resistance was articulated largely in terms of the prescriptive cultural and generational discourses regarding sex and marriage and implicitly on assertions of women's autonomy and economic independence, unequal power relations in heterosex itself were never acknowledged or challenged. Shefer (1999:308) found a similar construction of heterosex as "possibly one of the last sites for change".

One woman, however, in addressing the physical aspects of sex, described her intense dislike of sex in her marriage, attributing this to her partner's inability to satisfy her physically. This opened up a moment of exploring women's physical sexual pleasure and also voiced resistance to male-dominated heterosex:

> P3:[ ] Op 'n stadium het ek seks gehaat, ook terwyl ek getroud was. He was awful. Sien, ek het nie seks gehad eintlik voor ek getroud is nie.
> P2: Sien, daai ouma's wat sê mens moet seks hê voor jy trou was reg!
> P3: Ja, maar vir my was dit . . . ek het nie geweet . . .
> P1: Jy't nie geweet jy moet dit actually like nie . . .
> P3: Ja, ek het nie geweet daar is beter nie. En ek het nie geweet hoekom almal so aangaan oor seks nie, want vir my was dit awful. In ses jaar wat ek getroud was, was die seks vyf sekondes per sessie. No foreplay, it was like five seconds later, and it was all over.
> (*Agreement from group that this is terrible*)
> P5: En het jy ooit orgasmes gehad?
> P3: Nooit nie. Tot ek vir L ontmoet het, toe weet ek eers waaroor seks gaan. That was the first time I actually enjoyed it. Vir die eerste keer in my lewe op drie-en-dertig het ek besef dat dit nogal lekker is.
> P5: Hoekom het jy nooit seks gehad voor jy getroud is nie? Was dit 'n besluit wat jy gemaak het?
> P3: Ek het 'n bietjie seks gehad, met my eks. Ons het basies besluit om daai pad te loop – om te trou. Ons was nog nie verloof of iets nie, maar ons het geweet ons gaan trou. En ek het my ma geglo wat sê mens hou dit vir die huwelik. So, toe ons nou wel begin full-on seks het, het ek niks gehad om hom mee te vergelyk nie. Dit was my eerste ou. Ek was baie naief toe ek getrou het. Ek was toe vier-en-twintig.
> P4: En mens dink dit word beter.
> P3: Ek het nie eers gedink dit word beter nie, ek het net gedink dis seks . . .
> P1: Dis nou maar een van die goed wat jy moet endure . . .
> P3: Ja. Ek het net gedink daar's iets fout met my. I don't like it. En toe het ek begin dink dis alles my skuld. Ek doen alles verkeerd. Ek het nooit besef dis sy issues nie – dat hy maar net 'n vrot lover was nie. [ ]
> P3: Maar ek dink 'n belangrike deel van seks is kommunikasie. Praat met mekaar.
> (Focus group)

> [P3: [ ] At one stage I hated sex, also while I was married. He was awful. See, I didn't really have sex before I got married.

P2: See, that grandmother that said one must have sex before you get married was right!
P3: Yes but to me it was . . . I didn't know . . .
P1: You didn't know that you were actually supposed to like it . . .
P3: Yes, I didn't know there was better. And I didn't know why everyone made such a fuss about sex, because to me it was awful. In the six years I was married, the sex was like five seconds per session. No foreplay, it was like five seconds later and it was all over.
(*Agreement from the group that this is terrible*)
P5: And did you ever have orgasms?
P3: Never. Until I met L, then I knew for the first time what sex was about. That was the first time I actually enjoyed it. For the first time in my life at the age of thirty-three, I realised that it's quite nice.
P5: Why didn't you have sex before you got married? Was it a decision you made?
P3: I had a little bit of sex, with my ex. We basically decided to walk that road – to get married. We weren't engaged or anything yet, but we knew that we were going to get married. I believed my mother who said one reserves sex for marriage. So, when I started having full-on sex, I had nothing to compare it to. It was my first boyfriend. I was very naïve when I got married. I was twenty-four then.
And one thinks it will improve.
P3: I didn't even think it would improve. I just thought that's sex . . .
P1: It's just one of those things you have to endure . . .
P3: Yes. I thought there was something wrong with me. I don't like it. And then I started to think it's entirely my fault. I though I was doing everything wrong. I never realised it was his issues – that he was just a lousy lover.
[ ]
P3: But I think an important part of sex is communication. Speak to each other.]

Significant in the foregoing excerpt is the acknowledgement of the importance of women's physical sexual pleasure in the sexual encounter. As such, it constitutes one of the rare moments in the focus group discussion in which women's physical sexual pleasure was directly addressed. Here "foreplay" is constructed as an important part of the sexual encounter. Furthermore, P5's question ("And did you ever have an orgasm?"), powerfully constructs orgasm as representative of sexual satisfaction. Disappointingly, however, the physical sexual pleasure for women in this excerpt is ultimately constructed as dependent on male expertise ("I never realised that it was his issues – that he was just a lousy lover") thereby removing opportunities for women's agency in seeking and obtaining sexual pleasure. In addition, communication is constructed as the primary method to achieve mutually satisfying sexual experiences in relationships. As Shefer (1999: 302) points out however, the centralising of communication "problematically assumes that women and men are equally positioned in their negotiations with each other or simply lack certain skills, which will facilitate appropriate communication." Ultimately, women's sexual pleasure is constructed as "a given", a natural attribute to be "unveiled" by the male partner's expertise. Clearly the notion that a man (in the context of monogamy) is totally responsible for his partner's sexual pleasure – a notion espoused by Marie Stopes (Bland, 1983) in the earlier years of this century – is not desirable as a climate of mutual enquiry and openness to the

other's desires and needs would provide the ground for genuine negotiation, which would also enable the negotiation of safer sex.

Other articulations of women's resistance to male dominance in heterosexual relationships drew on feminist liberal discourses and popular psychology discourses espoused by, for example popular women's magazines that propagate self-discovery and self-empowerment to challenge women's dependence on men or to do without them entirely. Miles (1992) and Shefer (1999) found similar results. As one participant states:

> Ek het op 'n plek gekom waar ek – to a degree – goed voel oor myself – for me, just for me. Dit beteken nie vir jou of vir jou werk dit. Ek het op 'n plek gekom, want ek het so lank hard probeer . . . Jy moet 'n man en 'n relationship hê om happy te wees. Tot ek agtergekom het, you know what – happiness is nie 'n continuing event van die moment wat jy gebore is tot jy die dag jou kop neerlê nie. Ongeag van hoe lank 'n relationship is, be it for life, be it for two weeks: There are moments of happiness. If you're very lucky, the rest is contentment. En ek het op 'n punt gekom waar ek OK is daarmee om alleen te wees. I don't have to be in a relationship to be content – and I can even have moments of happiness!
> (Focus group)

> [I arrived at a place where I – to a certain degree – feel good about myself – for me, just for me. It doesn't mean that it works for you or you. I arrived at a place, because I for so long I tried so hard . . . You must have a man and a relationship to be happy. Until I realised – you know what – happiness isn't a continuing event from the moment you are born until the day you rest your head. Irrespective of how long a relationships I, be it for life, be it for two weeks: There re moments of happiness. If you're very lucky, the rest is contentment. And I got to a point where I'm OK to be alone. I don't have to be in a relationship to be content – and I can even have moments of happiness!]

On the one hand, the foregoing excerpt articulates resistance to both the have-hold discourse ("I don't have to be in a relationship to be content – and I can even have moments of happiness!") and the romance discourse ("Irrespective of how long a relationship is, be it for life or be it for two weeks: There are moments of happiness. If you're very lucky the rest is contentment."). The "solution" to unsatisfying intimate relationships offered here is to reach a point where you "feel good about yourself". Ultimately therefore, the quote constructs women as being responsible for their own (emotional) satisfaction in relationships whilst nothing is said about men's responsibility.

Although articulations of change were more evident in the individual interviews, than in the focus group discussion, they were still marginal. Notable in this regard were the voices that actively pursued traditionally masculine roles and subjectivities – as highlighted in section 5.2.6 of this thesis. Furthermore "change" was most often constructed as a "choice" between positions or as part and parcel of personal development and "growth" – i.e. the logical

outcome of a development trajectory. I understood this as in line with a Western conception of identity as fixed, coherent and consistent.

These "changes" alluded to in the above paragraph were mostly described as positive. As one women, reflecting on her past casual sexual relationships notes in this regard:

> [ ] ek het nou nie meer nodig om my wild oats te sow om vry te voel nie because ek het nou groter geword, ouer geword, 'n bietjie wyser geword, en 'n paar knocks bygekry, [ ] I feel free. Want ek dink dis die wete dat everything that I have, wat nie vreeslik baie wêreldgoed is nie, maar, dit wat ek het, of dit nou materieël is of emosioneel, het ek self gekry [ ] – daar's nie 'n man wat daarop aanspraak kan maak dat hy 'n rol daarin gespeel het nie.[ ] Today who I am is who I helped myself become. [ ] What I've achieved and what I've done was at great cost – emotionally en economicly. Dit het my soort van die liberation gegee van: You know what, I'm OK. Whether I'm in a relationship or not, [ ] is ek totaal OK met wie ek is. I don't need to manifest it in a certain way. Whether I am in a relationship or not: This is who I am. Ek voel nie ek moet conform as ek in 'n relationship is nie. Ek hoef nie my behaviour aan te pas nie . . .
> (Individual interview, M)

> [[ ] I no longer need to sow my wild oats to feel free, because I've grown up more, I've become older, a bit wiser, and got a few more knocks [ ] I feel free. Because I think it's the knowledge that everything that I have, whether its material or emotional, I attained myself [ ] – there isn't a man that can claim that he had a hand in it [ ]. Today who I am is who I helped myself become. What I achieved and what I've done was at great cost – emotionally and economicly. It sort of gave me the liberation of: You know what? I'm OK. Whether I'm in a relationship or not, [ ] I am totally OK with who I am. I don't feel that I have to conform in a relationship. I don't have to adjust my behaviour . . .]

In the foregoing excerpt, change is predicated both on women's agency in the gendered structure of the economy and on her sense of self (drawing on liberal feminist and popular psychology discourses). Implicitly this excerpt also articulates resistance to the have-hold discourse ("Whether I am in a relationship or not: This is who I am. I don't feel that I need to conform in a relationship. I don't need to adjust my behaviour . . ."). On the other hand casual sexual relationships (note the metaphor of "sowing wild oats" used here, which reminds of the male sex dive discourse and its concomitant connotations) are constructed as negative – an earlier phase predicated on emotional immaturity and inexperience from which the participant has "evolved". Significantly, M also later expresses difficulties in negotiating pleasure in heterosex with her male partner:

> I: Is dit so – verstaan ek jou reg - dat jy sê dit is makliker om jouself te assert in die ander aspekte van die verhouding – dis wat jy wil hê, dis wat jy nie wil hê nie – as in die sexual realm?
> M: Ek dink dis omdat A kommunikeer baie moeilik oor seks. Ek kan voel dis ongemaklik vir hom om daaroor te praat, wat dit vir my ongemaklik maak om daaroor te praat. Maar my afleiding is dat hy kom uit 'n agtergrond . . . ek dink nie dit was 'n geval van seks is vuil nie, maar ek dink daar was 'n ongemak van sy ouers se kant om met hom daaroor te praat and that left him with connotations. Ek

dink sy pa het rondgespeel op 'n stadium and I think he knows about it . . . so ek weet nie of al die goed in sy kop, vir hom half . . . mens kan net . . . ek weet nie . . . en dit maak my hesitant om met hom daaroor te praat omdat hy ongemaklik is om daaroor te praat en omdat dit seks is en nie finansies, of politiek of ander aspekte van jou relationship is nie, is dit nou net soveel moeiliker om daaroor te praat, want hy's ongemaklik om daaroor te praat.
(Individual interview, M)

[I: Is that the case – do I understand you correctly – that you are saying it's easier to assert yourself in the other aspects of your relationship – this is what you want, this is what you don't want – than in the sexual realm?
M: I think its because A struggles to communicate about sex. I can feel it's uncomfortable for him to speak about it. But my deduction is that he comes from a background . . . I think it wasn't a case of sex is dirty but I think there was a discomfort on the side of his parents to speak to him about it and that left him with connotations. I think his father played around a one stage and he knows about it . . . so I don't know if all that stuff in his head, that has made him half . . . one can only . . . I don't know . . . and that makes me hesitant to speak about it because he's uncomfortable to speak about it and because its sex and not finances or politics or other aspects of your relationship, its now just so much more difficult to talk about it, because he's uncomfortable to speak about it.]

From the foregoing excerpt one gets the sense that this woman is particularly uncomfortable in negotiating her own pleasure in the sexual realm – a discomfort she then projects onto her partner. What then follows is a psychologised justification for her partner's discomfort, thereby ironically displacing responsibility and blame from the man onto the woman. Read together, the foregoing two experts (quoted from one participant's individual interview) powerfully illustrates how one individual can be positioned in one discourse and yet be *situated* differently in another.

The discourse of change and the complexities and contradictions underlying it also emerged in another woman's (C) account of her present relationship in which she alludes to women's ambivalence within the dominant-submissive male-female relationship. C had previously been married, was now divorced and is presently in a committed relationship with L. When asked how her divorce had impacted on her present relationship, she answered as follows:

C: My hele vorige verhouding met my eks het my wyser gemaak. Ek weet wat ek verkeerd gedoen het in daai verhouding en ek weet wat ek nie nou moet doen nie . . .
I: Soos wat?
C: Ek het maar daai games saam met hom gespeel, partykeer. You do this to me: tit for tat. En dit het nie gewerk nie. [ ] En ek het nou met L – wat vir my moeilik is – ek het altyd as jy met my baklei, baklei ek terug – maar met L – veral in die begin toe hy deur hierdie moeilike tyd gegaan het – sluk, sluk hoe jy voel, smile – en weet jy wat? Daai persoon gaan liewer vir jou wees net omdat jy jou bek gehou het. Dit is wat ek . . . en ek dink dit werk wonders vir my in my verhouding. Dis dat ek net daai selfgesentreerdheid van my wegvat en dink OK – wees 'n spons en hanteer die klip wat na jou toe kom of die mislikheid wat na jou toe kom. En snaaks genoeg – as L moeilik is en hy's kwaai oor iets en hy kom raas by my dan sal ek vir hom luister en sê ja en so . . . vyf minute later kry jy die meeste liefde wat jy nog ooit gekry het. Dis al wat jy wou gehad het in die eerste plek. Jy weet? Elke dag – dan dink ek by myself – moenie dit doen nie, want dis die nagevolge . . . [ ]
(Individual interview, C)

[C: The whole of my previous relationship with my ex made me wiser. I know what I did wrong in that relationship and I know what I shouldn't do now . . .
I: Like what?
C: I also played those games with him sometimes. You do this to me: tit for tat. And it didn't work. [ ] And with L I now I have to – which is difficult for me – I always, if you fight with me, I fight back – but with L – especially in the beginning when he was going through that difficult time – swallow, swallow how you feel, smile – and you know what? That person's going to love you more just because you kept your mouth shut. That's what I . . . and I think it works miracles for me in my relationship. Its just that I can remove that egocentrism and think OK – be a sponge and handle the stone that's coming your way or the lousiness that's coming to you. And funny enough – when L is difficult about something and he's angry and he comes to scold, then I'll listen and say yes and so . . . five minutes later you get the most love you've ever received. It's all you wanted in the first place. You know? Every day – then I think to myself – don't do this, because these are the consequences . . . [ ]]

This excerpt highlights the complexities and contradictions involved in the reproduction of male power in heterosexual relationships. What is articulated here is that submissiveness for women does not necessarily exclude gain or advantage. It is the gains and advantages, such as getting "the most love you've ever received" that reflect the investments that Hollway (1984, 1989) speaks of in taking up submissive gendered subjectivities.

The issue of investment and the reasons that women position themselves in submissive gendered subjectivities also emerges in another participant's account of the significant changes in her life over the past few years:

S: Daar was groot verskuiwings (*in my lewe oor die afgelope paar jaar*). Ek voel net asof ek grootgeword het. En my lewe nou is heeltemal anders as wat ek gedink dit gaan wees. Ek het gedink dat ek op drie-en-twintig getroud gaan wees en 'n kind gaan hê en so op agt-en-twintig nog 'n kind. Dis die prentjie wat ek in my kop gehad het. En dis nou geheel en al glad nie so nie. Ek is nou agt-en-twintig en ek is nog nie getroud nie en ek het al saam met 'n man geslaap. Ek weet nie wanneer ek gaan trou nie, en as ek trou op twee-en-dertig, dan is dit vir my fine. [ ] Maar dit was maar die prentjie wat ek in my kop gehad het. Jy, weet, dis maar wat jy in storieboeke lees en op TV sien en in movies. Maar toe ek na skool nog nie 'n kêrel het nie en op twee-en-twintig en drie-en-twintig nog nie 'n kêrel het nie, het ek gedink: Dit gaan nie gebeur nie. Ek gaan nie trou op drie-en-twintig soos ek gedink het nie en in 'n groot huis bly met 'n hond nie.
I: Want as jy op drie-en-twintig nog nie 'n kêrel het nie is die kanse nie goed dat jy later een gaan kry om mee te trou nie?
S: Presies. En toe't ek mos nou . . . vir almal en myself het ek mos toe gesê ek *wil* nie trou en kinders hê nie.
[ ]
Ek dink ek is 'n late bloomer. J sê ek is 'n late bloomer.
(Individual interview, S)

[S: There were big shifts (*in my life over the past few years*). I just feel as if I've grown up. And my life now is completely different to what I thought it was going to be. I thought that at the age of twenty-three I'll be married and have a child and at about twenty-eight another child. That's the picture I had in my head. And now it's completely not like that. I'm twenty-eight now and I'm not married yet and I have already slept with a man. I don't know when I'll get married, and if I get married at thirty-three, then it's fine with me. [ ] But that was the picture I had in my head. You know, that's what you read in the storybooks and on TV and in the movies. But when I still didn't have a boyfriend after school and then

at twenty-two and twenty-three still didn't have a boyfriend, I thought: It's not going to happen. I'm not going to get married at the age of twenty-three as I thought and live in a big house with a dog.
I: Because if you haven't got a boyfriend at twenty-three the chances aren't good that you'll get one later to get married to?
S: Exactly. And then I just . . . I told everyone and myself that I don't *want* to get married and have kids.
[ ]
I think I'm a late bloomer. J tells me I'm a late bloomer.]

The notion expressed here by S is that her identity has evolved from a position of not being married and not even having a boyfriend at an age where it was expected, to being in a committed sexual relationship without being married. This position is further constructed as "natural" for women, hence the metaphor of the "late bloomer". S's investment in this position clearly makes it difficult to question or challenge the social imperative for women (of a certain age) to both "have a man" and be sexually active although she repeatedly articulates her discomfort with engaging in sex outside the confines of marriage:

(*In reponse to the question how the issue of sex was handled in her home whilst growing up*)
Seks is vir die huwelik. Jy slaap nie saam met iemand voor die huwelik nie. [ ] En toe dit nou wel gebeur dat ek en J saamslaap was dit vir my moeilik gewees, ontsettend. Ek het vreeslik teengeskop, maar ek het wel besluit, dit was OK . . . 'n besluit wat ek geneem het, dat ek gaan nie wag tot ek eendag trou voor ek by iemand slaap nie. Ek gaan dit doen voor die tyd. [ ] Hoe weet ek of ek en die man sexually compatible is? Gaan ons in die huwelik in en dan werk dit nie en dan skei ons en dis alles behalwe wat ek wil hê. Ek bedoel seks tog 'n ontsettende belangrike deel van jou verhouding en vir 'n huwelik. En mans wat nie tevrede gehou word in die huwelik nie – seksueel – loop rond. So ek het besluit . . . en dis nie te sê die heel eerste man wat jy ontmoet moet jy by slaap nie . . . so dis hoekom ek en J seksueel betrokke geraak het. [ ]
(Individual interview, S)

[Sex is for marriage. You don't sleep with someone before marriage. [ ] And when it did happen that J and I slept together it was very difficult for me, extremely. I resisted terribly, but I did however decide, it was OK . . . a decision I made, that I wasn't going to wait until I got married before I slept with someone. I'm going to do it beforehand. [ ] How do I know whether the man and I are sexually compatible? If we go into the marriage and it doesn't work and then we get divorced and that's not at all what I want. I mean, sex is after all an extremely important part of your relationship and of a marriage. And men who are not satisfied in marriage – sexually – have affairs. So I decided . . . and it's not to say that you must sleep with the first man you meet . . . so that's why J and I became sexually involved. [ ]]

In the foregoing excerpt, change is constructed as "a choice". On first glance this participant seems to position herself as active subject in the pursuit of sexual pleasure ("How do I know if the man and I are sexually compatible?"). Upon closer inspection, however, it becomes clear that in articulating the motivation to have sex, S also powerfully reproduces the male sex drive discourse ("And men who are not satisfied in marriage – sexually – have affairs") as well as the have-hold discourse which construct women are more strong subjects of the drive to procure a man in a committed partnership. ("If we go into the marriage and it doesn't work, then we get divorced and that's not at all what I want").

Similarly, another participant, MB, describes her sexual and relationship history as a process, which she describes as "back-to-front". Her history of sexual relationships is constructed as consisting of a sexual relationship centred on sex, followed by a relationship centred on "having someone" (positioning in the have-hold discourse) and one-night stands in between. Following this, she describes a present relationship with a man which is constructed as a purely *emotional* connection:

> [ ] dit is die eerste keer in my lewe wat ek, dink ek, *unconditional love* voel vir *enigiemand*, behalwe vir my familie. [ ] En . . . wat vir my vreemd is van hierdie attraksie is dat ek van die begin af aangetrokke tot hom was. Maar dit was eers na moves wat *hy* gemaak het en goed wat *hy* gedoen het. Ek het nogal die afgelope tyd baie daaraan gedink. Maar van die begin af . . . dit was . . . ek weet actually . . . ek kan een keer onthou waar dit vir my 'n *sexual* attraction was, maar dit was glad nie . . . in die begin was dit nie hierdie ding van: Ooo, ek wil daardie lyf hê nie. Dit was glad nie dit nie. Dit was *al* die ander goed . . . behalwe die . . . die sexual attraction . . . [ ] So eintlik het ek het alles agterstevoor gedoen: Eers die seks, toe die relationship en toe die emotional connection, maar . . .
> (Individual interview, MB)

> [[ ] it's the first time in my life that I, I think, feel *unconditional love* for anyone besides my family. [ ] And . . . what I find strange about this attraction is that I felt attracted to him from the very beginning. But it was only after moves that *he* made and things that *he* did. I have actually been thinking about it quite a lot lately. But from the beginning . . . it was . . . I actually know . . . I can remember one occasion where I felt sexual attraction, but it was not at all . . . in the beginning it wasn't this thing of: O, I want that body. It wasn't that at all. It was all the other things . . . except the . . . the sexual attraction . . . So actually I think I did everything back-to-front: First the sex, then the relationship and then the emotional connection, but . . .]

Invested within the idea of an early and exclusively sexual attraction to an exclusively emotional relationship trajectory as "back-to front" is the notion that " love" is the "real" and legitimate motivation for relationships and must therefore be given the primary place at the front of things.

Only one participant described her "change" – also indicated as a choice between two positions – as negative:

> Ek weet nie, ek voel so half dood. Al wat vir my sleg is van my situasie né, is dat ek weet ek gaan nooit weer 'n verhouding hê nie. Ek is absoluut oortuig. Ek kan nie – in elk geval, ek kom nie in die situasie waar ek mense ontmoet nie. Maar ook, ek is mal daaroor om aan die einde van die dag my deur toe te maak en te sê: "Nou is ek alleen". Al wat vir my erg is, is [ ]ek het nie meer emosie nie, ek kan nie emosie oordra nie. Dit is my ander issue en dan praktiese goed soos – ek moet baie na funksies en goed toe gaan en ek is altyd alleen. [ ] almal is daar met hulle vroue [ ] . . . en dan sit ek daar alleen soos 'n poepol. [ ] Ek het die ander aand gedink, met die fokus-groep bespreking, ek het gedink ek is nie eers op julle vlak nie. Die emosionele kompleksiteit daarvan. Maar dis weird né, want dis ook OK. Jy weet ek wil net iemand hê wat ek na 'n funskie toe kan neem. [ ]
> (Individual interview, AJ)

> [I don't know, I feel sort of dead. The only thing that I find bad about my situation is that I know I'll never have a relationship again. I am absolutely convinced. I can't – in any case, I don't get into

> situations where I meet people. But also, I'm mad about closing my door at the end of the day and to say: "Now I'm alone." The only thing that I find terrible is [ ] I don't have emotion any longer, I can't communicate emotion. That's my other issue and also then practical things like – I must often attend functions and then I'm always alone [ ] everyone else is there with their wives [ ] . . . and then I sit there alone like a arsehole. [ ] I also thought the other evening during the focus group discussion, I thought I'm not even on your level. The emotional complexity of it. But it's weird hey, because that's also OK. You know, I just want someone I can take along to a function. [ ]]

The foregoing excerpt powerfully illustrates the dilemma for the ("new", independent?) women. There are two positions available to here: the one position is constructed as being in an emotionally (potentially) painful relationship. The other is to be alone and "feel no emotion" *and* face the social ostracism of being single.

5.3 DISCOURSES OF THE "OTHER" IN RELATION TO HIV/AIDS

Although the vignette was intended to elicit women's "sex talk" as a way of exploring the women's constructions of their sexualities(s), the topic of HIV/AIDS was frequently directly addressed particularly in the focus group discussion and occasionally in the individual interviews. Although I initially intended to analyse women's construction of their sexualities and the implications of these constructions for women's ability or inability to negotiate safer sex, I thought it useful and important to explore more closely the participants' thoughts, feelings and ideas about HIV/AIDS. As such, this section therefore represents a major shift in analytic focus. Despite this, many important articulations with regard to HIV/AIDS emerged which deserve further investigation.

Most of the women expressed discomfort with raising the issue of condoms with a partner and all (almost exclusively) engaged in unprotected sex, apart from instances where possible pregnancy became reason for concern. Furthermore, none of the women in the study have been tested for HIV apart from one who was tested for insurance purposes.

In discussions about the reasons for engaging in unprotected sex, discourses of "familiarity" with the male sex partner emerged particularly strongly:

> [ ] I did not even consider it at that time. Ek het mense geken wat hom geken het en die feit dat ons 'n paar uur gesels het, het ek 'n idee gehad van wie ek dink hy is. To my mind it felt right, so ek het nie daaroor uitgeclutch nie.
> (Focus group)

[[ ] I did not even consider it at the time. I knew people who knew him and the fact that we spoke for a few hours, I had an idea of who I thought he was. To my mind it felt right, so I didn't clutch out about that.]

[ ] Hy is 'n nice ou. Ek ken hom, my niggie ken hom. Dit was nie 'n geval van: Ek het hom in 'n club ontmoet en ek ken hom glad nie en nie een van my vriende ken hom nie . . . [ ]
(Focus group)

[He's a nice guy. I know hom, my cousin knows him. It wasn't a case of: I met him in a club and I didn't know him at all and none of my friends knew him . . . [ ]]

The foregoing two excerpts powerfully links up with the discourses around AIDS as "Other". Someone with whom one has become familiar (to a greater or lesser degree) becomes a person who could not have AIDS because s/he is known. The binary logic of Western thought makes a familiar person not-"Other", therefore not-AIDS. This was also linked to a discursive contradiction. On the one hand, need for knowledge of another was voiced, and on the other hand, the impossibility of such knowledge:

I: So J was jou eerste seksuele ervaring, maar jy was nie sy eerste nie?
S: Nee, hy het voor hy my ontmoet het, 'n paar seksuele ervarings gehad. Maar ons praat nie daaroor nie, want dis in sy verlede.
(Individual interview, S)

[I: So, J was your first sexual experience but you weren't his first?
S: No, before he met me he had a few sexual experiences. But we don't talk about it because it's in his past.]

[ ] Ek het nog nooit vir L gesê ek het 'n one-night stand gehad nie. Hy weet baie van my, maar hy weet nie dit nie. En ek dink ook nie mens moet nie alles vir jou partner vertel nie. Die oomblik as jy alles sê, dan is dit – dis asof jy dit op jou skouer dra en dan gaan hulle dit ook op hulle skouer dra. Want ek weet L het dit baie gedoen en ek wil ook nie alles weet wat hy gedoen het nie. Ek dink . . . om 'n mens interessant en uniek te hou, moet jy nie alles van hulle weet nie. As jy alles van iemand weet, is dit 'n boring relationship. Daar moet 'n sense of mystery wees . . . En dis ook die fout wat ek met my eks gemaak het. Ek het hom net mooi alles vertel, daar was niks meer sacred nie. Maar hy het ook nie vir *my* alles vertel nie. Daar was nie half – 'n deeltjie van my wat ek kon sê is my eie nie. Ek het my identiteit basies verloor. [ ]
(Individual interview, C)

[[ ] I've never told L that I had a one-night stand. He knows a lot about me, but he doesn't know that. I also think one shouldn't tell your partner everything. The minute you tell them everything, then it's as if – it's as if you reveal all and then they are also going to reveal all. Because I know that L did it often and I also don't want to know everything that he's done. In order for someone to remain interesting and unique, you mustn't know everything about them. When you know everything there is to know about someone, it's a boring relationship. There must be a sense of mystery . . . And that's also the mistake I made with my ex. I told him every last thing and he used it against me. There was nothing sacred anymore. But he didn't tell me everything. There wasn't sort of – a small part of me that I could say was my own. I basically lost my identity. [ ]]

As it emerged in the focus group discussion and the individual interviews, the discourse of "Other" was also powerfully linked to racial "Other". As one participant put it:

> Ons bly in 'n omgewing waar ons nie eintlik van AIDS weet nie. Niemand wat ek ken het AIDS nie. As ek 'n swart persoon was en tien huise om my se mense het AIDS, gaan ek anders dink.
> (Focus group)
>
> [We live in an area where we don't actually know about AIDS. Nobody I know has AIDS. If I was a black person and the residents of ten houses surrounding me all have AIDS, I'll think about it differently.]

"Nobody I know has AIDS." This operates on both a literal and metaphorical level. Only one person in the group knew people personally who are HIV positive, and almost everyone acknowledged their sense of distance from AIDS and also the assumption that "they" were somehow safe. Primarily this derives from the imputation of stigma, connected to the extremely loaded and negative connotations of AIDS. As Sontag (1990) points out, AIDS has the fundamental meaning of deviance, which includes connotations of promiscuity, delinquency, and pollution. In laymen's terms AIDS is still popularly characterised as a gay disease and in terms of connotations of Other, thereby powerfully stigmatised. The discourse of AIDS as "Other" in the above excerpt also signifies racial "Other". The "area we reside in" is white and consequently we know no one who has AIDS. The implication is that the popularly held belief/myth that AIDS is a "Black" disease, to the exclusion of white people, is reproduced. As one participant explains:

> S: [ ] Jy weet, ek het eintlik nog nooit regtig aan HIV/AIDS regtig gedink nie omdat ek niemand ken wat HIV positief is of wat AIDS het nie. Dit het nog nooit iemand in my vriendekring of familiekring geraak nie. As ek moet eerlik wees, die persepsie in my kop is nog steeds dat ander mense dit kry. Nie ons nie.
> I: Soos wie is dié ander mense?
> S: Gay mans. En swart mense. Want dit hoor jy van – in die media. Ek hoor ook nie eintlik vreeslik baie van bruin mense wat AIDS het nie . . . wat straight is nie. En nog minder van wit mense. Die meeste wit mense wat HIV positief is waarvan ek hoor, is gay mans. Tensy hulle dit nou gekry het soos deur 'n bloedoortapping of iets – soos daai wit dominee wat HIV-positief is. Ek dink nie ek het al gehoor van sê nou maar 'n dertigjarige wit vrou wat HIV positief is nie [ ]
> (Individual interview, S)
>
> [S: [ ] You know, I've never really thought about HIV/AIDS because I don't know anyone who is HIV positive or who has AIDS. It has never affected anyone in my circle of friends or in my family circle. If I have to be honest, the perception in my head is still that other people get it. Not us.
> I: Like who are these other people?
> S: Gay men. And black people. Because that you hear of – in the media. I also don't hear of many coloured people with AIDS . . . who are straight. And still less of white people. Most of the white people, who are HIV positive that I hear of, are gay men. Unless they get it through

> a blood transfusion or something – like that white reverend who is HIV-positive. I don't think I have heard of for example a thirty-year-old, white woman who is HIV positive. [ ]]

The foregoing excerpt powerfully illustrates how the stigmatising discourses of the "Other" in relation to HIV/AIDS, particularly in the South African political context with its long-standing history of racial segregation, operate to split AIDS off from the dominant, familiar "us" (white, middle-class, heterosexual) and projects it onto the disempowered, marginalized, unfamiliar "them" (homosexuals and black people). If people who are familiar are not-Other and therefore not-Aids, people who are unfamiliar *are* "Other" and therefore *are* AIDS.

The *Nelson Mandela/HSRC Study on HIV/AIDS* (2002) reports that HIV/AIDS is affecting South Africans differently according to race, age and geographical location. The highest prevalence was amongst the twenty-five to twenty-nine year old age group (28%), followed by the thirty to thirty-four group (24%). Among people of fifteen to forty-nine years old, those living in urban informal settlements were more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS (28,4%) than those living in urban formal settlements (15.8%), farms (11.3%) or other rural areas (12.4%). Furthermore the prevalence rate amongst Africans was reported to be highest (12.9%), whilst white and coloured people were found to have closely similar prevalences (6.2% and 6.1%). The figure for Indians was reported to be 1,6%. The Mandela/HSRC study furthermore points out that the white prevalence rate is high compared to other countries such as Australia, France and the USA (where the prevalence among whites is 1% or less). Despite these findings, which clearly indicate that white South African women between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-four are indeed very vulnerable to contracting the HI virus, most of the women in this study felt a distance from the HIV/AIDS threat.

The excerpt cited above also alludes to the role of media in reproducing discourses of "Other" in relation to AIDS ("Gay men. And Black people. Because that's what you hear of – in the media.") Media discourses are treated seriously in feminist, poststructural, psychoanalytic methodology, as important sites of cultural reproduction. The stigmatising discourse of "Other" in relation to HIV/AIDS, which emerged in this study, correlates with the findings of Connoly and Mcleod (2003) who explored the constructions of HIV/AIDS in the South African printed media. Connely and Macleod (2003) identify what they refer to as a discourse of war against HIV/AIDS. The authors assert that the discursive framework of war is predicated upon the personification of HIV/AIDS in which agency is accorded to the virus

thus for it to be constructed as the enemy. In the South African printed media, the diseased body, which is the polluter or the infector, is thus positioned as the "Other, a dark and threatening force, which takes on racialised overtones. At the same time, medical and scientific understanding predominates in the investigative practices and expert commentary on the war, with alternative voices (such as those living with HIV/AIDS) being silenced.

5.4 INDIVIDUAL HISTORIES, INVESTEMNT AND INTERSUBJECTIVITY

Hollway (1989: 60) found that the positions people take up in "gender differentiated discourses . . . (make) sense in terms of their interest in gaining enough power in relation to others to protect their vulnerable selves". Seen as such, consciousness is not an unmediated product of experience. According to Hollway (1989) it is mediated by the unconscious, which is not neutral, but has a continuously forming and changing history within discursively produced power relations. This analytic is particularly evident if one looks at gender performativity across the group session and individual interviews. In the group, gender performativity, in general, was heightened in taking normative positions of sexuality. Taking alternative positions in discourses of sexuality was, in general, suppressed in the group. In the interviews, however, hegemonic gender performativity was significantly different. Firstly there was more diversity in subject positions taken up by women in the individual interviews. For example, women positioned themselves simultaneously in the permissive and the have-hold discourse whereby the imperative to love and be loved *and* sexual pleasure was expressed. Particularly poignant in this regard was C's assertion that she has always longed for love ("I long for love") directly followed by an account of sexual pleasure in the absence of love:

> I: Jy het netnou gesê dis moontlik om goeie seks te hê soder liefde. Het jy dit al ervaar?
> C: Nee . . . alhoewel – toe ek en **L** uitgegaan het in die begin, het ons seks gehad – die beste seks gehad van my lewe. En ek was nie toe al lief vir hom nie, want ek het hom skaars geken. Ons het die eeste keer seks gehad, so twee of drie weke nadat ons mekaar ontmoet het.
>
> [I: You previously mentioned that it's possible to have good sex without love. Have you experienced that?
> C: No . . . – when L and I started dating in the beginning, we had sex – the best sex I've ever had in my life. And I didn't love him then already, because I barely knew him. We had sex for the first time about two or three weeks after we met.]

C then describes her motivation for engaging in sex with this particular man as follows:

I: Maar het jy in daai stadium dit in jou agterkop gehad dat dit gaan ontwikkel in 'n verhouding?
C: Ja, ek . . . ek het gedink dit sal nogal nice wees, maar ek het nie gedink dis die volgende ou met wie ek wil intrek nie. Nee, glad nie. Ek dink nie verder nie. Soos ek sê, ek is 'n romantikus. Ek lewe in 'n oomblik. Soos jy nou sê, one-night stands, bla, bla . . . ek dink nie so nie. Ek dink nie, ek gaan nou met 'n ou slaap want dit gaan miskien 'n permanente verhouding word nie. Dis vir my nice op daai oomblik. En later aan dan dink ek – OK dis nou aan die ontwikkel in iets meer. Daai eerste aand wat ek saam met hom geslaap het was dit vir my fabulous, maar ek het nie op daai oomblik gedink dis die man vir my nie. Maar ek het ook nie gedink hy is nie.
(Individual interview, C)

[I: But at that stage, did you have the notion at the back of your mind that it was going to develop further into a relationship?
C: Yes I . . . I thought at that stage it would be quite nice, but I didn't think this was the next guy that I want to move in with. No, not at all. I don't think further. Like I say, I'm a romantic. I live in the moment. Like you say, one-night stands, bla, bla . . . I don't think like that. I don't think I'm going to sleep with this guy because it might develop in a permanent relationship. To me it's nice in that moment. And later then I think – OK, this is developing in something more. That first evening I slept with him, to me it was fabulous, but I didn't think in that moment this is the man for me. But I also didn't think he's not.]

According to Hollway (1984) and Walkerdine (1986) the multiple positionings accorded to women are often contradictory and as such facilitate change. On the other hand, as Shefer (1999) points out, post-structuralist analysis in addition to asserting the importance of contradiction for change, also maintains that subjectivity is multiple and that subjects are able to simultaneously locate themselves within conflicting discourses, given different investments. As Shefer (1999) points out, it is thus understandable that a woman can live with these contradictions for a long time, as many women (and I myself) do.

In addition, closer inspection of the individual interviews, read alongside the transcript of the group discussion, revealed that women who positioned themselves on the margins in the group, although also primarily positioned on the margins in the interviews, seemed to negotiate more among subject positions and felt more enabled to take up normative positions in the interviews. These same women rarely took up normative positions in the group, where strict hierarchic power relations among subject positions were in place through performativity of normative discourses. For example, one participant described her sexual relationship with a much older married man as "perfect" despite resistance from the group (for remaining in a relationship with a married man for eight years):

P3: Dis so snaaks, né. Mens dink altyd mens sal nie in so 'n situasie beland nie. Maar hoe, hoe gebeur dit?
P4: Ag ek weet nie – dit was alles deel van . . . hy was my baas en hy het al hierdie mag en aansien in die gemeenskap . . . en hy gee my al hierdie duur geskenke . . . en dit was altyd hierdie fantasies van: (*dramatises*) Dan roep hy my na sy kantoor en gooi my neer op sy lessenaar . . . (*laughs*) (*Laughter from group*) En hy was hierdie Springbok tennisspeler – so hy't stamina wat skrik vir niks! En dan't ons soms

seks vir ag ure! (*Laughter from group*) En hy is 'n musikant – dan lê ek op die verhoog na my klasse en dan loop hy om my en speel viool dat ek kan ontspan . . .
P1: Nou wat wil jy meer hê! (*Laughter from group*)
(Focus group)

[P3: It's so strange, isn't it? One always thinks one will not land up in a situation like that. But how, how does it happen?
P4: Oh, I don't know – it was all part of . . . he was my boss and he had all this power and status in the community . . . and he gave me these expensive gifts . . . and it was all this fantasy of: (*dramatises*) Then he calls me to his office and throws me down on the his desk . . . (*P4 laughs followed by laughter from the group*) And he was this Springbok tennis player – so he had stamina for Africa! And then we'd sometimes have sex for eight hours! (*Laughter from group*) And he's a musician – then I would lie down on the stage after my classes and then he would walk around me and play the violin to help me to relax . . .
P1: Now, what more do you want!]

In the individual interview, however, P4 describes her sexual relationship as physically unpleasurable and primarily centred on receiving love or feeling loved:

AJ: Ons het een keer so lank seks gehad – ek dink dit was vir omtrent agt ure – en dan lê ek daar en ek beplan my klas vir die volgende dag! Maar dit was altyd hierdie snaakse ding wat met my gebeur as ek met R seks het– dit was soos 'n film wat voor my afspeel wat niks te doen het met ons nie (*laughs*) – heeltemal niks. [ ] Maar weet jy wat né? In die begin kon hy glad nie in my ingaan nie. Hulle moes my oopsny – die dokters. [ ] Die ginekoloog het gesê dis 'n fisiese ding. [ ] Ek wou net gehad het dit moet gebeur. Verstaan jy? En daarom het ek vir die dokter gesê: sny net oop wat jy kan oopsny. Ek weet nie presies wat hulle gedoen het nie. Maar nou het ek al gewonder – ek wonder of hulle nie dalk al my lewe daar onder afgesny het nie (*laughs*). My drade gedisconnect het nie. [ ]
I: En toe daarna? Na die operasie?
AJ: En toe daarna was ek stukkend en seer, en hy kon nie wag nie. [ ] En dit was vir hom fantasties. [ ] En ek het dit net toegelaat. Want dis dieselfde ding – dis lekker om te voel . . . [ ]
[ ] later begin ek hou van die idee dat iemand lief is vir my. En ek het lief geraak vir R. [ ]
(Individual interview, AJ)

[AJ: Once we had sex for such a long time – I think it was about eight hours – and then I just lay there and planned my class for the next day! But it was always the strangest thing that happened to me when I had sex with R – it was like a film that played in front of me and that had nothing to do with us (*laughs*) – absolutely nothing. [ ] But do you know what? In the beginning he couldn't go into me. They had to cut me open – the doctors. [ ] The gynaecologist said it's a physical thing. [ ] I just wanted it to happen. [ ] Do you understand? And that's why I told the doctors: Just cut open what you can cut open. I don't know exactly what they did. But now I've already wondered – I wonder if they didn't cut off the life down there (*laughs*) If they disconnected my wires. [ ]
I: And then, after that? After the operation?
AJ: And just after that I was raw and sore, and he couldn't wait. [ ] And to him it was fantastic. And I just allowed it. Because of the same thing – it was nice to feel . . . [ ]
Later I started enjoying the idea of someone love me. And I started loving R. [ ]]

The interviews alone were rich in complexities and provided histories in discourses suggesting relations to later events and to motives for investment in particular positions. Discussion groups were constraining in these aspects. Juxtaposing individual interviews and group discussions, however enabled analysis of the historic effects of the force and rigidity with which hegemonic sexuality is reproduced among women. One example in this regard is

the individual interview with C. This woman described herself as a romantic who "places love above everything". She relates this to her childhood experience of emotionally distant parents (the participant's parents got divorced when she was four and she was sent to boarding school at the age of thirteen):

> Ek het nog altyd gesoek na die ou wat my . . . seker maar oor ons 'n tekort gehad het daaraan – jy ook maar . . . na liefde, ek smag na liefde. En ek wil nie iemand die skuld gee daarvoor nie – daar was net een ouer en drie kinders en sy was ook nie altyd daar nie.
> (Individual interview, C)

> [I have always looked for the guy that could give me . . . probably because we had a shortage of that – you also . . . love, I long for love. I don't want to blame anyone for that – there was only one parent and three children and she wasn't always there.]

Furthermore, women occupying positions on the margins of hegemonic sexuality at some period in their histories clearly described understanding themselves as marginalised in the past and as closer to the norm currently, by strategically taking up normative practices of (female) sexuality in order to achieve more normative positions, for example:

> [ ] wat ek bedoel is it was OK for where I was then. Dis nie nou iets wat ek sou doen nie, casual sexual relationships, want I don't need that. [ ] But is was fine for the sense of well being that it gave me, and that came along with it. Soort van. As ek *nou* sou single wees, sou ek baie meer selektief wees, want ek is nou verby die stadium waar casual sex vir my fascinating is. [ ] Ek is nou meer gesettle, dis nie meer vir my die ding dat ek wil gevindicate wees deur die sexual act nie.
> I: Wat bedoel jy met vindicate?
> Ek dink ek het soveel responsibility gehad op so 'n jong ouderdom omdat ek so jonk getrou het, so toe meeste van my pêlle nog besig was om rond te jol, I was changing nappies. So ek het gevoel ek het hierdie leemte, hierdie sorgvryheid en jol het ek heeltemal gemis. So ek dink vir my was dit, I was trying to recapture that en as ek sê vindication: I also had that. Even if it was on that level. Ek het ook bietjie my wild oats gesow. [ ]
> (Individual interview, M)

> [[ ] What I mean is that is was OK for where I was then. It's not something that I'll do now, casual sexual relationships, because I don't need that. [ ] But it was fine for the sense of well being that it gave me, and that came along with it. Sort of. If I had to be single now, I'd be much more selective, because I'm past that stage where I find casual sex fascinating. [ ] I'm more settled now; it's no longer this thing that I want to be vindicated through the sexual act.
> What do you mean by vindicate?
> I think I had so much responsibility at such a young age because I was so young when I got married, so when most of my pals were busy jolling around, I had was changing nappies. So I felt I had this emptiness, I completely missed out on this carefreeness and jolling. So I think to me it was trying to recapture that and if I say vindication: I also had that. Even if it was on that level. I also sowed my wild oats. [ ]]

Although positioning within normative discourses seemed like a mostly conscious acceptance and participation in the norm, what seemed to remain unconscious were the effects of histories in multiple discourses constructing the norm that worked simultaneously with the

conscious negotiation of subject positions. Many women in the study, for instance, described histories of emotionally distant fathers and of experiences of "sex talks" with fathers, which centred on articulations such as "be careful, because all boys are bastards". This enabled an understanding of the emotional investment in the contradictory positionings in the "longing for love" and "love/relationship is potentially dangerous for women" discourses within which most of the women who participated in the study positioned themselves. This central conflict (to use the psychoanalytic term) is central to the many different and varying experiences articulated by the women in the study. For example:

> MB: There is just nothing about him that I do not love. Hy is 'n Moslem en kom uit 'n ander godsdienstige agtergrond as ek en selfs as hy sy godsdienstige rituele beoefen. I just love it. Daar is net niks wat my afsit of irriteer nie. En dis scary . . .
> I: Hoekom is dit scary?
> MB: Want dis al hierdie emosies. En ek is vulnerable en dis . . . dis nie oor seks of oor "just having someone that's presentable" nie. It's love. En hy stuur vir my al hierdie mixed messages en ek maak myself oop vir hom, vulnerable vir hom.
> (Individual interview)

> [MB: There is just nothing about him that I don't love. He's a Muslim and he comes from another religious background to me and even when he practices his religious rituals. I jut love it. There is jut nothing about him that puts me off or irritates me. And that's scary . . .
> I: Why is it scary?
> MB: Because it's all these emotions. And I'm vulnerable and it's . . . it's not about sex or "just having someone that presentable". It's love. And he sends me all these mixed messages and I open myself up to him, I make myself vulnerable to him.]

In the foregoing excerpt, MB draws strongly on the romance discourse to articulate her feelings for a man she describes as "a friend and colleague" . Concomitant with this is the love is dangerous discourse. Love is described as "scary". Furthermore it is separated from sexual pleasure as well as the have-hold discourse.

Another participant, in describing her present relationship as less satisfying (emotionally and sexually) than a previous relationship with a partner named J, articulated her decision to "cut herself off from feeling" to protect her vulnerable self from rejection. Despite this, memories of her emotional fulfilment in her previous relationship filled her with sadness:

> M: Ek het nou gister my filing begin uitsort, en toe kom ek af op hierdie brief wat ek vir (J) geskryf het en ek het so sit en huil toe ek dié brief weer lees. En ek dink toe: Die Here weet it could have been so good. Still now – en ek is nou twee jaar in 'n relationship met **A**, and it's not all like the relationship I had with J. Maar ek weet ook, as J nou na my toe kom, ek dink nie ek sal kans sien daarvoor nie. Want ek sal . . . based on what do I trust you? How do I know . . . because daar was nooit 'n ander girl nie, daar was nooit ander faktore nie, daar was nie iets wat hy vir my kon sê: *Dit* is hoekom ek weg is nie. So om te verhoed dat jy nie weer waai nie, moet *dit* nie weer gebeur nie. Maar there's nothing. There's no infrastructure. Maar nog steeds, I was filled with this incredible sadness toe ek die brief lees . . . Dan besef ek . . . ek dink ek het deur 'n verskeidenheid experiences myself so

afgestomp as 'n beskermingsmeganisme . . . en dis tyd dat ek dit address. Hierdie natural healer wat ek consult het, het ook vir my gesê daar's 'n band om my hart en dis tyd dat ek dit address. Ek het myself afgesluit om te voel, want dis veiliger. En ek bedoel, dis nie regverdig op **A** nie en dis ook nie regverdig teenoor myself nie. Maar ek is nou nog eers op daai plek van ek is nog nie lus vir kak nie so kom ons cruise nou maar eers 'n bietjie aan tot ek reg is daarvoor.
I: Aancruise? Met die relationship met A?
M: Ja, met alles . . . liefde, trust . . . ek sukkel daarmee . . . maar ek wil nie nou daarmee deal nie. (Individual interview, M)

[M: Yesterday I started sorting out my filing and I came across this letter I wrote to J and I cried terribly when I sat and read the letter. And I thought: The Lord alone knows, it could have been so good. Still now – and I two years into the relationship with A, and it's not at all like the relationship I had with J. But I also know, if J had to come to me now, I don't think I would take that chance. Because I would . . . based on what do I trust you? How do I know . . . because there was never another girl, there were never any other factors, there wasn't something that he could tell me: This is why I left. So to prevent you from leaving again, this mustn't happen, but there's nothing. There's no infrastructure. But still, I was filled with this incredible sadness when I read the letter . . Then I realise I . . . I think due to variety of experiences I have shut myself off as a defence mechanism . . . and its time that I address it. This natural healer whom I consulted also told me that there's a band around my heart and that its time that I address it. I cut myself off from feeling because it's safer. I mean, it's not fair to A and it's also not fair to me. But I'm now still at that place where I don't feel like shit so lets cruise on for now until I'm ready for that.
I: Cruising on? With the relationship with A?
M: Yes, with everything . . . love, trust . . . I struggle with that but I don't want to deal with it now.]

The foregoing excerpts powerfully illustrate women's positionings within contradictory discourses given their investments in these discourses. It also reflects the complex set of connections and disconnections between love and sex as each of the women negotiate the conflict between the longing for love and the notion that love is dangerous in multiple and differing ways.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has focussed on the central discourses of sexuality, which emerged in the focus group discussion and individual interviews. Underpinning many of these discourses was an understanding of men and women as inherently different and "other" to each other. Male sexuality is largely perceived as a biological drive over which men have no control. Men are constructed to be inherently/instinctively unfaithful and always in need of sex which is explained with reference to either the biological determinist framework or to psychologised and sociologised notions of gender identity and ego needs. Women on the other hand are constructed as psychologically and emotionally vulnerable and in need of men's sexual desire, thereby powerfully reproducing the repression and silencing of female sexual desire and the construction of women as passive recipients of men's sexual pursuit and activity.

Furthermore instances where female physical sexual pleasure is openly expressed occurs within the context of the absence of love or emotion, thereby imitating and reproducing the male model of sexuality. In addition, it is noteworthy that these discourses emerged not in the focus group discussion but in the individual interviews which raises important questions for the use of focus group discussions in research on sexuality. This will be further elaborated upon in the concluding chapter.

The central expressed discourses of resistance are the culture and generational discourses which prohibit sexual activity for women outside the confines of marriage. Whilst these discourses are illustrative of shifts towards a more open exploration of female sexual pleasure, they afford little space for resistance to power inequalities inherent in heterosex.

Throughout the focus group discussion, discourses of change and resistance emerged which were mainly predicated on notions of financial and emotional independence from men, which drew strongly on popular psychology and feminist discourses. Although articulations of change were more evident in the individual interviews, they were still marginal. Most salient in this regard, were articulations of female sexuality that actively pursued traditionally masculine roles and subjectivities. Furthermore "change" was most often constructed as a "choice" between positions or as part and parcel of personal development and "growth" – i.e. the logical outcome of a development trajectory – whereby women ultimately reproduced the hegemonic discourses surrounding heterosex and sexuality.

In the group discussion and individual interviews, the topic of HIV/AIDS was frequently directly addressed. Although this represented a shift in focus from participants' experience of and thoughts about heterosex and sexuality per se, these discussions did reveal a distinctive discourse with relation to HIV/AIDS frequently articulated in this study, namely the discourse of the racialised "Other".

In the foregoing analysis, I have tentatively explored the issues of personal histories, investment and intersubjectivity across cases. Through interpretative discourse analysis, I have suggested that a central conflict underpinning the participants' accounts of past relationships with their fathers and present relationships with male partners is that of the longing for love and the fear of love or intimacy (the "love is dangerous" discourse).

The implications, contributions and limitations of these findings will be explored in more detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This study poses the question how discourses of love and relationship impact on women's social construction of their sexuality. At the outset of the thesis and the analysis of the data, I articulated the need to problematise the connections between constructions of female sexuality and intimacy and thereby challenge hypotheses put forward in empirical literature, which has reduced this relationship to one of monolithic essentialism. Secondly, I have voiced the need to explore the experiences and articulations of a particularly neglected group of South African women in South African research on sexuality and safer sex, namely white, (Afrikaner) women. Thirdly, I wanted to stress the agency of women in heterosex and heterosexuality in opposition to many post-structuralist positions that tend to paint a picture of individuals as helpless puppets dancing to the powers of discourse.

As Shefer (1999) points out, in any academic endeavour, it is standard procedure to "conclude", that is to summarise the findings of a study and then reflect on the significance thereof. Within a post-structuralist framework this is of course necessarily an artificial closure as in discourse analytic studies arguments, words, writing and the "making" of meaning are endless, un-ending processes and always partial. What I aim to present, as a conclusion therefore, is perhaps better described as (my) "thoughts" about the articulations offered by the participants in this study and the implications of these for intervention and future research. I also aim to relate the research questions and aims as set out in the foregoing paragraph to the empirical "findings" of this study. At the same time, I remain uncomfortably aware of the fact that in "doing" the analysis, on which this chapter and the "conclusions" it aims to present is based, my role as researcher admittedly imbued me with the power to decide which words to highlight and how to use them in the interests of constructing a coherent thesis. In presenting this "closure" I am reminded of Hall's (1988, cited in Wetherell, 1995) assertions about "identity" that he proposes is as much about closure and difference as it is about change and flux. On the one hand then, "we have to learn to live with ambivalence, with contradictions, with fragmentation" (Wetherell, 1995: 135). On the other hand, in order to take a stand and to attempt to make a difference, "we have to mobilise around some identities and some, rather than other, senses of community" (Wetherell, 1995: 142).

6.2 CENTRAL "FINDINGS"

Whilst acknowledging that the "findings" presented in the following discussion are subjective and partial, I have chosen to present the central findings in relation to findings of other international and local studies of (hetero)sexuality. I will therefore attempt to point out how the findings correlated but also how they differed from other findings and other studies. Following this, I will highlight the contributions they have to offer for practical interventions, including educational programmes and social policy and reflect on the implications for the current debates within feminist and discourse analytic studies on (hetero) sexuality. Finally I will reflect on the limitations of this study.

6.2.1 The masculinity/femininity binarism

As has been pointed out in the foregoing chapter, the majority of discourses on sexuality that emerged in this study were predicated on an understanding of men and women as inherently different and "other" to each other. As studies such as Shefer's (1999) and my own have revealed, the (gender) difference discourse powerfully serves to explain and thereby reproduce the power inequalities in heterosex and the construction of female sexuality more generally.

Throughout the focus group discussion and the individual interviews, participants continually constructed their own sexualities *in direct opposition* to that of men's sexuality, which was repeatedly described as centred purely on physical pleasure and as inherently "restless" (see the metaphor of the hunter, always needing a new challenge or "prey" to pursue and conquer) and instinctively unfaithful.

Although disclosures of casual sexual encounters (particularly in the focus group discussion) were marginal, sexual activity outside of the confines of a committed relationship were most commonly constructed as either predicated on the hope of the encounter leading to a committed relationship or as way of affirming women's social and psychological "worth" (as "normal", healthy and liberated) and as most often occurring after a break-up. In this way, women's sexual activity was constructed not as an act of her own desire, but rather as

motivated by a need for emotional commitment (from men) or as (psychological) reparation for the hurt caused by the ex-partner.

Within a committed relationship, (male) sexual activity was constructed as the "barometer" of the health and very existence of the relationship. Given the entrenchment of men's rampant sexual needs, the notion that men who are not sexually satisfied by their partners seek sex elsewhere (i.e. have affairs) was also frequently expressed. In all instances the imperative on women to be sexually active intersected with the male sex drive discourse to the extent that the ways in which women and men seek physical sexual pleasure went by unacknowledged and thus unchallenged.

The prevalence of the difference discourse in this study is not surprising. International theorists such as Wittig (1989) and Silverman (1992) for example, have argued that to challenge hegemonic heterosexuality, which in turn is predicated on the masculine/feminine binarism, is tantamount to questioning social reality. This is particularly true in the South African context which is (still) deeply heterosexist and homophobic and in which alternative sexualities and sexual activities remain largely unarticulated and marginalised (Morrell, 2001).

6.2.2 The absence of a positive discourse on women's sexuality and sexual pleasure

In this study there is particularly a lack of a positive discourse on women's sexuality, which reflects the findings of other local and international studies (e.g. Holland, Ramazanoglu, Scott, Sharpe & Thompson, 1991; Holland, Ramazanoglu & Thompson, 1996; Hollway, 1995; Kippax, Crawford, Waldby & Benton, 1990; Shefer, 1999; Wood & Foster, 1995). As Hollway (1995: 87) states in this regard:

> There is currently no emancipatory discourse of women's heterosex, which means that it is very difficult to communicate the experience of pleasurable, egalitarian heterosex, both at the level of simply talking about it, and also at a theoretical level of conceptualising women's heterosexual desire as consistent with a feminist politics.

In arguing that experience is mediated by discourse, Hollway (1995: 87) asserts that a feminist discourse on heterosexuality is needed within which women's experiences "from the

eroticisation of power difference (as defined by radical feminism) to the experience of equality and sexual pleasure at the same time".

As Shefer (1999) points out, a positive discourse of women's sexuality and desires is not the same as the permissive discourse. She argues that the permissive discourse may ironically have added to women's lack of agency in heterosex, by placing an imperative on women to be sexually active "without a consideration of the power differences and double standards in the construction of masculinity and femininity" (Shefer, 1999, p. 327).

The foregoing "finding" in Shefer's (1999) study is also reflected in the present study. Particularly in the focus group discussion, women's sexual pleasure and desires were often silenced. As has been noted in Chapter 5, whilst articulations of sexual pleasure were more pronounced in the individual interviews, "sexual pleasure" was often predicated on the absence of love or commitment. I have furthermore argued that this construction of *sex for the sake of it*, in many ways reflects what Holland, Ramazanoglu, Scott, Sharpe and Thompson (1991:12) refer to as a "male model of sexual empowerment". Although this model may be attractive to young woman who are trying to resist the passive model of female sexuality, this discourse ultimately reproduces the male defined constructions of heterosex and as such, neither acknowledges, nor successfully resists, male power. At the same time, the imperative for women to be sexually active emerged in the focus group discussion as alternatively signifying successful femininity and mature female sexuality whilst women's lack of power and agency in heterosex went by unchallenged.

6.2.3 The "culture" and generational discourses

The culture discourse has been highlighted in other local discourse analytic studies of (hetero)sexuality, particularly those of Strebel (1993) and Shefer (1999). In the present study, the culture discourse emerged as a central discourse which intersected with other discourses and was "utilised" in two ways: Firstly it emerged as a central explanatory discourse of male dominance in patriarchal South African (and particularly Afrikaner) culture, thereby ironically reproducing and endorsing the power inequalities in heterosex and heterosexual relationships. Secondly, it emerged as a central explanatory discourse for the women's sexual activity articulated in this study as resistance to the cultural, religious and generational moral impingements on women's "free" sexual expression. Although this was often couched in

liberatory terminology, this particular utilisation of this discourse was seen on closer inspection to be deeply problematic in terms of women's agency in heterosex and heterosexual relationships.

The emergence of the "culture" discourse constitutes an important difference to the "findings" of discourse analytic studies in "First World" countries in which discourses of culture do not emerge. One explanation for this is that historically, particularly in this country, discourses of gender inequality have taken a second place to the political and intellectual struggle around apartheid and issues related to ethnic difference and poverty (Levett, Kottler, Burman & Parker: 1997). Seen from this perspective, patriarchal culture is (still) deeply embedded in South African communities and cuts across class and race (Shefer, 1999). In addition, the widespread emphasis on cultural identity in the current South African political climate also needs to be taken into consideration. This is particularly true for Afrikaners because, as Du Pisanie (2001) points out, whilst Afrikaners in post-apartheid South Africa have lost the political and economic support necessary to uphold their former heterosexist, patriarchal cultural identity, Afrikaner nationalism has not disappeared. Du Pisanie (2001) speaks of the emergence of a "new" Afrikaner identity that finds it difficult to submit to authority and discipline and desires to break free of existing stereotypes about the Afrikaner. At the same time, this identity, whilst seemingly challenging the traditional Afrikaner identity, is still deeply embedded in notions of exclusivity and thus reinforces the puritan (racist) ideology upon which it is predicated. In reflecting upon the findings of my study, I furthermore propose that Afrikaners present struggle to mobilise around a new cultural identity also successfully silences issues of gender.

In the present study, as in discourse analytic studies of Shefer (1999) and Miles (1992), there appeared to be more adherence to traditional versions of masculinity and femininity. Although recipients in the present study drew on feminist discourses which advocate women's financial independence and on "discourses of assertiveness from human relations" (Miles, 1992: 24) discourses of women's empowerment and agency in their *sexual* identities and experiences did not emerge. This powerfully contradicts the findings of local studies which have suggested that the changing social conditions are facilitating new and empowering identities for women in the domestic and sexual spheres of their lives (e.g. Campbell, 1993).

The strong resistance to the culture and generational discourses that emerged in this study often interlinked with the permissive discourse, which pressurises "women to be sexually active without consideration of power differences and double standards in the construction of masculinity and femininity" (Shefer, 1999, p. 327).

The foregoing analysis (see Chapter 5) suggests that white Afrikaner women and men may be particularly invested in the male sex drive discourse which constructs male sexual desire as instinctual, spontaneous and irresistible and constructs women as the objects of such desire. The notion underlying the discourse of "culture" as it emerged in this study is that traditional Afrikaner culture is more prescriptive, rigid and moralistic in respect of sexual activity for women than other cultures. Although, from a postmodernist understanding of the fluid and shifting nature of the construct "culture", this notion is certainly contestable, it did operate as an important explanatory discourse for women's investment in both the male sex drive discourse (which constructs men's sexual desire as instinctual, uncontrollable and natural and constructs women as the objects of such desire, thereby affirming her femininity) and the permissive discourse which pressurises women to respond to men's desire through sexual activity which affirms her sexual maturity.

In her compelling analysis of Afrikaner nationalism and popular Afrikaans literature for young boys and girls published between 1941 and 1971, Du Plessis (2002) argues that popular Afrikaans children's literature played a significant role in the construction of Afrikaner identity and the dissemination of the ideologies of Afrikaner nationalism. She refers to "the discourse on the self as danger to the self" (Du Plessis, 2002: 2) with regard to body and sexuality as central to both popular Afrikaans literature and Afrikaner nationalism. As "remedy" to that danger, the notion of discipline, in particular self-discipline and self-control, was proposed by both Afrikaner nationalism and popular Afrikaans literature published from 1941 to 1971, which in turn "fed into the development of an Afrikaner identity, which Hyslop describes as comprising of a non-reflexive submission to authority" (Hyslop, 2000, in Du Plessis, 2002: 35). I would suggest that earlier exposure to these strict cultural impingements on sexuality offers a possible explanation for participants' strong investment in both the male sex drive discourse and the permissive discourse which pressurises women to be sexually active in response to men's sexual needs. It seems that for the women participating in the study, the very fact that they were engaging sex outside of marriage constituted the sum of their resistance and challenge to regulating discourses on

sexuality to which they were exposed culturally, whilst power inequalities in heterosexual practice and their own sexual identity more generally, were less acknowledged.

In Chapter 5, I have suggested that investment in the male sex drive discourse, in turn, makes the practice of safer sex difficult as safer sex unavoidably introduces an aspect of premeditation into the sexual encounter. In addition, the psychologisation of women's desire as it emerged in this study, predicated on the (psychological) "need to be desired" which in turn is closely interlinked with body image discourses and the prescriptive discourse of the ideal female beauty, further operate to entrench the imperative for women to be sexually active without taking into account the power inequalities inherent in constructions of masculinity and femininity. As such, the women participating in this study are afforded little space to both acknowledge and challenge male power in heterosex as is evident throughout the focus group discussion and individual interviews

This similarly places important question marks over prevention campaigns' urgent insistence on the prophylactic properties of chastity, fidelity and marriage as ways of preventing the spread of the HI virus.

6.2.4 The separation of sex and love

As I have indicated in Chapter 5 of this thesis, discourses that separated love and sex for women emerged particularly strongly in the individual interviews with participants. In these discourses, sexual pleasure was predicated on the absence of love or commitment and thus mirrored the "male model of sexual empowerment" (Holland, Ramazanoglu, Scott, Sharpe and Thompson, 1991:12). Although the emergence of these discourses are significant in that they acknowledge female sexual desire and centralise female sexual pleasure and as such constitute important moments of resistance, they ultimately afford women little opportunity to address or even acknowledge the power inequalities inherent in heterosex and thus offer women no space for negotiation of safer sex or a more egalitarian sexual identity.

Despite this, one could argue that this discourse is the only one available to women who wish to resist the dominant discourses of women's passivity and disempowerment in heterosex. It is therefore striking that this discourse emerged not in the focus group discussion but in the individual interviews. I would argue that this is illustrative of the fact that women regulate

their sexuality among themselves and this marginal discourse was more freely expressed in a one-on one situation. It also calls into question the exclusive use of focus group discussions in discourse analytic work on sexuality. More importantly however, the emergence of this discourse problematises the essentialist conflations of love and sex for women and suggests that the connections and disconnections of love and sex are far more complex than suggested in mainstream academic literature. The findings in this study would suggest that it is indeed part and parcel of an intricate web of discourses such as race, age, culture and gender, which interlink and intersect and together reproduce and maintain the construction of female sexuality as responsive to male sexual needs.

6.2.5 The "longing for love" vs. "love is dangerous" discourses

In Chapter Five, I have noted that almost all of the women participating in this study described their fathers as emotionally distant and reported experiences of "sex talks" with fathers, which centred on articulations such as "be careful, because all boys are bastards". Thus it seems that the notion expressed by adult men to their daughters is that men only want sex from women, thereby reproducing the hegemonic male sex drive discourse and hence explaining (at least in part) the participants' strong investment in this discourse.

In the previous chapter, I also suggested that these early childhood experiences of their fathers, gave rise to a central psychic conflict which can be seen to underpin most of the women's accounts of their past and present relationships with men, namely the longing for love vs. the fear of love. I also consider this to be an important motivating factor in the women's strong investment in positioning themselves in the dominant male sexual discourse (i.e. sex in the absence of love) and the dominant female sexual discourse (sex for the sake of love) which both equally reproduce women's disempowerment in heterosex.

6.2.6 Discourses of the "Other" in relation to HIV/AIDS

As has been pointed out previously, the topic of HIV/AIDS was frequently directly addressed, particularly in the focus group discussion. Although this can be seen to be divergent from the topic of sexuality and its links with love and relationships, these

discussions gave rise to another set of discourses which I considered valuable in the context of this study.

The stigmatisation of the "Other" in relation to HIV/AIDS has been well documented (e.g. Sontag, 1990; Kopelman, 2002). In this study this stigmatisation also took on racial overtones as HIV/AIDS was stigmatised to be a "Black" disease. This finding correlates with the findings of other local studies in which the discourse of HIV/AIDS as an "African problem" emerged, representing the politicisation of the disease (e.g. Ashforth, 2001; Le Clezio, 2003; Seidel, 1993).

This has important implications for South African media campaigns aimed largely at black people. In a recent AIDS awareness advertisement on SABC 2 for example, a young black women discloses her HIV status, surrounded by the faces of other black women and black children. Although media campaigns such as these are important and valuable, they also effectively silence the voices of white women and (heterosexual) men living with HIV, and function to reproduce the racial stigmatisation surrounding HIV/AIDS in South Africa.

6.3 IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

The first aim of this study was to problematise the essentialist conflation of love and sex for women. The foregoing analysis illustrates that the connections (and dis-connections) between love/intimacy and sex for the women who participated in this study were indeed complex and contradictory and intersected with discourses of race, age and culture. In addition, women's desire was constructed as "the need to desired" which intersected with body image discourses and the prescriptive discourse of the ideal female beauty. Together these discourses operate to entrench the imperative for women to be sexually active and ironically reconstruct traditional constructions of masculine and feminine identities, ultimately reproducing gender inequality. This places important question marks over prevention campaigns' urgent insistence on the prophylactic properties of chastity, fidelity and marriage as ways of preventing the spread of the HI virus.

As expected, discourses of love and relationships were utilised as strong motivating forces for women's sexual activity. Participants' accounts of their relationship histories with emotionally distant fathers helped me to understand the force and rigidity with which these

discourses are reproduced. Contrary to this, love/relationships were also perceived by many women as potentially dangerous, which in turn led to positioning within male defined sexuality (i.e. sexual activity in the absence of love/relationships). I would suggest that participants' accounts of intimate sex talks with their fathers, which were largely informed by the male sex drive discourse, goes some way in explaining the investment in this discourse. One could furthermore hypothesise that these women were invested in simultaneously positioning themselves within these contradictory discourses, given the pay-offs they provide. The implications for sex education (in schools and at home) is also noteworthy. As many local and international studies have intimated, a "new language" on female sexuality is needed that celebrates, legitimates and acknowledges women's sexual agency and physical sexual pleasure without merely imitating and thereby reproducing male defined constructions of heterosex (e.g. Holland, Ramazonoglu, Sharpe & Thompson, 1992; Hollway, 1984; Lesch, 2000; Shefer, 1999). At the same time, the social imperative on men to be biologically and psychologically driven by their "uncontrollable sexual urges" in the absence of love or commitment need to be addressed. As long as men and women continue to construct male sexuality as "biological" and instinctual and as centred purely on physical pleasure, hegemonic discourses of women's vulnerability and passivity in heterosex and in heterosexual relationships as well as marginal discourses in which women position themselves in the male model of sexual power will be maintained and reproduced. In both instances women are afforded little or no power or agency.

A second aim of the study was to explore the possibilities of women's agency in heterosex. Although women's pursuit of male defined sexuality was criticised as reproducing gender inequality, it also opened up important moments of resistance to hegemonic discourses which conflate love and sexuality for women. As Butler (1990) asserts, it is only with the frameworks of language that are available to women that they can resist and challenge the status quo. The fact that articulations of sex in the absence of love occurred not in the focus group discussion but in the individual interviews also has methodological implications. Read together with the fact that female sexual desire was silenced and obscured in the focus group discussion, methodology which utilises both focus group discussions and individual interviews may be important in generating new data and assist in pointing towards possibilities of change and agency for women in heterosex.

The third aim of the study was to give voice to a hitherto largely under-researched category of women in the South African research on sexuality and HIV/AIDS. This study suggests that white Afrikaner women are engaging in penetrative sex, in and out of relationships and almost exclusively without the use of condoms. Furthermore only one participant was aware of her HIV status.

Throughout the focus group discussion and the individual interviews, the race discourse frequently emerged and operated to mediate hegemonic gendered discourses on sexuality. Women who engaged in heterosex across the racial divide, articulated these experiences as empowering and centred on sex for the sake of it precisely *because* it occurred in the absence of love or the possibility of a relationship, highlighting the way in which race continues to mediate choices of long term partners. Despite this, the participants' strong investment in the male sex drive discourse offered them little or no space for negotiation of their own physical sexual pleasure or safer sex.

Throughout this study, the issue of age has been referred to merely in passing. From the foregoing analysis discussed in Chapter 5 however, it is clear that age, as does race, operates to maintain, justify and reproduce hegemonic (gendered) discourses on sexuality. In his comparative study of the sexual behaviour of thirty-something and twenty-something women and men in the United States in the early 1990s, Montefiore (1993) found that the biggest difference in sexual practices between the twenties and thirties lay in the behaviour of the women, not the men. Partly a result of the sexual revolution, and partly motivated by what the author refers to as the participants fear of (old) age, the thirty-something women who participated in Montefiore's study were seen to engage in condomless sex far more frequently than their younger counterparts, "oblivious to the danger of HIV/AIDS" (Montefiore, 1993: 67). Montefiore's study (as does the present study) raises important questions concerning South African HIV/AIDS awareness and education campaigns aimed almost exclusively at the youth with little or no focus on older and particularly older *white* women and men.

6.4 LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHUR RESEARCH

The first important limitation of this study is that it expresses the feelings and thoughts of men only via the reports of women in the group discussion and individual interviews. This

constitutes a profound silence in the literature on sexuality and on AIDS and HIV prevention in general and serves as a clear pointer for future research.

Secondly, as Shefer (1999: 349) points out, there is very little South African research "which documents and analyses those bodies and subjectivities which resist, subvert and destabilise and transgress the rigid normative injunctions of the dominant sexual/gender disorder". She suggests that the narratives of gay, lesbian, intersexual, transgendered and transsexual people may be valuable in both challenging the dominant discourses and engender new discourses on sexualities and subjectivities. In articulating only the experiences of heterosexual women, this study has missed important opportunities for such challenges to dominant discourses on sexuality. I am of the opinion that discussion between heterosexual, lesbian, gay and bisexual women and men could provide rich and valuable data in these respects.

A third central limitation of the study is a detailed psychoanalytic account of the psychic processes by way of which participants position themselves in relation to a particular discourse or resist particular discourses. Moreover, the study does not answer questions about why participants located themselves within certain discourses and not others.

6.5 FINAL THOUHTS

Although my thesis will soon fall silent, I am struck by the fact that the stories – the living voices of the women who participated in this study – will continue beyond it.

Furthermore, the "findings" as presented in the foregoing chapter left me feeling both overwhelmed (and admittedly somewhat depressed) at the enormity of the challenge that lies ahead, as well as excited at the possibilities of change and resistance offered by the contradictions and gaps in the discourses articulated by the women in this study. I remain hopeful that their participation in this study did bring about some shifts, no matter how small, in these women's lives. At the same time, I believe that reading the findings of this thesis together with the findings of other South African discourse analytic studies will engender more dynamic and nuanced research in the area of sexuality within the South African context.

REFERENCES

Abdool Karim, S. S., Abdool Karim, Q., Preston-Whyte, E. & Sankar, N. (1992a). Reasons for lack of condom use among high school students. *South African Medical Journal*, 82, 107 – 110.

Adool Karim, Q., Preston-Whyte, E. & Abdool Karim, S. S. (1992b). Teenagers seeking condoms at family planning services: Part I. A user's perspective. *South African Medical Journal,* 82, 356-359.

Abdool Karim, Q., Abdool Karim & Preston-Whyte, E. (1992c). Teenagers seeking condoms at family planning services: Part II. A provider's perspective. *South African Medical Journal*, 82, 360-362.

Akande, A. (1994). AIDS-related beliefs and behaviours of students: evidence from two countries (Zimbabwe and Nigeria). *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 4, 285-303.

Anderson, W. (1995). What's going on here? In W. Anderson (Ed.), *The Fontana postmodernism reader* (pp. 1 – 17). London: Fontana Press.

Ashforth, A. (2001). *AIDS, witchcraft and the problem of public power in post-apartheid South Africa*. Unpublished.

Athey, J. L. (1991). HIV infection and homeless adolescents. *Child Welfare*, 70 (5), 517 – 528.

Atkinson, J. M. & Heritage, J. C. (Eds.). (1984). *Structures of social action: Studies in conversation analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bailey, J. M., Gaulin, S., Agyei, Y., & Glaudue, B. A. (1994). Effects of gender and sexual orientation on evolutionarily relevant aspects of human mating psychology. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 66, 1081 – 1093.

Baldwin, J. D. & Baldwin, J. I. (1997). Gender differences in sexual interest. *Archives of Sexual Behaviour*, 26 (2), 181 – 210.

Banister, P., Burman, E., Parker, I., Taylor, M. & Tindall, C. (1994). *Qualitative methods in psychology: A research guide*. Buchingham: Open University Press.

Barrett, M. & Phillips, A. (1992). Introduction. In M. Barrett & A. Phillips (Eds.), *Destabilising theory: Contemporary feminist debates* (pp. 1 – 9). Cambridge: Polity Press/Blackwell Publishers.

Baumeister, R. F. (1982). A self-presentational view of social phenomena. *Psychological Bulletin*, 91, 3 – 26.

Baumeister, R. F. (2000). Gender differences in erotic plasticity: The female sex drive as socially flexible and responsive. *Psychological Bulletin*, 126, 347 – 374.

Barthes, R. (1977). The death of the author. In S. Heath (Ed. and Trans.) *Image, music, text.* New York: Hill.

Belenky, M. F., Clinchy, B. M., Goldberger, N. R. & Tarule, J. M. (1986). *Women's ways of knowing: The development of self, voice and mind.* New York: Basic.

Berger, J. (1972). *Ways of seeing.* Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Blumberg, J. & Soal, J. (1997). Let's talk about sex: Liberation and regulation in discourses of bisexuality. In A. Levett, A. Kottler, E. Burman & I. Parker (Eds.), *Culture, power and difference: Discourse analysis in South Africa* (pp. 83 – 95). Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

Bohan, J. S. (1993). Regarding gender: Essentialism, constructionism and feminist psychology. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 17, 5 – 21.

Bowie, C. & Ford, N. (1989). Sexual behaviour of young people and the risk of HIV infection. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 43, 61 – 65.

Braidotti, R. (1994). *Nomadic subjects: Embodiment and sexual difference in contemporary feminist theory.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Burman, E. (1991). What discourse is not. *Philosophical Psychology*, 4 (3), 325 – 342.

Burman, E. & Parker, I. (1993). Introduction. In E. Burman & I. Parker (Eds.), *Discourse analytic research: Repertoires and reading of texts in action* (pp. 1 – 13). London: Routledge.

Burman, E. (1994). Feminist research. In P. Banister, E. Burman, I. Parker, M. Taylor & C. Tindall (Eds.), *Qualitative methods in psychology: A research guide* (pp. 121 – 141). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Burman, E. (1996). Introduction: Contexts, contests and interventions. In E. Burman, P. Alldred, C. Bowley, B. Goldberg, C. Heenan, D. Marks, J. Marshall, K. Taylor, R. Ullah & S. Warner. *Challenging women: Psychology's exclusion, feminist possibilities* (pp. 1 – 18). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Butler, J. (1990). *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity.* New York: Routledge.

Butler, J. (1993). *Bodies that matter: On the discursive limits of "sex".* New York: Routledge.

Butler, J. (1997). *The psychic life of power.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Cairns, K. (1990). The greening of sexuality and intimacy. *Scieccan Journal*, 25 (2), 1 – 10.

Cameron, D. (1998). Gender and language gender, language, and discourse: A review essay. *Signs*, 23 (4), 945 – 967.

Campbell, C. (1993). Identity and difference. *Agenda*, 19, 45 – 63.

Campbell, C. & Williams, B. (1998). Evaluating HIV prevention programmes: Conceptual challenges. *Psychology in Society*, 24, 57 – 68.

Chance, P. (1988). The trouble with love: head over heels is an uncomfortable position for human beings. *Psychology Today*, 22 (2), 22 – 24.

Christopher, E. (1982). Psychosexual medicine in a mixed race community. *British Journal of Family Planning*, 7, 119 – 121.

Christopher, E. (1989). *Sexuality and birth control in community work*. London: Tavistock.

Collins, P. H. (1990). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and politics of empowerment*. Boston: Unwin Hyman.

Connelly, M. & MacLeod, C. (2003). Waging war: Discourse of HIV/AIDS in South African media. *African Journal of AIDS Research*, 2 (1), 63 – 74.

Coveney, L., Jackson, M., Jeffreys, S., Jaye, L. & Mahoney, P. (1984). *The sexuality papers: Male sexuality and the control of women*. London: Hutchinson.

Coward, R. (1984). *Female desire: Women's sexuality today*. London: Paladin.

Crawford, M. (1995). *Talking difference*. London: Sage.

Daniluk, J. C. (1993). The meaning and experience of female sexuality. A phenomenological analysis. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 17, 53 – 69.

Danziger, K. (1997). The varieties of social construction. *Theory & Psychology*, 7 (3), 399 – 416.

DeLamater, J. (1987). Gender differences in sexual scenarios. In K. Kelly (Ed), *Females, males and sexuality: Theories and research* (pp. 127 – 129). Albany: Sate University of New York Press.

De la Rey, C. (1997). On political activism and discourse analysis in South Africa. In A. Levett, A. Kottler, E. Burman & I. Parker (Eds.), *Culture, power and difference: Discourse analysis in South Africa* (pp. 189 – 197). Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

Delphy, C. (1984). *Close to home: A material analysis of women's oppression*. London: Hutchinson.

Du Pisanie, K. (2001). Puritanism transformed: Afrikaner masculinities in the apartheid and post-apartheid period. In R. Morrell (Ed.), *Changing men in Southern Africa*. (pp. 157 – 176). Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press.

Du Plessis, I. (2002, October 15). *The body in fiction: Afrikaner Nationalism and popular children's literature in the 1940's*. Sex and The Body Seminar Series, conducted by the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research in collaboration with the Graduate School for the Humanities and the School of Arts, Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand.

Dworkin, A. (1987). *Intercourse*. London: Arrow Books.

Echols, A. (1984). The taming of the Id: Feminist Sexual Politics, 1968 – 83. In C. S. Vance (Ed.). *Pleasure and danger: Exploring female sexuality* (pp. 50 – 72). Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Espin, O. M. (1984). Cultural and historical influences on sexuality in Hispanic/Latin women: Implications fro psychotherapy. In C. S. Vance (Ed.), *Pleasure and danger: Exploring female sexuality* (pp. 149 – 164). Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Evans, M. (1999). "Falling in love with love is falling for make believe": Ideologies of romance in Post-Enlightenment culture. In M. Featherstone (Ed.), *Love and eroticism* (pp. 265 – 276). London: Sage.

Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language*. London: Longman.

Faith, K. (1994). Resistance: Lessons from Foucault and feminism. In H. Radtke & H. Stam. (Eds.), *Power/Gender* (pp. 36 – 66). London: Sage.

Featherstone, M. (1999). Love and eroticism: An introduction. In M. Featherstone (Ed.), *Love and eroticism* (pp. 1 – 18). London: Sage.

Feminist Review (Ed.). (1987). *Sexuality: A reader*. London: Virago Press.

Few, C. (1997). The politics of sex research and constructions of female sexuality: What relevance to sexual health work with young women? *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 25 (3), 615 – 625.

Flax, J. (1990a). Postmodernism and gender relations in feminist theory. In L. J. Nicholson (Ed.), *Feminism/Postmodernism* (pp. 39 – 62). New York and London: Routledge.

Flax, J. (1990b). Thinking fragments: Psychoanalysis, feminism and postmodernism in the contemporary West. Berkeley and Los Angeles, California: University of California Press.

Fontana, A. & Frey, J. H. (1994). Interviewing: The art of science. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 361 – 376). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Foster, D. (1999). Racism, Marxism, psychology. *Theory and Psychology*, 9 (3), 331 – 352.

Foucault, M. (1980a). *The history of sexuality, Volume 1: An introduction*. Translated by Robert Hurley. London: Penguin Books.

Foucault, M. (1980b). *Power/Knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings 1972 – 1977*. In C. Gordon (Ed.). New York: Pantheon.

Frosh, S. 1987. The politics of psychoanalysis: An introduction to Freudian and post-Freudian theory. London: Macmillan.

Fuss, D. 1989. *Essentially speaking: Feminism, nature and difference*. New York: Routledge.

Gallop, J. (1982). *Feminism and psychoanalysis: The daughter's seduction.* London: Macmillan.

Garnets, L. D. & Peplau, L. A. (2000). Understanding women's sexualities and sexual orientations. An introduction. *Journal of Social Issues*, 56 (2), 181 – 197.

Gavey, N. (1993). Technologies and effects of heterosexual coercion. In S. Wilkinson & C. Kitzinger (Eds.), *Heterosexuality: A feminism & psychology reader* (pp. 93 – 119). London: Sage.

Gavey, N. (1997). Feminist post-structuralism and discourse analysis. In M. Gergen & S. Davies. (Ed.). *Towards a new psychology of gender: A reader* (pp. 49 – 64). New York: Routledge.

Gergen, K. J. (1985). The social constructivist movement in modern psychology. *American Psychologist*, 40, 266 – 275.

Gergen, K. J. 1997. The place of the psyche in a constructed world. *Theory and Psychology*, 7 (1), 723 – 746.

Gilbert, G. N. (1980). Being interviewed: A role analysis. *Social Science Information*, 19, 227 – 236.

Gilfoyle, J., Wilson, J. & Brown. (1993). Sex, organs and audiotape: A discourse analytic approach to talking about heterosexual sex and relationships. In S. Wilkinson & C. Kitzinger (Eds.), *Heterosexuality. A Feminism and psychology reader* (pp. 181 – 202). London: Sage.

Gill, R. (1995). Relativism, reflexivity and politics: Interrogating discourse analysis from a feminist perspective. In S. Wilkinson & C. Kitzinger (Eds.). *Feminism and discourse:* Psychological perspectives. London: Sage.

Gough, B. (1998). Men and the discursive reproduction of sexism: Repertoires of difference and equality. *Feminism and Psychology*, 8 (1), 25 – 49.

Greer, S. (1997). Nietzsche and social construction. *Theory and Psychology*, 7 (10, 83 – 100.

Grosz, E. (1990). *Jacques Lacan: A feminist introduction.* London: Routledge.

Guggino, J. M. (1997). Gender differences in affective reactions to first coitus. *Journal of Adolescence*, 20 (2), 189 – 201.

Hartsock, N. C. M. (1985). Money, sex and power: Towards a feminist historical materialism. Boston: Northeastern University Press.

Hartsock, N. C. M. (1990). Foucault on power: A theory for women? In L. J. Nicholson (Ed.), *Feminism/Postmodernism* (pp. 157 – 175). New York and London: Routledge.

Hawkins, M. J., Gray, C. & Hawkins, W. E. (1995). Gender differences of reported safer sex behaviours within a random sample of college students. *Psychological reports*, 77 (3), 963 – 969.

Hayim, I. (2000). *The deconstruction of homosexual identity: A Foucauldian analysis.* Unpublished Masters thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

Hekman, S. (1995). *Moral voices, moral selves: Carol Gilligan and feminist moral theory.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Henriques J., Hollway W., Urwin C., Venn C. & Walkerdine, V. (Eds.). (1984a). *Changing the Subject: Psychology, Social Regulation and Subjectivity.* London: Routledge.

Henriques, J., Hollway, W., Urwin C., Venn, C. & Walkerdine, V. (1984b). Introduction to Section 2: Constructing the subject. In J. Henriques, W. Hollway, C. Urwin, C. Venn & V. Walkerdine (Eds.), *Changing the Subject: Psychology, Social Regulation and Subjectivity* (pp. 91 – 118). London: Routledge.

Hermans, H. J. M. & Kempen, H. J. G. (1993). *The dialogical self: Meaning as movement.* California: Academic Press.

Hill, C. A. (1997). The distinctiveness of sexual motives in relation to sexual desire and desirable partner attributes. *The journal of sex research*, 24 (2), 139 – 154.

Holland, J., Ramazanoglu, C., Scott, S., Sharpe, S. & Thompson, R. (1991). *Pressure, resistance, empowerment: young women and the negotiation of safer sex.* Women Risk and AIDS Project (WRAP). Paper 6. London: Tufnell Press.

Holland, J., Ramazanoglu, C., Scott, S., Sharpe, S. & Thompson, R. (1990). Sex, gender and power: Young women's sexuality in the shadow of AIDS. *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 12 (3), 336 – 350.

Hollway, W. (1984). Gender differences and the production of subjectivity. In J. Henriques, W. Hollway, C. Urwin, C. Venn & V. Walkerdine (Eds.), *Changing the subject: psychology, social regulation and subjectivity* (pp. 227 – 263). London: Routledge.

Hollway W. (1989). *Subjectivity and method in psychology: Gender, meaning and science.* London: Sage.

Hollway, W. (1995). Feminist discourses and women's heterosexual desire. In S. Wilkinson & C. Kitzinger (Eds.), *Feminism and discourse. Psychological perspectives* (pp. 86 – 105). London: Sage.

Hollway, W. (1996). Recognition and heterosexual desire. In D. Richardson (Ed.), *Theorising heterosexuality* (pp. 91 – 108). Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

hooks, b. (1990). *Yearning, race, gender and cultural politics.* Toronto: Between the Lines.

Human Studies Research Council. (2002). *Full study: Nelson Mandela HSRC study of HIV/AIDS.* Cape Town: HSRC Publishers.

Hunter, A. (1993). Same door, different closet: A heterosexual sissy's coming-out party. In S. Wilkinson & C. Kitzinger (Eds.), *Heterosexuality: A feminism & psychology reader* (pp. 150 – 168). London: Sage.

Hutcheon, L. (1989). The politics of postmodernism. London, New York: Routledge.

Hyde, J. S. & Linn, M. C. (1986). *The psychology of gender: Advances through meta-analysis*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

Hynie, M., Lydon, J. E. & Taradash, A. (1997). Commitment, intimacy, and women's perceptions of premarital sex and contraceptive readiness. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 21, 447 – 464.

Illouz, E. (1999). The lost innocence of love: Romance as a postmodern condition. In M. Featherstone (Ed.), *Love and eroticism* (pp. 161 – 186). London: Sage.

Irigaray, L. (1996). This sex which is not one. In S. Jackson & S. Scott (Eds.), *Feminism and sexuality: A reader*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Jackson, S. & Scott, S. (1996). Sexual skirmishes and feminist factions: Twenty-five years of debate on women and sexuality. In S. Jackson & S. Scott (Eds.), *Feminism and sexuality: A reader*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Jeffreys, S. (1996). Heterosexuality and the desire for gender. In D. Richardson (Ed.), *Theorising heterosexuality* (pp. 75 – 90). Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Jolley, J. & Mitchell, M. G. (1992). *Research design explained.* (2nd Ed). For Worth: Harcourt Brace. Jovanovich College Publishers.

King, D. (1990). Multiple jeopardy, multiple consciousness: The context of a black feminist ideology. In M. Malson, E. Mudimbe-Boyi, J. O'Barr & M. Wyer (Eds.), *Black women in America: Social science perspectives* (pp. 265 – 295). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kippax, S., Crawford, J., Waldby, C. & Benton, P. (1990). Women negotiating heterosex: Implications for AIDS prevention. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 13 (6), 533 – 542.

Kitzinger, C. & Wilkinson, S. (1993). Theorising heterosexuality. In S. Wilkinson & C. Kitzinger (Eds.), *Heterosexuality: A feminism and psychology reader* (pp. 1 – 32). London: Sage.

Kopelman, L. M. (2002). If HIV/AIDS is punishment, who is bad? *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy*, 27 (2), 231 – 243.

Lacan, J. *Speech and language in psychoanalysis* (Trans. A. Wilden). (1968). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Leary, M. R. (1993). The interplay of private self-processes and interpersonal factors in self-presentation. In J. Suls (Ed), *Psychological perspectives on the self* (Vol. 4, pp. 127 – 155). Hillsdale: Erlbaum.

Leary, M. R., Tchividjian, L. R. & Kraxberger, B. E. (1994). Self-presentation can be hazardous to your health: Impression management and health risk. *Health Psychology*, 13, 461 – 470.

Le Clezio, N. (2003). *"Like the people who have AIDS are different you know?": Narratives of HIV and risk told by young, white heterosexual South African men.* Unpublished Honours project. Cape Town: University of the Western Cape.

Lees, S. (1986). *Losing out: Sexuality and adolescent girls.* London: Hutchinson.

Leigh, B. (1989). Reasons for having and avoiding sex: gender, sexual orientation, and relationship to sexual behaviour. *The Journal of Sex Research*, 26 (2), 199 – 210.

Lesch, E. (2000). *Female adolescent sexuality in a coloured community.* Unpublished Doctoral thesis. Cape Town: University of Stellenbosch.

Levett, A., Kottler, A., Walaza, N., Mabena, P., Leon, N. & Ngqakayi-Motaung, N. (1997). Pieces of mind: Traumatic effects of child sexual abuse among black South African women. In A. Levett, A. Kottler, E. Burman & I. Parker. *Culture, power and difference: Discourse analysis in South Africa* (pp. 125 – 138). Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

Livermore, B. (1993). The lessons of love. *Psychology Today*, 26 (2), 30 – 40.

Lloyd, S. A. (2000). Intimate violence. *National Forum*, 80 (4), 19 – 26.

McKinnon, C. A. (1989). *Toward a feminist theory of the state*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.

McGreal, C. (2002). Thabo Mbeki's catastrophe. *Prospect*, March: 42 – 47.

McNay, L. (1992). *Foucault and feminism: Power, gender and the self.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Miles, L. (1992). Women, AIDS, power and heterosexual negotiation: A discourse analysis. *Agenda*, 15, 14 – 27.

Mitchell, J. (1974). *Psychoanalysis and feminism.* Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Mohanty, C.T. (1994). Feminist encounters: Locating the politics of experience. In M. Barrett & A. Phillips (Eds.), *Destabilising theory: Contemporary feminist debates* (pp. 74 – 92). Cambridge: Polity Press/Blackwell Publishers.

Montefiore, S. S. (1993). Let the games begin: Sex and the not-thirtysomethings. *Psychology Today*, 26 (2), 66 – 72.

Morrell, R. (2001). The times of change: Men and masculinity in South Africa. In R. Morrell (Ed.), *Changing men in South Africa* (pp. 3 –33). Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press.

Muehlenhard, C. L. & Hollabaugh, L. C. (1988). Do women sometimes say no when they mean yes? The prevalence and correlates of women's token resistance to sex. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 54 (5), 872 –879.

Muehlenhard, C. L. & McCoy, M. L. (1991). Double standard/Double bind. The sexual double standard and women's communication about sex. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 15, 447 – 461.

Naus, P. J. (1987). Sexuality now and in the future. *Sieccan Journal*, 2 (2), 35 – 44.
Nicholson, L. J. (1990). Introduction. In L. J. Nicholson (Ed.), *Feminism/Postmodernism* (pp. 1 – 16). New York and London: Routledge.

Otis, J., Levy, J., Samson, J, Pilote, F., Fugere, A. (1997). Gender differences in sexuality and interpersonal power relations among French-speaking young adults from Quebec. A province-wide study. *The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*, 6 (1), 17 – 29.

Parker, I. (1992). *Discourse dynamics: Critical analysis for social and individual psychology*. London: Routledge.

Parry, C. D. H. & Abdool-Karim, Q. (2000). Substance abuse and HIV/AIDS in South Africa. In NIDA (Eds.). *Proceedings of 2nd Global Research Network Meeting on HIV Prevention Drug-using Populations*, Atlanta, 1999 (pp. 81 – 88). Washington, D. C: US Department of Health & Human Services.

Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Newsbury Park: Sage.

Patton, W. & Mannison, M. (1998). Beyond learning to endure: Women's acknowledgement of coercive sexuality. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 21 (1), 31 – 40.

Peplau, L. A. & Garnets, L. D. (2000). A new paradigm for understanding women's sexuality and sexual orientation. *Journal of Social Issues*, 56 (2), 329 – 354.

Phillips, D. A. (2001). Methodology for social accountability: multiple methods and feminist, poststructural, psychoanalytic discourse analysis. *Advances in Nursing Science*, 23 (4), 49 – 66.

Potgieter, C. (1997). Black, South African, lesbian: Discourses of invisible lives. Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town.

Potter, J. & Wetherell, M. (1987). *Discourse and social psychology: Beyond attitudes and behaviour*. London: Sage Publications.

Ramazanoglu, C. (Ed.). (1993). *Up against Foucault: Explorations of some tensions between Foucault and feminism*. London: Routledge.

Regan, P. C. & Berscheid, E. (1996) Beliefs about the state, goals and objects of sexual desire. *Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy*, 22, 110 – 120.

Reid, P. T. (2000, April). Women, ethnicity and Aids. What's love got to do with it? *A Journal of Research*, 709 – 723.

Reiss, I. L. (1971). The double standard in premarital intercourse: A neglected concept. In B. Lieberman (Ed.). *Human sexual behaviour: A book of readings* (pp. 183 – 190). New York: Wiley.

Rich, A. (1980). Afterward. In L. Lederer (Ed.), *Take back the night: Women on pornography* (pp. 313 – 320). New York: William Morrow and Company.

Richardson, D. (1989). AIDS education and women: sexual and reproductive issues. In P. Aggleton, P. Davis & G. Hart (Eds.). *AIDS: Individual, cultural and policy dimensions* (pp. 169 – 179). London: Falmer Press.

Richardson, D. (Ed.). (1996). *Theorising heterosexuality*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Rogers, C. R. (1985). Toward a more human science of the person. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 25 (4), 7 – 24.

Roiphe, K. (1993). *The morning after: Sex, fear and feminism*. London: Hamish Hamilton.
Rose, S. (2000). Heterosexism and the study of women's romantic and friend relationships. *Journal of Social Issues*, 56 (2), 315 – 328.

Rubin, G. (1984). Thinking sex: Notes for a radical theory of the politics of sexuality. In C. S. Vance (Ed.), *Pleasure and danger: Exploring female sexuality* (pp. 267 – 319). Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Sarup, M. (1993). *An introductory guide to post-structuralism and postmodernism*. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Sawicki, J. (1991). *Disciplining Foucault: Feminism, power and the body*. New York: Routledge.

Segal, L. (1990). Competing masculinities: A manliness – the masculine ideal. In L. Segal (Ed). *In slow motion: Changing masculinities, changing men* (pp. 104 – 133). London: Virago.

Seidel, G. 1993. The competing discourses of HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa: Discourses of rights and empowerment vs. discourses of control and exclusion. *Social Science and Medicine*, 36 (3), 175 – 194.

Shefer, T. (1999) *Discourses of heterosexual subjectivity and negotiation*. Unpublished Doctoral thesis. Cape Town: University of the Western Cape.

Silverman, K. (1992). *Male subjectivity at the margins*. New York and London: Routledge.

Sontag, S. (1990). *Aids and its metaphors*. London: Penguin Books.

Sprecher, S. & McKinney, K. (1993). *Sexuality*. Newbury Park: Sage.

Stanley, L. & Wise, S. (1990). Method, methodology and epistemology in feminist research processes. In L. Stanley (Ed.). *Feminist praxis: Research, theory and epistemology in feminist sociology* (pp. 20 – 60). London: Routledge.

Stewart, D. W. & Shamdasni, P. N. (1990). Focus groups: Theory and practice. In L. Bickman & D. J. Rog (Eds.), *Applied social research methods series*. Newbury Park: Sage.

Stoltenberg, J. (1991). How men have (a) sex. *Canadian Dimension*, 25 (1), 28 – 35.

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Strebel, A. (1993). *Women and AIDS: A study of issues in the prevention of HIV infection.* Unpublished doctoral thesis. Cape Town: University of Cape Town.

Strebel, A. (1997). Putting discourse analysis to work in AIDS prevention. In A. Levett, A. Kottler, E. Burman & I. Parker (Eds.), *Culture, power and difference: Discourse analysis in South Africa* (pp. 109 – 121). Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

Strebel, A. & Lindegger, G. (1998). Power and responsibility: Shifting discourses of gender and HIV/AIDS. *Psychology in Society*, 24, 4 – 20.

Stubbs, M. (1983). *Discourse analysis*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Swart, S. (2001). "Man, gun and horse": Hard right Afrikaner masculine identity in post-apartheid South Africa. In R. Morrell (Ed.), *Changing men in South Africa* (pp. 75 – 89). Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press.

Taris, T. W. & Semin, G. R. (1997). Gender as moderator of the effects of the love motive and relational context on sexual experience. *Archives of Sexual Behaviour*, 26 (2), 159 – 181.

Taylor, B. (1995). Gender-power relations and safer sex negotiation. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 22 (4), 687 – 693.

Tiefer, L. (1995). *Sex is not a natural act and other essays*. Oxford: Westview Press.

Townsend, J. M. (1998). Dominance, sexual activity and sexual emotions. *Behavioural and Brain Sciences*, 21 (3), 386 – 398.

Tuzin, D. (1991). Sex, culture and the anthropologist. *Social Science Medicine*, 33 (8), 867 – 874.

Vance, C. S. (1984). Pleasure and danger: Towards a politics of sexuality. In C.S. Vance (Ed.), *Pleasure and danger: Exploring female sexuality* (pp. 1 – 27). Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Walkerdine, V. (1984). Some day my prince will come. In A McRobbie & M. Nava (Eds.), *Gender and generation*. London: Methuen.

Webb, D. (1997). *HIV and AIDS in Africa.* Cape Town: David Philip.

Weedon, C. (1987). *Feminist practice and post-structuralist theory*. London: Basil Blackwell.

Weeks, J. (1985). *Sexuality and its discontents*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Weeks, J. (1986). *Sexuality*. New York: Ellis Horwood.

Weinrich, J. D. (1987) *Sexual landscapes*. New York: Scribner.

Weiss, E., Whelan, D. & Gupta, G. R. (1996). *Vulnerability and opportunity: Adolescents and HIV/AIDS in the developing world*. Washington, D.C: International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW).

Wetherell, M. (1995). Romantic discourse and feminist analysis: Interrogating investment, power and desire. In S. Wilkinson & C. Kitzinger (Eds.). *Feminism and discourse: Psychological perspectives* (pp. 128 – 144). London: Sage.

Wetherell, M. (1997). Linguistic repertoires and literary criticism: New directions for social psychology of gender. In M. M. Gergen & S. N. Davis (Eds.). *Toward a new psychology of gender: A reader*. New York: Routledge.

Wick, D. T. (1996). *Social constructionism groping towards this something*. Journal of Systematic Therapies, 15 (3), 65 – 81.

Widdicombe, S. (1995). Identity, politics and talk: A case for the mundane and the everyday. In S. Wilkinson & C. Kitzinger (Eds.), *Feminism and discourse: Psychological perspectives*. London: Sage.

Wilkinson, S. & Kitzinger, C. (1995). *Feminism and discourse: Psychological perspectives*. London: Sage.

Wilton, T. & Aggleton, P. (1990). Aids – don't die of misinformation. *Youth Clubs with the Edge*, 56, 19 – 21.

Wittig, M. (1989). On the social contract. In D. Altman, C. Vance, M. Vicinus, J. Weeks and others, *Homosexuality, which homosexuality?* (pp. 239 – 249). Amsterdam and London: Uitgeverij An Dekker/Schorer and GMP.

Wood, K. & Foster, D. (1995). Being the type of lover . . . gender-differentiated reasons for non-use of condoms by sexually active heterosexual students, *Psychology in Society*, 20, 13 – 35.

Wood, K., Maforah, F. & Jewkes, R. (1996). *Sex, violence and constructions of love among Xhosa adolescents: Putting violence on the sexuality education agenda*. Tygerberg: Medical Research Council.

Wood, K. & Jewkes, R. (1998). *Love is a dangerous thing: Micro-dynamics of violence in sexual relationships of young people in Umtata*. Tygerberg: Medical Research Council.

Worth, D. (1989). Sexual decision making and AIDS: Why condom promotion among vulnerable women is likely to fail, *Studies in Family Planning*, 20 (6), 297 – 307.

Wouters, C. (1999). Balancing sex and love since the 1960s sexual revolution. In M. Featherstone (Ed.), *Love and eroticism* (pp. 187 – 214). London: Sage.

APPENDIX 1

THE VIGNETTE

A woman and a man meet each other for the first time at a party given by a mutual friend. They are strongly attracted to one another and spend most of the party dancing together, talking and getting to know each other. It's around midnight and the lights are getting low. They are dancing close, looking into each other's eyes. What happens now? Have you ever been a similar situation and if yes, what happened?

APPENDIX 2

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW FORMAT

1.Tell me more about your childhood years.

2. Tell me about your family of origin.

3. How was the issue of sex handled in your home whilst growing up?

4. Tell me about your intimate relationships – past and present?

5. Tell me about your sexual experiences.

6. How do you experience your sexuality?

7. How do you feel about one-night stands and how does this correlate (or not correlate) with your experiences?

8. How do you feel about sex and love and how does this correlate (or not correlate) with your experiences?