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**Analyzing how notions of masculinity influence the
vulnerability of men to HIV/AIDS. A study of Zimbabwean
Shona men living in Cape Town**

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A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award
of the degree of Master of Philosophy in HIV/AIDS and Society.

Faculty of Humanities
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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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 Date: 15/08/08

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Abstract

This thesis started with the premise that some attributes of masculinity make men vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. A review of existing literature on gender and HIV revealed that the majority of studies done on gender and HIV have focused largely on women. A few that have focused on men have done so in the light of portraying men as perpetrators who hold back women's development and place them at risk of HIV infection. This thesis shows that men are also victims of their manliness by showing how various characteristics of masculinity place not only women but also men at a heightened risk of HIV infection. Using existing literature and in-depth interviews among 18 Zimbabwean men, the study explores various attributes of masculinity that are linked to contraction and transmission of HIV/AIDS. It also provides an outline on how masculinities are constructed. The results of the study show that indeed masculinities make both men and women vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. They also show that in the face of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and due to different ways in which masculinities are constructed, the emergence of a new type of masculinity that could be instrumental in reducing the spread of HIV is observable.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

HIV/AIDS is by far the most devastating health threat that is being experienced globally. At the end of 2007, around 30.8 million adults and 2.5 million children were living with HIV and there were 2.1 million AIDS related deaths (AVERT, 2008). However, the epidemic affects Africa more than any other continent with Sub Saharan Africa being the most affected region. In 2007, 68% of the people infected by HIV were in Sub Saharan Africa and this region accounted for 76% of AIDS deaths globally (UNAIDS, 2007). Sub Saharan Africa is however, unevenly affected by the epidemic with Southern African countries accounting for 32 % of all the new HIV infections and AIDS deaths globally in 2007. Furthermore 35 % of people living with HIV are in Southern Africa (UNAIDS, 2007). Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe are eight countries in this region whose national adult prevalence exceeded 15 % in 2005 (UNAIDS, 2007).

Zimbabwe is experiencing one of the harshest AIDS epidemics in the world with its population estimated to have decreased by four million between 2002 and 2006, the infant mortality doubling since 1990, with the lowest life expectancy and a higher number of orphans in proportion to its population than anywhere else. Migration due to economic and political problems add to these figures but according to AVERT most of these cases are a result of AIDS (AVERT, 2008). The Zimbabwean epidemic is worsened by economic instability in the country that has resulted in the highest inflation rate the world over, insufficient resources to provide the much-needed antiretroviral drugs, “brain drain”, failure to get global funding and lack of comprehensive programmes to tackle the growing problem of HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS, 2007).

Different interventions have been implemented in the prevention of HIV/AIDS. The ABC (Abstinence, Be faithful, Correct and Consistent use of Condoms) campaign is a prime example of such interventions. The advent of antiretroviral drugs (ARV) has offered a ray of hope to the epidemic. In Sub Saharan Africa however, antiretroviral drugs are only accessed by a few as is asserted by UNAIDS (2006).

The sheer scale of need in this region means that a little less than one quarter (23 %) of the estimated 4.6 million people in need of antiretroviral therapy in this region are receiving it.

In the light of the fact that treatment programmes are new and limited, the need for effective prevention programmes prevails. Sadly, prevention efforts thus far have failed to significantly reduce the rate of HIV infection in most parts of the world (Sorell and Raffaelli 2005). Most prevention programmes have focused on women, and rightly so because women carry the larger burden of HIV in various ways. According to UNAIDS (2007) the majority of people living with HIV in Sub Saharan Africa are women (61%). Women are not only disproportionately infected by HIV but the burden of caring for AIDS patients falls on them (UNAIDS, 2006; Lindegger and Maxwell, 2005; Foreman, 1999).

Nevertheless, women alone cannot affect the programmes as Lindegger and Maxwell (2005) point out

The very behavioral strategies that are likely to be most effective for reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS, namely, condom use and faithfulness to one partner, are the strategies that are least in the control of women (Lindegger and Maxwell, 2005: 5).

These strategies are mainly in the hands of men and as Foreman (1999) declares, “the HIV epidemic is driven by men” (1999: viii), “men determine the path of the disease” (1999: ix). This declaration by Foreman (1999) alleges that men are largely responsible for the HIV/AIDS epidemic. This is true to the extent that in Africa the epidemic is mainly driven by heterosexual sex and heterosexual sex is largely shaped by the desires and power of men. Many studies to date portray women as victims at the hands of men and as powerless in making any decisions about sex. This is true of the sexual relationship between men and women especially in Africa where there is a heightened sense of patriarchy (this will be discussed fully in Chapter 4). For that reason, men are largely in charge of the very behavior that perpetuates the spread of HIV – sexual behavior. According to Mane and Aggleton (2001), men generally have higher reported rates of partner change and unsafe sexual intercourse that could result in contraction and/or transmission of HIV. The question then is if men primarily drive the epidemic, what then drives men? Mane and Aggleton (2001:27) point to societal and cultural expectations:

Research data clearly suggest that cultural and social expectations and norms create an environment where risk is acceptable, even encouraged for 'real man'.

This is in line with other scholars who have identified a link between masculinity and HIV that shows that masculinity places both men and women at risk of HIV infection.

1.1 Masculinities

1.1.1 Introduction

This thesis aims at exploring the assertion that masculinity plays a dominant role in the contraction and transmission of HIV/AIDS. It is difficult to define masculinity but a number of scholars have agreed that there are certain principles or expectations that some men are pressured to comply with and others gladly comply with and these expectations in turn influence their behavior to constitute a pattern that is widely referred to as masculinity (Buchbinder, 2005; Gibbs, 2005; Lindsay and Miescher, 2003; Sorell and Raffaelli, 2005). A number of arguments on how masculinity is defined have arisen rooted in a debate between essentialism and constructionism and a stance between the two. These are two gender theories that describe how masculinities and femininities are constructed. Stanley (2002:31) highlights the contest between the two theories:

The basic argument is whether 'sex' (our 'maleness' or 'femaleness', the biological basis of sex differentiation) causes 'gender' (culturally ascribed notions about 'femininity' and 'masculinity') or whether and to what extent 'gender' is a social construction.

1.1.2 The essentialist theory of gender

The essentialist theory of gender states that masculine traits and feminine traits are innate (essences). Lindsey (1997) relates males to wild animals that display gender order where males are aggressive and competitive and females are more passive and assume the role of infant care suggesting that masculinity or femininity is natural.

The principles of evolution will allow for a greater understanding of how our social behaviors are developed. We can look to natural selection to find adaptive behaviors which can determine why males are aggressive,

why females do childcare, and why sex inequality where males are dominant occurs world wide (Lindsey, 1997:46).

Gilmore (1990:21) states this view held by some psychologists and biologists who support the essentialist theory of gender.

Aggressiveness and masculinity, including the testing and proving, is merely a consequence of male anatomy and hormones: men seek challenges because they are naturally aggressive. That is simply the way they are; women are the opposite. Period.

What the essentialist theory of gender proposes is that masculinity is inherent, it occurs naturally. It suggests that men inherit with masculine genes the tendency to be aggressive, competitive, promiscuous, and irresponsible.

A number of scholars have criticized the essential theory on the following premises: It mainly draws on inferences from animal behavior for human behavior (Kimmel and Messner 1998; MacInnes, 1998). It ignores females that can be sexually aggressive and competitive and males that can nurture and be passive (Lindsay and Miescher, 2003). It questions the “natural” character of differences between men and women because these have to be continually enforced like often telling a boy “boys don’t cry” (Buchbinder, 1994; MacInnes, 1998). It does not take into account the different social behaviors that vary according to different cultures (Kimmel and Messner, 1998). More importantly and in relation to HIV/AIDS, some interpretations of the theory deny any possibility of change (Buchbinder, 1994). It presents the man as naturally territorial, aggressive, tough, and violent. The English saying “boys will be boys” that is parallel to the Zimbabwean Shona saying *murume murume* (a man is a man) suggests that all we can do is accept that a man is a man is a man.

1.1.3 The constructionist theory of gender

The constructionist theory states that masculinity is learned or constructed by historical, cultural and social factors that occur in a person’s life (Buchbinder, 2005). Consequently, Gibbs (2005) and Sorell and Raffaelli (2005) refer to masculinity as a set of socio-cultural values that influences men’s behavior. The first question that is asked when a baby is born is “What is it’s sex?” because the parents and society want to know what sex the baby is so that they know on what learning path to place it by

buying blue clothes, toy trucks and taking them to soccer games for example. In a boy's young life he is often told, "boys don't cry" toughening the boy in accordance to the hegemonic masculinity discussed below. In some societies, physically and emotionally painful tasks are performed in order for one to be called a man. The *Varemba* community of Zimbabwe for example carries out an initiation ceremony where boys are circumcised. Mager (1998) says this of circumcision

Circumcised bodies signaled a change in personality, manliness, and identity. Circumcision signified masculine identity and male power, constructed over and against boys and women. It was a rite of passage that placed young men on the path to marriage, homestead headship and fatherhood. (Mager, 1998: 660)

The constructionist theory of gender is based largely on socialization and enculturation and proposes that masculine or feminine traits are acquired through everyday social relations. It is important to note that in as much as some scholars can say sex does not determine how one behaves we see gender in terms of sex. The simple thing of knowing a child's sex – a matter of a vagina or a penis – triggers an avalanche of cultural interventions that begin at birth and only end at death. It has the positive function of indicating to adults and younger people how the new comer is to be treated.

We have continued to think of gender in terms of sex: to see it as a social dichotomy determined by a natural dichotomy. We now see gender as the content with sex as the container. The content may vary, and some consider it must vary, but the container is considered to be invariable because it is part of nature. (Jackson and Scott 2002:52)

Lindsey (1997:53) defines socialization as a process by which one learns one's culture, develops human potential and becomes a functioning member of society. Culture molds one's beliefs and behaviors about male or female or masculinity and femininity through different mediums such as the family, religion, peers, education and media. This is not to suggest that one simply learns or is molded passively in a certain culture. This assumption ignores that one is socialized by different agents with different messages, that we live in a diverse society with numerous sub cultures and that an individual has to negotiate through all this and come up with his/her own decisions. Socialization in this study will refer to how masculinities are constructed in interaction with the individual and how and why he makes the decisions that he

makes. (Considering that my study focuses on men and their masculinity, I am from this point forth going to refer to only one sex –male, in discussions about socialization.) The aspect of socialization and how masculinities are constructed will be discussed at length in Chapter 3.

1.1.4 Essentialism versus constructionism

There is a long-standing debate between these two theories and which one is more suitable over the other. A close look at both theories indicates that there are some aspects of each theory that makes good sense. Essentialists would sight aggressiveness and physical strength, among others, as typically innate characteristics of masculinity that can be seen even in ancient societies where men have always engaged in tasks that required strength and aggression. Constructionists such as Buchbinder (1994: 2) would question these attributes by sighting effeminate men and the fact that masculine ideals have to be continually reinforced in a child. As a result, some scholars have identified the difficulty in choosing one theory over the other and have proposed a stance between the two theories. Connell, (2002: 35) deliberates

*If the two realms cannot be held strictly apart, perhaps they can be added.
A common sense compromise would suggest that gender differences arise
from both biology and social norms.*

However, Connell went on to show that this stance is not without its difficulties. He states that it is complicated to combine biology and sociology since biology is superior in its scientific explanations and categories. This has not stopped other scholars from adopting this view much as it may seem to be simplistic. Levinson (1978) as cited in Kimmel and Messner (1998: 110) is an example

*Levinson has argued that masculine identity is neither fully “formed” by
the social context, nor is it “caused” by some internal dynamic put into
place during infancy. Instead, it is shaped and constructed through the
interaction between the internal and the social.*

Having said this however, this thesis leans towards the constructionist theory of gender to explain the concept of masculinity. To begin with, the social constructionist perspective argues that men’s (and women’s) lives vary from culture to culture and within a given culture over time (Kimmel and Messner, 1998). This shows that gender

is not stagnant, but that it can change. Consequently, it allows for interventions that could result in a reduced spread of HIV/AIDS. Mane and Aggleton (2001: 32) put it together persuasively when they said

If masculinities are multiple, for example, then some versions may be more useful than others in promoting greater gender equality and improved sexual health. If masculinities are actively constructed then it may be possible to create more gender equitable versions of them. Finally, if masculinities are dynamic, over time, shifts away from less helpful versions of masculinity that emphasize dominance and aggression may be possible.

1.1.5 The personal/ self construction theory

A look at the two theories above has revealed a missing aspect to the discussion of masculinities. I think there is need to recognize that in as much as individuals are born with a body that makes one a man (or a woman) and are exposed to a culture that sets up how they are to behave they are still individuals liable to make their own decisions. There is an aspect of individual behavior present that is shown by how even twin boys who are born of the same parents and are exposed to the same culture can turn out to be different people with different beliefs and attitudes. This influence of individual agency on gender is fully discussed in Chapter 3.

1.1.6 Hegemonic, subordinate and new age masculinities

It is important to note that although some aspects of masculinity appear to be universal such as toughness, aggressiveness and stoicism (Gibbs, 2005; Foreman, 1999; Buchbinder, 1994) there is no universalized masculinity. Connell (2000:10) boldly states, “we need to speak of masculinities not masculinity.” There is a range of masculinities that shift over time and place (Gibbs, 2005; Connell, 2000). Masculinities operate in a hierarchy where some masculinities are dominant and referred to as hegemonic while others are subordinated or marginalized or stigmatized. According to Gibbs (2005), hegemonic masculinity is the most desired and the most honored, it ranks the highest in the hierarchy of masculinities and it determines standards by which other masculinities are defined. However, Gibbs (2005); Sorell and Raffaelli (2005) and Hearn (2005) all clearly point to the fact that

not all men adhere to hegemonic masculinity and it is by far not the most common. It is important to note that each age and each society generates its own hegemonic form of masculinity. For the purpose of this study hegemonic masculinity that is sometimes referred to as traditional masculinity, the ideal masculinity or the dominant masculinity is going to refer to a type of masculinity typical to Zimbabwean Shona men. Its characteristics include the subordination of women (and other weaker males), availability of material wealth, reproductive fecundity, aggressiveness, to mention a few (full discussion of the characteristics of hegemonic masculinity will be presented later in this chapter (1.1.9) and in Chapter 4).

Subordinate masculinities or subordinate variants are other types of masculinities that are not hegemonic. These are not popular and are marginalized. Subordinate masculinities are located on a sliding scale. Some subordinate masculinities rate higher than others do. Of interest to this thesis is the “Sensitive New Age Guy” also referred to as the “New Age Guy” or the “New Man” whose characteristics could be instrumental in reducing the spread of HIV. Some of the new man’s characteristics are incorporated in the definition by Morrell (2001: 4) below

New men were in favor of women’s liberation, looked after the children, supported women in their desire to develop careers, and were sensitive and introspective people.

A more explicit discussion on the “new man” follows in chapter 5.

1.1.7 Masculinity and its influences

Studies on masculinities are not new and date back to as early as the 1920s. Even before the 1920s, societies were structured in a way that observed what is termed masculinity today under religious, non-rational and moralistic discourses (Connell, 2002). It is beyond the scope of this study to go into detail on earlier studies on how masculinities have been understood. A brief summary will ensue starting with the work of Sigmund Freud that was based in psychology, which was then considered a medical intervention. One of the main points that Freud and his first major follower Alfred Adler and psychoanalysts thereafter between 1920 and early 1930s raised was that gender and sexuality were not fixed by nature but were constructed through a long and conflict ridden process (Connell, 1995).

However, between 1930 and 1960, this assertion by Freud and his followers was abandoned and masculinity was seen as unproblematic with anything that appeared to be not normal viewed as pathology, homosexuality being a prime example. This was during the era of the sex role theory. The sex role theory attributed masculinity to socialization and asserted that “being a man or a woman means enacting a general set of expectations which are attached to one’s sex” (Connell, 1995:22).

In the 1960s, a new group of feminists emerged known as the second-wave feminists. They portrayed female sex roles as oppressive to women and demanded a change towards social, economic and political equality between men and women. Feminism has had a profound effect on masculinity and its study (Miles, 1995). Different reactions from men to feminist principles have in turn had different influences on masculinity. Some men stopped to consider the messages that feminists forwarded and reviewed their positions. This led to the rise of the male liberation movement that was in support of the women’s liberation movement and the emergence of new accepted masculinities like the “Sensitive New Age Guy” alluded to by Buchbinder (1994). Others however, reacted in what Buchbinder (1994) terms the “male backlash against feminism”. Feminism may have been counterproductive, in that once attacked by feminists, some men felt undermined and resentful towards women and in order to reassert their dominance they became even more aggressive and violent.

Alongside feminism is the gay liberation movement originating at the same time with feminism. The gay liberation movement can be dated back to the ‘stonewall liberation’ of 1969 where many gay men in the Stonewall Inn in New York resisted police raids. From then on, many gay movements were initiated. Gay men challenged the right of heterosexual men to dominate women and subordinate masculinities. They also questioned the notion of gay men being effeminate and presented evidence of men who looked “masculine” in terms of their body physique but were gay. Gay men questioned that masculinity was innate. They asked, for example, how one can explain gay men who wanted to dress and act like women? Like feminism, the gay liberation movement has had conflicting influences on masculinity. On one hand straight men feel their manliness has been threatened by gay men and as is shown by Connell (1995) can react violently. On the other hand, they assert that it offers an opportunity

for men to stop and think about what masculinity really means. Both feminism and the gay liberation movement have questioned the notion of masculinity as being unitary. This is evidenced by the emergence of different masculinities as Buchbinder (1994) concludes

Out of the challenges offered to men by history and the critique of masculinity (developed on one hand by feminist theory, and on the other by gay political theory) has come the fracturing of 'masculinity' as an integrated concept (Buchbinder, 1994: 22).

The discussion above gives an overview of influences on masculinities. However, it is important to note that much of the discussion centers on studies of men in the developed world. Studies of masculinities in the developed world have provided us with a framework to make sense of masculinity but they differ significantly from those in Africa. This study aims at specifically looking at masculinities in Zimbabwe and their linkages to HIV/AIDS. A brief discussion of masculinities in Africa will follow.

1.1.8 African masculinities

It is important to note that the term “Africa masculinities” does not suggest that there is one type of masculinity intrinsic to Africa. Conceivably, the term ‘Africa’ can refer to a continent that shares similar historical experiences and current material circumstances (Ouzgane and Morrell, 2005). However, African men have largely been seen as a homogenous group by some Western writers as shown by Epperecht (1998) who refers to a number of studies that were conducted up to the 1970s that tried to explain the intrinsic childishness or animalism of the African male. Accordingly, Marable (1998), establishes that some white men saw the African man as “one step above the animals, with physical power but no intellectual ability” and as a lusty sexual being. However, other scholars like European historians of the 19th century denied that there was anything common between North and North East Africa and Sub Sahara Africa (Ouzgane and Morrell, 2005). Regardless, “African masculinities” have largely, been universalized as a homogenous concept. It is however, important to note that there is no universalized African masculinity. Ouzgane and Morrell (2005: 1) say this of Africa:

Africa is an exceedingly diverse continent in terms of religion, language, climate, topography, economy, governance and culture.

Subsequently, African masculinities should also be viewed as diverse. There is however, one aspect that unites most of Africa that is worth mentioning in the study of masculinities and that according to Ouzgane and Morrell (2005) is colonialism. It has had a great impact on masculinities in Africa. In the immediate pre-colonial era, the image of African masculinity to Africans was what is referred to as the “big man” (Lindsay and Miescher, 2003; Holland, 2005). The “big man” of this era had a large household, many children, and the choice of having many wives, wealth, and dependants he looked after. It is important to note that the “big man” was the ideal type but not all men could measure up to him.

The colonial era brought with it wage labor, religious conversion, education and literacy all of which saw a destabilization of the traditional masculinity. Young men could now earn their own wages and not depend on their fathers for money; they could gain senior status through these alternative routes (Lindsay and Miescher, 2003: 10-12). Some white colonial settlers infantilized and feminized the African men assigning them to jobs that had earlier been considered to be for women and referring to them as “boy” regardless of age or marital status (Morrell, 1998; Epprecht, 1998). New forms of masculinity also emerged to include ones that saw migrant work and Christianity as the focal points, politics and later violence was incorporated in new masculinities linked to nationalism (Morrell, 1998; Epprecht, 1998). However, the traditional masculinity continued in the colonial era especially in the rural areas. Patriarchal rule continued, men dominated social and political hierarchies and sexual division of labor was evident.

The effect colonialism had on masculinities in Africa is felt today. Many masculinities exist today, some traditional, others in accord with Western orientation and most of them a hybridized combination of the two. Lindsay and Miescher, 2003 refer to the African big man as the ideal aspirant and portray him as a wealthy, powerful patriarch with business and government networks, some rural links to “his people”, one wife (but eyes for many) and dependants. Whether this is true of the whole of Africa is difficult to say but as Morrell (1998) highlights it is important to focus on specific locations to be able to analyze masculinities fully. This study therefore is bent on

finding out about masculinities among the Shona speaking Zimbabwean men and the discussion that follows traces a brief history of Zimbabwean masculinities.

1.1.9 The Zimbabwean context: The Shona Masculinities

The Shona people are based in Zimbabwe. Their name derives from the Shona language that they speak. Eighty two percent of the estimated 12 million people in Zimbabwe use Shona as their first language, 14 percent are Ndebele speakers and the remaining 2 percent is attributed to English speakers (less than 1 percent) and other African languages (A Self-Help Assistance Programme [ASAP], 2008).

As in most African countries, Zimbabwean masculinities were also largely influenced by colonialism. Holland (2005) suggests that in pre and early colonial Rhodesia (Rhodesia is the name used to refer to Zimbabwe before independence of 1980) the 'big man' archetype was the desired mode of masculinity. It included material wealth, subordination of women, reproductive fecundity and loyalty to family (that normally comprised of more than one wife and many children) and others. Epprecht (1998) affirms this by saying that being a man in the 1920s meant to pay *roora* (the bride price), to acquire a submissive and fertile wife, to get land and to support a growing family. Shire (1994) includes other aspects such as a good fighter and hunter, one who possessed verbal agility, one who was a good leader and advisor and one who belonged to the totemic group. One can therefore see that in the immediate pre-colonial era to be a man in the Shona culture meant a number of things in varying circumstances. Characteristics of the pre-colonial era that are of important to the study of HIV/AIDS are the importance placed on material wealth (in this case agricultural wealth such as livestock and fields), subordination of women, multiple sex partners (that included the practice of polygamy), and the importance of having many children. Most of these characteristics have been carried over to the present day and fused with characteristics that emerged in the colonial era. These can all, unfortunately, be linked to the spread of HIV. Before discussing the linkages of the different characteristics of the pre-colonial man and HIV/AIDS, a discussion of colonialism and its effect on Zimbabwean masculinity will follow.

Colonialism brought with it a disruption of this traditional type of masculinity. Epprecht (1998) gives a detailed account of this change summarized below. The introduction of wage labor, schooling, and the church saw a shift in the ideal masculinities where achievement was now measured according to the white man's terms. This was exacerbated by growing land shortages, decreased wages, introduction of population control exercises, some degree of freedom that women were beginning to exercise and interference by colonial bureaucrats in most aspects of everyday life. Violence was reaffirmed as a desirable masculine attribute initially in reaction to white racism developing into widespread violence in the name of nationalism as is asserted by Shire (2004: 149)

The great patriarchs of the Shona resorted to telling tales about the Nguni assegai or muscet: objects of desire, which symbolized the machismo of the warrior and resistance to colonial domination. Others expressed this identification through the use of the Ndebele language. SiNdebele signified the epitome of a very physical masculinity: an ability to use the knobkerrie and the myths of the Zulu fighters like Shaka.

This according to Holland (2005) presented difficulties in negotiating between pre-colonial and colonial masculinities for the Zimbabwean man. This merger of the two cultures had consequences on how masculinity was defined. Some attributes of the pre-colonial era remained but their terms changed. Instead of measuring material wealth by livestock and fields, importance is placed on hard cash, possessions such as a house or car, a good paying job and a high level of education. This attribute is rife in present day Zimbabwe as is seen by the importance of the 4Cs (cash, car, *crib* (house) and cell phone) in defining a 'real man'. A popular Urban Grooves song *Wanga* by the group Africa Revenge refers to the 4Cs, which loosely translated goes:

Hauna mari (You don't have cash)

Hauna mota (You don't have a car)

Hauna imba (You don't have a house (crib))

Hauna phone (You don't have a cell phone)

Saka uri wanga (So you are a nobody.)

Other colonial definitions of importance to this study are the reaffirmation of violence as a desirable masculine attribute, the subordination of women that was reaffirmed by some Christian teachings. These Western masculine attributes fused together with the

traditional attributes discussed above all had consequences for contraction and transmission of HIV/AIDS (full discussion in Chapter 4).

Epprecht (1998) goes further to discuss post independence and the effect it has had on Zimbabwean masculinities. Of importance is the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) introduced in 1990. Tens of thousands of employees were retrenched when ESAP was introduced. This resulted in men's economic disempowerment and left many men without enough to take care of their families and children. In 1999 the land redistribution programme, where Government began to forcibly evict white farmers, was introduced. It also increased the economic destabilization the country was facing and worsened the plight of men. Farming communities were disrupted, the economy deteriorated leading to increased poverty (AVERT, 2008). On one hand, men who were largely the breadwinners were left with no employment and no way to feed their families. On the other hand, some Zimbabwean men benefited from the land reform in that they were allocated land and loans to work on the land. However, largely the men that benefited were political elites or men affiliated to political elites who were already well off. Other government initiatives such as the operation *murambatsvina* (clean up) also brought further economic disempowerment. Here informal businesses such as flea markets were disallowed and houses that had been built without proper permits destroyed. Today Zimbabwe is experiencing economic hardships with an unemployment rate of 80 %, and with 80 % of the population living below the poverty line. This all disrupted the customary expectations of masculinity by upsetting traditional roles of masculinity. Men could no longer adequately provide for their families, they could not easily acquire the material wealth that gave them social standing as a man. They could no longer produce many children for lack of money to take care of them. Consequently, subordination of women and loyalty from family and others decreased because now many men did not/could not fulfill the masculine ideologies. It is important to note that through the very strategies that seem to have impacted negatively on men, some men have benefited. As earlier stated these men are few and are in most cases men that were formerly advantaged in terms of their social circles or educational credentials. The very fact that some men are successful even in these dire conditions also affects masculinities in that the "big man" aspirant prevails and yet he seems to be unattainable for the ordinary man.

1.2 Chapter summary

This chapter has provided a background on masculinities highlighting that the subject of masculinities is not clear-cut. It has also provided a background to Zimbabwean masculinities and how it has been affected by colonialism and the deteriorating economic situation in that country. As briefly highlighted, some characteristics of masculinities appear to be linked to the spread of HIV/AIDS. The thesis aims at further exploring these characteristics and how they are linked to HIV/AIDS (Chapter 4). However, before going into the characteristics that are instrumental in the spread of HIV a discussion on how masculinities are constructed is included (Chapter 3). It is important to find out how boys or men arrive at conclusions of what it means to be men if any interventions are to be attempted. As stated above masculinity is not stagnant. The above discussion has shown the processes that the Zimbabwean masculinity has gone through, fragmenting the traditional masculinity into a whole range of masculinities. This study also looks into changing masculinities and attempts to find out if there is an emerging masculinity that could be instrumental in curbing the spread of HIV/AIDS (Chapter 5). The study is based on existing literature and interviews conducted among 18 Shona speaking Zimbabwean men living in Cape Town.

Chapter 2: Methodology

2.1 Aim of study

The main thrust of the thesis is to explore the assumption that some notions of masculinity make both men and women vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. The study aims to find out what it means to be a man. It seeks to discover different expectations that men have to adhere to in order to be considered as 'real' men. It also seeks to find out how men experience their sexuality. Furthermore, it tries to identify how these expectations and experiences influence their and their partners' vulnerability to HIV/AIDS. The study also aims to question whether there is any change in what it means to be a man in light of all the factors that influence masculinity and in the face of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Is emergence of the New Age Guy observable among the Zimbabwean men and if so what is influencing its emergence?

2.2 Research design

2.2.1 Sample group

Eighteen face-to-face interviews with Zimbabwean men living in Cape Town were conducted. The respondents were aged between 21 and 35 and spent the bulk of their lives in Zimbabwe. All the respondents received their primary and secondary education in Zimbabwe and came to Cape Town for undergraduate or postgraduate studies. Most of them were either studying at the University of Cape Town or had completed their studies there at the time of the study. This is so because I was in a course work degree programme that did not allow me enough time to travel. I however, took care that the respondents selected were still very much in touch with Zimbabwe and were in Cape Town for study reasons. I chose an age range of 21 to 35 because I wanted a group of young men regarded as a young generation who hopefully experienced or are experiencing a type of socialization or enculturation that is related in some way. I wanted to incorporate higher education and a citizenship that was global in nature so that I could find out if these characteristics had any bearing on how the respondents defined their masculinities. Snowball sampling was predominantly used where I identified a respondent and asked him to refer me to a friend or colleague who fell within my sample frame. I started by requesting

interviews from Zimbabwean men I had encountered in courses I studied and at my place of residence and asked them to recommend a friend or colleague.

2.2.2 Ethical considerations

All interviews were treated as confidential and participants remain anonymous. In this thesis, all the respondents are going to be referred to as R1 to R18 (R representing respondent). All the respondents signed a consent form that briefed them on the aims of the study and stated that they were not to answer questions they were not comfortable with and could withdraw from the study at any point (see appendix A for a copy of the consent form).

2.2.3 In-depth interviews

The study employed the qualitative method of in-depth interviews. According to Moore (2000: 121), qualitative research allows respondents to talk about their feelings and about their underlying attitudes, beliefs and values. In-depth interviews in particular, explore what people feel about issues thereby building an understanding of why things happen in the way that they do (Moore, 2000: 122). This is the reason why in-depth interviews are well suited for this study. It seeks to find out what men feel and think about issues of masculinity and how this has implications for HIV/AIDS. Due to the sensitivity of the study involving issues of sex and HIV that are not normally freely discussed, I had initially decided to use a qualitative questionnaire. After piloting the questionnaire, it became clear that it was not a well-suited design due to the low response rate and to the low quality of data produced. The respondents in the pilot study took time to return the answered questionnaire and others did not return them at all. The returned scripts were hurriedly done with a lot of unanswered questions and unsatisfactory answers that did not provide the much-needed data. Conversations with these pilot respondents revealed that it was easier to answer questions verbally than to write down answers as it took up too much time. This response resulted in the use of a more interactive method, that of in-depth interviews that allow for probing by the interviewer. In-depth interviewing was not without its limitations considering my position as a woman interviewing men. To counter this I came up with a vignette that I read out to the respondents and asked questions about it

so that they did not feel as though the questions were too personal. Davies (2007: 166) asserts that

A potentially rewarding way of tapping into the respondent's feelings is to offer additional stimulus as a basis for conversation... you can use a vignette in order to tell a story to interviewees with a view of prompting a reaction.

In this study I came up with a vignette that presents a typical Zimbabwean man who comes home late, is possibly promiscuous and does not appreciate being questioned by his wife and have used this as a basis for the discussion. I went on to ask questions about the respondents and the way in which they were raised and what it means to them and to their culture to be a man (see appendix B for a copy of the interview schedule). Please note that the interview schedule was used as a guideline and was not rigorously followed in all interviews. The direction of the interview depended on the responses from the respondents.

The interviews were audio taped, listened to and transcribed. The transcriptions were coded using an interpretive thematic system. The themes that emerged were used in the discussions in chapters 3, 4 and 5 that go into detail on how masculinities are constructed, the linkages between masculinities and HIV/AIDS and the emergence of the New Age Guy.

2.3 Reflexivity

This section accounts for me as the researcher. Interest in the topic was due to my participation as a respondent in gender studies that focused primarily on women in HIV prevention and portray the man as the driving force behind HIV/AIDS incidence. A review of the literature on HIV and gender reveals many studies done on women and a few on men and interestingly most of these studies reaffirm that women are the victims and men the perpetrators. This has resulted in the choice of this topic. It made me question why men behaved the way that they do. I realized that there were expectations from society for men to behave in a certain way that not only put women at risk of HIV but also themselves. It made me question if in a way the men were victims of their 'manliness'.

I have to acknowledge my position as a researcher dealing with a sensitive topic. Renzetti and Lee (1993: 6) assert that sensitive research intrudes into the private sphere and inquires into deeply personal experience. It intrudes on the interests of powerful persons and deals with things sacred to those being studied they do not wish profaned. This is all true of the topic at hand because sexual issues are regarded as private and sacred and the issue of masculinity where women are subordinated to men can be regarded as an area that men would want to keep hold of to protect their domination over women and the advantages it carries. This can result in information that would have been useful to the study either being withheld or distorted.

Accordingly, I also have to acknowledge my position as a female researcher investigating the male domain. Renzetti and Lee (1993: 188) state that

Racial, class and sex differences and similarities enter into the consciousness of individuals and groups and determine their conceptions of themselves and others as well as their status in community. This has implications for the process of research. Such social characteristics assist both the researcher and the subject to “place” each other within the social structure and therefore have a bearing on the relationship between them.

Of importance here is my status as a woman in relation to men. The fact that I am a Shona woman myself gave me the advantage that I could relate to some of the respondents' experiences. However, in the Shona culture it is not appropriate for a woman to discuss sexual matters especially in the presence of a man. Because I am a Shona woman myself, the respondents were in some instances uncomfortable to discuss these issues with me as evidenced by stammering before answering a question, a nervous laugh or as one respondent said out rightly, “that is a naughty question”. The fact that the Zimbabwean student community in Cape Town is small could have also contributed to men being dishonest or evasive about their perceptions or experiences. In my pilot study, I felt that I had also experienced the constraints of culture that does not allow women to openly discuss sexual issues by not being able to freely ask some questions involving sex.

The fact that my research was conducted in a patriarchal society where unequal power relations exist in favor of men also has to be incorporated here. My respondents being men could have felt that they were not answering my question in their positions as

individuals but as representing the whole group of men. In my interviews respondents repeatedly referred to me as “you people” referring to women and to themselves as “us”. At the end of it all, the men could have come up with answers that represented them as men in relation to women, which affirmed their position as “men”.

This is not to suggest that all the respondents were positioning themselves as (Shona) men in relation to me as a (Shona) woman throughout the interviews. There are also advantages to being a female researcher. The respondents went into detail about experiences that they thought I could not understand or relate to as a woman and I could ask them to expand more on the pretext that as a woman I needed more clarification. Apart from that, a number of respondents saw the interview as a platform that they could use to discuss issues that they have not earlier on been allowed to discuss. In the Shona culture, men are not given an opportunity to discuss their personal problems and issues such as sex and masculinity are hushed. One respondent said to me after the interview that he felt that the interview was therapeutic in the sense that it gave him a platform to air his views on what he thought about masculinities in general and in relation to HIV/AIDS. This ties in with the assertion by Renzitti and Lee (1993: 9)

In sensitive areas, research participants desire catharsis rather than sanctuary, that is, research on sensitive topics may produce not only gains in knowledge but also effects that are directly beneficial to research participants.

Chapter 3: How masculinities are constructed

3.1 Introduction

According to Dover (2005), socialization and enculturation are the most important formative processes of masculinity (and femininity). As previously stated in Chapter 1 masculinities are constructed through a number of agents such as family, peers, social institutions, religion, education and media that instruct one on cultural expectations. This Chapter will focus on these institutions and how they facilitate the construction of masculinities bearing in mind that the man engages with these institutions and is not merely a passive learner. These agents furnish the man with different messages on what it means to be a man and he does not merely absorb all of them. He interacts with them and makes his own choice. According to Sandstrom (2007: 92), each individual has his own preferences, means, goals, beliefs and context that inform the choices he makes – personal agency referred to in Chapter 1.

A number of theories have been proposed that attempt to explain what informs an individual's choice or decision. It is beyond the scope of this study to go into details about them but a brief synopsis will ensue. Wallace and Wolf (1995) cite the Rational Theory that was proposed by George Homans. It states that individuals engage in behavior that is most rewarding to them.

People choose whether to participate in an exchange after they have examined the costs and the rewards of the alternative courses of action, and have chosen the most attractive. (Wallace and Wolf, 1995:280)

This theory, therefore, states that given the different messages on what it means to be a man, the man will weigh the costs and the rewards and choose behavior that is most rewarding. For example, one man might view having multiple sexual partners as more rewarding in the sense that he gets a lot of sexual gratification and approval from peers whilst another man can view faithfulness to one partner as more rewarding in that he has a lower chance of contracting HIV. A number of other scholars have criticized this theory as presenting individuals as cold and calculating with a lot of time to make decisions when faced with a number of choices. One such scholar is Herbert Simon who came up with an alternative theory, Bounded Rationality.

Bounded rationality dispenses with cost benefit calculation and sees decisions as being based on other factors, such as adhering to cultural norms, conformity to common behavioral patterns or expectations, imitations of prestigious people, intuition, emotional response, following algorithms developed over long-term evolutionary time scales and being influenced by socio cultural interaction processes. (Sandstorm, 2007:95)

Undoubtedly, this theory also has its own share of critics but the most obvious criticism is that it dispenses with the cost that an individual attaches to the decisions he makes. I would consider both theories as valid and would take the route that Sandstorm (2007: 97-8) proposes

I suggest a two-track approach so that social scientists can proceed with their research agendas while keeping in mind that the ultimate goal is to develop causal links between the individual rational actor and the social system in which he or she operates.

I believe in this dyadic approach between social system (in this case the different messages from the different agents) and the individual agency. This chapter therefore, will go into details on the different socialization agents that inform masculinity bearing in mind that there is also individual agency involved. It focuses on how masculinities are constructed in the Zimbabwean, Shona context, drawing from the interviews I conducted among 18 respondents and on existing literature.

3.2 Socialization agents

3.2.1 Family

The family is the most significant instrument in the socialization of a child. It is important to note that both male and female relatives reinforce and reproduce the dominant masculinity. In the family, the mother and other female relatives are fully involved in the life of a young boy as Gilmore (1990) avers children establish a primary identity with the nurturing parent, the mother or her surrogate, in cases where the biological mother is not present. She teaches a boy how to be a man in line with the dominant masculinity. It is interesting to note that the mother reinforces dominant masculinity by treating boys differently from girls. Respondent 8 (hereafter, R8) comments on how his mother who had three boys and one girl would always say how she was raising them differently. From little things like the difference in clothing and

toys to things like assigning them different roles with the girl child seeing to all household chores. R4 also highlights how his mother tried to toughen him in accordance with dominant masculinity

You fall down off your bike your mother comes to you ok that's enough crying boys don't cry, if it's a girl they will make her cry the whole day.
(R4)

In other instances however, the mother would want to socialize her son based on her own experiences of her husband and how she would have liked to be treated.

The message that she tried to communicate is that you should... you should always respect your woman, always respect your elders and don't abuse women. She also advocated for against paternalism, that things are changing and you should respect women. That it was different from what it was before and even in terms of her relationship with my father that things have changed that you can still be a man but respect other people, respect women.(R8)

Here the mother refers to her own relationship with her husband and points to the fact that the son should treat his own wife differently. What is interesting to note is that having said all that, the mother goes on to say 'sometimes you have to play the leading role' showing that she wants to sensitise her son but at the same time show that its important to play the leading role as a man.

Fathers also have a role to play not in so much as what they say but how they act that the son looks up to and considers being masculine as is shown by R17.

My father also sometimes not directly but indirectly communicated messages on what it means to be a man. With my father, it is being responsible for your actions, integrity, standing on your own two feet and respecting other people regardless of their background or status or whatever, so I suppose that's independence. (R17)

R8 also talks about how he learnt that being a man meant you were not supposed to physically abuse your wife through his father's actions

I have never, never, never seen my father putting a hand on my mother, I never saw him doing anything of that sort. He shouted at her at times and they were times when he wasn't acting appropriately or treating her right

but otherwise I got that message that you don't have to physically abuse your wife. (R8)

In the same vein, R12 learnt what it meant to be a man from his father's mistakes

I feel there are some problems that came because my father had three wives. Because of the disagreements that would arise in the family it would not probably make him into the man that I admired but it actually made him probably have more problems to deal with in the family. Most of them were very difficult for him to solve and at the end of the day you realise that me as a child I never wanted to be like him because I felt that that was not what it meant to be a man. (R12)

Other male relatives like uncles or grandfathers can take up the role of the father where he is absent and be role models. R5 refers to his grandfather and how he took his father's place

I had my grandfather who is one man, one of the few men, African man in that tradition who had one wife, which was a rare thing, but since I spent more time with him I got stronger of the message from him than the other. (R5)

Similarly, R10 refers to his uncle and how he was actively involved in his upbringing where his father was away. The immediate parents, mother and father (or their surrogates) play a vital role in the construction of masculinities. As shown above different messages emerge but largely the parents realize that boys and girls are different and they treat them differently with the boy child usually awarded special privilege as is shown by R4

In a family where you have a guy and a girl parents will let the guy out more than the girl after six. So if you are brought up in such a scenario you are made to believe that you know men have more freedom than women do. (R4)

The extended family also contributes to the construction of masculinities. In the Shona culture, traditionally it is the role of *sekuru* (the maternal uncle) to teach the young men about masculinity and its link with sexual pleasure with women. Here the uncle is supposed to teach the man specifically on sexual matters since the subject is considered taboo to parents. R10 says this of the discussion he had with his uncle

Some informal discussions I have with my uncle (sekuru), he tells me about those things. About how you know if someone is a virgin, in our culture it's important to marry a virgin. But nobody will question whether the man is a virgin or not but men are interested in knowing whether the woman is a virgin. (R10)

It is the role of the maternal uncle to discuss such issues with the man. Other issues include how to sexually satisfy a woman, the importance of performing sexually, the importance of bearing children. The uncle is the person to recommend concoctions the man can use to have *musana wakasimba* (a strong back), an erection that lasts longer. He is in the position to even encourage the man to look for sexual escapades just to add to his virility as a man. Apart from sexual matters, the uncle schools the man on how to handle his wife and children and his position as a man in the household. In this regard, R10 says of his discussions with his uncle.

He taught me that as men you have to be responsible. Manhood does not imply just being the figurehead it actually involves taking responsibility for your family. Keeping a voice as a man, your wife is sort of your deputy, you are the headmaster and she is the deputy. So you are saying, as much as you fully comprehend and consider the views of your wife ultimately your decision should reign supreme. (R10)

Other female relatives like the *vatete* (aunt - the sister of one's father) in the Shona culture of Zimbabwe teach older boys of marrying age what it means to be a man. The aunts do not go into details like the uncle. Their domain is mainly to see to it that the husband has his place in the home as the head. If a woman is more dominant, the man will be said to have been given *mupfuwira* (a potion used to emasculate men) by the wife and the aunts can suggest that they go and have the man washed of the potions (*kugezwa*) by a witchdoctor. Prior to marriage, young Shona women are also taught what is expected of a woman and how she should be subservient to her husband. This plays a role in defining masculinity. As is shown by R7 below, women afford men all the decisions.

Because from the statement "ndizvo zvakangoita varume" (that's how men are) that in itself is showing that the parents really are just saying all you need to do as a wife is to stick with your husband, be there when he comes back, cook supper so I think that's the mentality, don't push him away. (R7)

It is important to note that tradition is changing. The aunts and the uncles who used to be actively involved in the construction of masculinities are now no longer as involved as R16 asserts.

I think the old generation, the tetes and the sekurus we are no longer in touch with them we are separated by the urbanisation so these teachings they are deteriorating, we are not getting those kind of teachings from the elders now so we don't think that influence is there now, though a little bit is still there. There is no one to teach those traditions to say a man has to feel your manhood like this. Yes, it's there but it's fading. (R16)

This is not to say they are extinct, their influence is still there but it is now reduced. The responsibility is now on parents to teach their children or on other institutions such as the church, and the school both of which are going to be discussed below.

3.2.2 Gendered upbringing

Apart from the family influencing how masculinities are constructed the space or environment in which one is brought up shapes one's masculinity. Runganga and Aggleton (1998) refer to a popular children's game *mahumbwe* (role-playing) that most growing children play. *Mahumbwe* is when children play house, roles such as cooking, cleaning and looking after the children are assigned to girls, and the boys take up the role of breadwinner and decision maker. Children are brought up in a scenario where there is a clear paternal ranking system with women subordinated to men and maintaining silence and obedience and this manifests in their play (Holland, 2005) and later in their life as R13 and R15 assert:

The other thing is from a society's point of view the teaching you get is man is not equal to woman. Man is up there, woman is just there to listen to you to do your bidding (R13)

I grew up in a rural area in a kind of traditional area, the kind of socialisation that I got is that the man is the head, the man is domineering, he has all the answers, you cannot confront him on anything. A woman has to do everything for you while you are seated, has to cook for you, wash for you, fetch water, firewood, you know does everything for you, gives you the food while you are seated, that kind of socialisation is what I got (R15)

The average Shona person was brought up in a gendered space. Dover (2005) refers to the *dare* versus kitchen scenario in rural Zimbabwe that Shire (1994) also alludes to. The *dare* is considered as men's space where mature men meet to discuss household matters or to just sit and relax, entry by any female member in this space is considered a taboo. R15 talks of how growing up in rural Zimbabwe the men went to community courts during the weekend and these were considered to be men spaces. The kitchen is perceived as women's space and a man that frequents the kitchen is mocked with the name *nhengamutsvairo* that literally means one who is always dodging the broom. It is common at any social gathering, a funeral or ritual for example for men to be seated at a space that is designated for men only and women to be in their own place usually where the cooking will be taking place. R7 talks of his experience in rural Zimbabwe.

If you go to the rural areas, back home men are treated differently from everyone else, people bringing you food and stuff like that. I guess you begin to find that when you grow up when you are 18 or so people start treating you differently at home you begin to feel that I am grown up. (R7)

It is interesting to note that even today such a scenario is observable. If a social meeting is arranged, a braai for example where both men and women are present the sitting arrangements are the same, men occupy their own space separate from that of women.

The Shona boy also grew up in an environment that encouraged male sexual prowess and the importance of bearing children. Runganga and Aggleton (1998) refer to a test that was done to determine the quality of semen referred to as the 'river test' where young men ejaculated in the river and watched to see whether their semen sank or floated on the water where the sunken semen reflected good quality semen with the potential to produce many children. This is echoed by the discussion by Shire (1994); he alludes to the games young men played which were concerned with ensuring procreation in adulthood. One game they played was a 'test' of whether they would eventually have kids by inserting their penises in the fruit of the *mumveva* (*kigelia pinnata*) if it matured it was a sign of sexual competence. Furthermore, emphasis is placed on the importance of procreation and male sexual pleasure. Epprecht (1998) highlights the importance of fertility in a marriage to the extent that if one could not produce offspring they would be subject to ridicule or in the practice of a custom

referred to as *kupindira* or *kusikira rudzi* (where a brother, cousin or friend will conceive with the wife of the man that is failing to produce children). R4 alludes to this practice when he was talking about the importance of having children.

If you are in a relationship, well the general feeling is that you are a man because you are able to produce children which goes back to culture again, men who weren't able to produce would let either the younger brother come and do it for them or they will be seen as less of a real man, that's how it was then. (R4)

It is important to note that although some of the practices are no longer widely practiced like semen testing in the river or the fruit it remains essential for a man to exhibit sexual prowess and bear many children.

The way homosexuality is scorned in Zimbabwe also shows the importance placed on male heterosexuality evidenced by the speech by the president where he refers to homosexuality as a threat to idealized patriarchal culture and national values (Epprecht, 1998). Furthermore, government-controlled media refuses to publish or air commentary sympathetic to gay rights (Epprecht, 1998).

Society still puts pressure on men to show sexual prowess and this goes beyond role-play or games into real life. Peers put pressure on their friends to subscribe to the idea that masculinity or manhood equals sexual prowess. R7 says this of his friends

But there is always the side from the friends like I said I think it's this message that to be manly you need to be with a lot of women first and stuff like (R7)

R11 talks of his experience in a boys' high school and how women (even teachers) were treated as "objects for the pleasure of man". R13 shares a similar experience

In high school if you say you do not have a girlfriend then you are not a man, you have to have not 1, maybe 3, 4, 5 and you have to sleep with them, that is what is accepted as a real man. You have to drink, to smoke, to smoke dagga at times that is what the community in which I grew up perceive as real man (R13)

This shows that the environment that a man is brought up in shapes his masculinity from the games he plays in his infancy and his boyhood, experiences in school and from the community and even the influences by the state.

3.2.3 Social customs and gatherings

Social gatherings also help construct masculinity. In the Xhosa tradition of South Africa older men facilitate the initiation ceremony where circumcision takes place and after that they spend the whole week in the wilderness teaching the new initiates how to behave as a “real men” when they return to society. In Zimbabwe, the practice of initiation is not widespread but a few groups practice it. R14 gives a lengthy discussion of a tribe called the Varembe that go through this process.

In my area there is a certain tribe which goes for them to be called men, the so called Varembe, for them to be called a man you have to undergo through a certain process where you are being taught to be a man and also being taught to sleep well with woman and also the women are taught the same thing how to sleep with a man. (R14)

The Varembe men also undergo circumcision in a secluded place without any women present. There they also get teachings on sexual matters and are encouraged to marry many wives. Women of this tribe also have their own initiation where they get teachings on how to take care of the husband and ways in which to make sure he is sexually satisfied.

3.2.4 Religion

As earlier stated in Chapter 1, there are some elements from colonialism that influence the way in which masculinity is defined. Religion is one of them and as R10 observes religion, in this case Christianity has taken the role of aunts and uncles in teaching men on what it means to be a man.

Well culture has taken a new dimension in the sense that previously they would go to the aunts, ‘vana tete and ambuya’ on the women’s side and the men would go to their uncles ‘vana sekuru’ but now its taking a new dimension it’s been taken over in the Christian way for Christians. (R10)

In this way, religion has a role to play in the construction of masculinities. In some instances, Christianity can provide contrasting messages as Mager (1998) shows how in the 1960s Christianity had an influence in the Ciskei and Transkei on young men by dissuading them from cultural participation such as the initiation ceremony that

supposedly transformed a boy into a man. R15 refers to how Christianity presents a different picture from that offered by culture.

I think due to our socialisation or our upbringing as men that if a woman confronts you, you kind of like quickly come on the defensive and I don't know whether that is born of the fact that maybe you know you are strong or society expects you or has built you to be domineering... But there are some quarters where we have been taught as a man that if you are confronted and you know it the best thing is for you to acknowledge and say sorry and build your marriage further. Like church organisations that say, we shouldn't use our position or our strength as man to cower our wives. (R15)

In this case, religion plays a part in teaching men to change the notions of a dominant masculinity. The contributions by the three respondents below show how religion, in this case Christianity, provides an alternative route to the dominant masculinity.

The church says manhood means responsibility, considering the wife's decision that you make collective not personal decisions, manhood even in terms of sex means you should have some form of informed consent, she should also be able to say no if she doesn't want. (R10)

To a great extent, it gave me a lot of biblical principles for example of abstaining until I got married, of being responsible because they preach more of being sinful when you are sleeping with a woman when you are not married (R14)

In a very big way the church has moulded me into what I am, how to treat my wife, how to treat our children, how to behave when I am with my wife outside... It's so strong that I should not have other extramarital affairs because it's against the teachings of the bible. Really, that keeps me even as I am here now I am completing my second month now without my wife. I have seen other guys who are in a similar situation with me now they are freely having other affairs. I have to be frank with you that the Christian teaching really helps me to keep on going until such a time. (R15)

This questions the positions that a man has to make all the decisions as the woman quietly takes them and that being a man means that one has to have multiple sexual partners. It presents a different view of a man being responsible, faithful and accommodating.

However, there is another view to religion, in other cases religion perpetuates the view that men are indeed the ultimate decision makers in the home and are not to be questioned by women. Some religious teachings define roles of men and women alluding to the point that men should be above the woman in most respects and this impacts differently on the notion of masculinity.

It made me realise who I am in God, a creation of God as a man and it has also taught me that God has placed me or has given me a role as a man, being the leader of the family, being at the fore front of everything that happens in the family. (R12)

The husband remains head of the family, as the word of God says in the book of Corinthians that women you should be below your husbands, in other words you have to listen to your husbands (R14)

These inputs show religion can construct masculinities in accordance with hegemonic ideals. It presents the man as the one who takes initiative in all things and the woman merely follows as R10 boldly states

It's biblically supported as well, Adam tilled the land and Eve was always a helper and you wouldn't expect the helper to be adventurous, they should be there to support what the adventurer is doing. (R10)

As stated in the beginning of the Chapter different agents provide different messages. In this case, Christianity seems to be providing different messages. This shows that it depends on how an individual interacts with the agent. Two respondents present two different understandings from the same message. They are both Christians and use the bible as a basis for the teaching. One respondent says

Religiously in that the man was naturally given a purpose by God to provide that's why the lady is regarded as a helper, a helper should not be going around looking for money; personally I question men who have a fair distribution of the budget between a man and a woman. If my wife

is to work, it will be for her own provisions doing whatever with the money. I was naturally meant to provide that's what the word of the Lord says. (R10)

The other says

Personally, I would love a situation where as a husband I will be able to provide materially and financially for my family but I don't think that's exactly what the bible teaches me... if we go to the book of Proverbs the bible describes a virtuous woman who is miles and miles more productive than the man. She wakes up early, buys a vineyard, ploughs, plants and produces for the family, children and the husband so to me that translates to a contribution to the whole family so if the bible is saying the wife can buy a field. So my headship of the family does not derive from the material or financial things that I provide, it's a God given sort of position it's not because I am the one providing for the family. (R13)

Religion, according to Pattman (2001) in his study 'Learning to be a man at a teacher's college in Zimbabwe', plays a part in shaping masculine identities, these are formed around whether men are 'drinkers' or 'church-goers'. R14 (an avid church goer) says of beer drinkers

One who consumes alcohol is not considered as a real man because there are some aspects of madness when you are drunk (R14)

In addition, in a study by Sorrell and Raffaelli (2005) religion in itself can be viewed as not masculine as one man claims, "religion is something for the women and children to do".

3.2.5 Education

Formal education contributes to the construction of masculinities. On one hand, formal education is seen as a means to inform men on the influence of masculinity on their lives and on the lives of their female counterparts. Formal education also changes the notion of gender roles in men and women alike. This has an influence in the shaping of masculinities in that the men become sensitive to women as is shown by the assertion by R2.

I think definitely, the old stigma of I am big, I drink beer doesn't get you far. So what if you are big and strong and you wanna drink beer ... I think the new man is someone who is smart and intelligent and can provide security especially financially... I think it has a lot to do with education. (R2)

Conversely, formal education can work in consolidation with dominant notions of masculinity where attaining education is considered a masculine attribute and used as a way of acquiring multiple sexual partners. R7 says this of his educated friends

I live in a student community, almost everyone I know is doing at least a Masters, a PhD, is already a postdoc, or has a big job somewhere but those are the people always after prostitutes and things like that. (R7)

3.2.6 Media

The media continuously has an effect on constructions of masculinity throughout one's life. Some movies present men as violent and aggressive and also as brave and unfeeling as is noted by Buchbinder (1994).

Men are generally shown to be stoic, bearing the agony discreetly, dismissing mortal wounds as mere scratches and thinking of others – family, girlfriend, home, another soldier – rather than themselves. This is part of construction of masculinity as heroic. (Buchbinder, 1994: 75).

Similarly, a lot of music bears the same message. Shire (1994) has this to say about masculinities in the time he was growing up in the colonial era in Zimbabwe.

My generation got its macho-ness from the swagger of cowboy movies and from rock-and-roll bands with their guitars as a sign of phallic symbol. (Shire 1994:152)

In modern day Zimbabwe, cowboys and rock-and-roll are outdated and new types of music now shape masculinities, hip-hop and urban grooves for example. Many music videos that young people watch today portray women as sex symbols who are just there to please the men. They are dressed in skimpy clothes and referred to as “bitches” and “whores”. Men are portrayed as cool rich people with a lot of *bling* (gold and diamond jewelry), fancy cars and more than two women on their hands. This picture presents men as wealthy, cool people and having many women is

considered cool as is evidenced by the terms “player” and “pimp” that are looked at as something to which to aspire.

On the other hand, media can be used to convey messages contrary to the dominant masculinities. Programmes with a positive outlook on masculinity can be aired. An example is that of a Zimbabwean campaign to prevent the spread of HIV where the emergence of a new type of masculinity is presented in a televised advertisement which loosely translated from Shona says “a real man does not rush to have sex when he has no protection, a real man is not pressured into having sex by his peers when he is not ready”.

3.3 Chapter summary

The chapter went into detail on how masculinities are constructed. It also highlights the importance of recognizing that although masculinities are defined as the dominant and the subordinate, an individual is not socialized according to one. Different messages emerge from different sources and in other cases one source can portray different messages. A number of reasons can be cited why an individual would choose one message over the other. It is important to look into how masculinities are constructed before attempting to establish the linkages between masculinities and HIV. It establishes the source of the pressures that men undergo in order to be considered “real men” thereby giving the researcher a picture of the origin or the cause of the notions of masculinity. The following chapter looks at the linkages between masculinities and HIV/AIDS.

Chapter 4: Masculinities and HIV

4.1 Introduction

A number of studies show a link between masculinities and HIV. However, until recently, most studies that have tried to understand HIV from a gendered perspective have focused almost exclusively on women. When men have been focused on, they have typically been portrayed as the perpetrators and women the victims to the extent, for example, that Foremar (1999) claims that men are responsible for the HIV epidemic. Indeed women carry the larger burden of the epidemic as discussed in Chapter 1. However, what some studies fail to point out is that gendered identities, specifically masculinities, place both women as well as men at risk of HIV infection. Mane and Aggleton (2001) rightly point out that inequality in gender relations is not something that men do to women but they both construct gender relations and of these gender relations, some dominant versions of masculinities place both men and women at a greater risk of HIV infection.

Dominant or hegemonic forms of masculinity oppress not only women but also men – constraining what they can and cannot think. (Mane and Aggleton, 2001: 29)

A number of studies carried out in Southern Africa support this claim. A review of studies done in Zimbabwe and in other Southern African countries that show the link between masculinities and HIV/AIDS is going to be incorporated here. I am going to supplement the literature with interviews conducted among 18 Zimbabwean men living in Cape Town. The first part of this chapter is going to show how masculinities place not only women but also men themselves in a vulnerable position to HIV infection. The second part of the chapter is going to look at how masculinity makes women more vulnerable to HIV infection.

4.2 Masculinities and men's risk of HIV infection

4.2.1 Introduction

The ensuing discussion aims at showing that the dominant masculinity confers benefits and privileges upon men but they come at a prohibitively high cost. It compromises men's health and increases their likelihood of contracting and transmitting HIV/AIDS. There are a number of attributes that are present in a man's life that he subscribes to or is pressurized to subscribe to in order to be considered a

'real man'. These attributes place the man at risk of HIV infection as is shown by the discussion below.

4.2.2 Commoditization of masculinities

Masculinity has largely been commoditized. It has largely been equated to material and/or financial possessions. The discussion in Chapter 1 has shown how masculinity has been equated to material and financial wealth dating back to the pre-colonial era to the present. It appears as though a man's possession or his ability to take care of others materially is a direct measure of how manly he is. All my 18 respondents cited the man as the provider attribute as a vital aspect of masculinity. Here are some examples:

I guess in the Shona culture 'murume' (man) is someone who is able to provide for his family whether or not he is being faithful or whatever I don't think it really matters. (R3)

To be a man you should be in a position to provide for your family, your wife, your progeny, and any other extended family that you might be responsible for, they should actually have at least the average of everything, they shouldn't lack anything, that is what I call manhood. (R6)

In the urban areas what they value most is responsibility, if you built your own house, you have got a car, and I think this western orientation that boils down to global citizenship. If you have some assets that is what people consider as manhood. (R10)

That was the most popular notion of what it means to be a man, being able to provide financially, materially and even spiritually as R13 asserts

To provide spiritual leadership in the family, lead in the prayers, in the bible readings, to protect spiritually and physically (R13).

Interestingly, even those men that do not subscribe to the traditional hegemonic mode of masculinity and attempt to establish a new form of masculinity incorporate the man as provider notion.

I think the new man is someone who is smart and intelligent and can provide security especially financially (R2)

The role of the man as a provider can facilitate the spread of HIV as one man in Beck's study clearly states.

Just the general perception of man's role, and his role in the home, that he is very much the bread winner and the strength of the household, I think for anyone to admit that they are unwell in that situation is very difficult. (Beck, 2004: 8)

Another way that the commoditization of masculinity perpetuates the spread of HIV is in a situation where the man is not in a position to adequately provide for his family or where his partner earns more than he does. R18 says this of the former

It is difficult, if you are a man and cannot provide for the family, there are things that your wife expects of you but you cannot do and she sees you as less of a man. I will just walk out and find someone else who sees me as a man and have sex with her, although I might feel bad afterwards and go back home. (R18)

This presents a situation where the man goes and finds a woman who regards him as more of a man (who he will probably pay) and have sex with putting himself at risk of infection and his wife as well since he talks of going back to her. R3 and R4 talk of scenarios where the woman earns more

If your woman earns more money than you do, it depends, if she always puts it in your face obviously its gonna cause problems in the relationship. You gonna feel inferior to your wife. Of which ever since you were a child I don't care where you are you've been taught that the man provides for his family right and he brings in most of the income to the family. (R3)

If my wife earned more than me I will actually feel intimidated because of the way I was brought up, the general trend is that the husband provides more, so obviously psychologists will explain it as social learning theory, that people observe and copy or mimic what they grow up seeing. (R4)

This can have the same results as the first resulting in the man looking for other sexual partners that appreciate his worth as a man.

R15 talks at length of men that embody the man as provider notion, men that have a lot of material and financial wealth. He however, shows how such men can be instrumental in the

spread of HIV since they are highly desired by women because of their money. As a result, they can end up engaging in a lot of sexual relationships and their wives can feel neglected and look for sexual satisfaction elsewhere all of this increasing chances of HIV contraction and spread.

Why because such rich men have got a lot of commitments, they travel a lot, they are also attractive, because our understanding is that free women tend to be attracted to such men but such affairs are not designed to be permanent they are designed to be very short, just one night, two night you know those kind of loose relationships. So it goes beyond manhood and gets into material issues and they are after the material issues. And those women who are married to rich men are not happy we have seen it even dramatised and such women getting into casual relationships with their garden boys just to keep their marriage just to keep themselves there maybe to avoid some kind of disgrace or because they need that wealth. But those men are attractive to a number of women. (R15)

4.2.3 Masculinity equals sexual prowess

Another attribute of masculinity that contributes immensely to the spread of HIV/AIDS is equating masculinity with sexual prowess. Different societies have different ways of referring to sexual prowess but commonalities include having multiple sexual partners, fathering many children, having the ability to have an erection, keep it and ejaculate in a woman. Foreman (1999: 17) notes, “in many societies ... young men are expected to prove their sexual prowess”. In a study done by Sorell and Raffaelli (2005) in Namibia among the Owambo speaking people one man says, “There is no secret about it ‘to be a man’ means to have sex”. In the Shona context, based on the interviews I had, sexual prowess is indeed an attribute of being manly. It ranges from simply having many girlfriends to being a ‘stud’. The criterion of having numerous girlfriends was identified by R5 and R7

People they have girlfriends but they seem to be keen on venturing out and meeting other girls. I think they think it's manly because other people tend to look up to you if you are able to get lots of girls and it's an ego thing I guess. (R5)

I think I mean if you notice there is this thing especially from our teenage years to our mid 20s whatever where there seems to be some connection between how many you are and how many women you get or something like that (R7)

It develops to having multiple sexual partners, which you actually have to engage in sexual intercourse with. This is illustrated by the claims below.

Especially that if you are a man you should show sexual prowess you know, and the more women you sleep with makes you more of a man. And brag about it. In social situations, I go some guys will say I slept with so and so and my assessment of the situation is they are sort of saying how much they are a man (R8)

If you are a man you would have been able to sleep with many women and break a lot of virginities and then they will say ya you are a real man you have done a, b, c, d or you have slept with a number of women (R11)

People would say you are not a man if you get to the age of getting married without having slept with probably 10 or more girls. (R12)

There is a lot of pressure on men and even on a sexual level, that's what also causes men to sleep around because they want to prove that I am a man so you want to go to different women. (R11)

The claims above show that in order for a man to be called a man by his peers he has to have multiple sexual partners. R12 goes on to say you have to sleep with ten or more girls before getting married. That has a huge consequence in the case of HIV because the man might be infected somewhere among those ten girls, he may be infected by the second girl resulting in the eight or more girls and the wife he is going to marry all being infected by HIV. Other respondents talk of how sleeping with many women and bragging about it to your friends shows that you are more of a man. This puts pressure on men to go out seeking conquests so that their peers can hold them in high regard. This sort of sexual prowess is detrimental to the health of the people involved in terms of HIV/AIDS because it relies heavily on numbers. The more women you have sex with, the more of a man you are and consequently the more risk

of contracting and transmitting HIV/AIDS or Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI). The danger of contracting STI is that it increases one's chance of contracting HIV and hence of passing it on.

R10 refers to another form of sexual prowess where the man has to perform for a certain number of hours, in his own words:

Men seem to be in a pressure to perform, culturally, if you don't perform for a certain number of hours you are not seen as man enough or if you don't have three rounds or five rounds or however defined. They are expectations even from the women that it should be done in a certain manner so if what they were taught culturally doesn't tally with what you are doing then there could be questions and I guess that could be the reason why other women hunt down for other men. (R10)

According to R10, this can result in women looking for other men besides their partner with the hope of getting someone who performs to their satisfaction thereby putting herself and her regular partner at risk. In the same way, the man can go looking for a woman who appreciates his efforts and does not put too much pressure on him all of which put the man at heightened risk of HIV infection.

4.2.4 Masculinity and reproduction

Making a woman pregnant or fathering children is also a trait considered to be masculine (Sorell and Raffaelli 2005). Dover (2005) refers to semen as a life giving substance that is the essence of manhood. In the Shona culture, bearing many children has always been considered as vital for one to be called a man as shown in the discussion in Chapter 3 about the custom of *kupindira* or *kusikira rudzi* (where a brother or cousin of a barren man impregnates his wife for him). R4 refers to this custom but it is interesting to note how he feels that the custom in itself emasculates you.

If you are in a relationship, well the general feeling is that you are a man because you are able to produce children, which goes back to culture again. Men who weren't able to produce would let either the younger brother come and do it for them or they will be seen as less of a real man, that's how it was then. It has changed now, you can't let the younger brother come and ho ho ho. You feel emasculated, to feel like a real man you have to have your own kids that's what culture teaches if you have some other guy coming to do it for you oh (R4)

This shows that R4 acknowledges that children are important for one to be called a man. The fact that he criticizes the custom of *kupindira* (that in itself could have consequences for the spread of HIV) leaves him with an alternative that could still put him at risk of infection of sleeping with other women with the hope that they can bear him children as is observed by R14

Yah when men are talking on their own they actually consider some of those things as very important that's why you see there is even pressure from your home if you don't bear children to say why what's the problem. You see vanatete (aunts) coming in to say what's the problem so at times they may even put pressure on you to marry another woman thinking that the problem will be the wife's. (R14)

R14 presents an alternative of marrying another wife, still putting the man (and the two wives) at risk of HIV infection and if the second wife does not bear him children all the women thereafter. Generally, in the Shona culture fathering children is considered very important to a man. This fact is reflected, according to Holleman (1969: 61) in the meaning of the term *baba* (father) which “implies respect, obedience and recognition of authority”. Fathering and fatherhood as a vital aspect of masculinity is affirmed by the responses of my interviewees to the question “is making a woman pregnant or having children confirmation that one is a man”?

Of course, in some instances like especially rural areas they believe that you are not a real man until you have your kids and they base how manly you are according to how many kids you have but I don't think so. (R7)

But culturally it's very serious, like I have been married for the past two years and already people are expecting a child and even those from the church they are beginning to ask questions saying you should be having a

kid by now where is the kid, or she should be pregnant. Surely, there is pressure and one of these days I spent a night worrying about but what's wrong with these people and it was disturbing. And even back home my wife said she was equally disturbed by a close relative who was saying even up to now you don't have a kid what's wrong with you, something like that. (R10)

It seems that having children is held in high regard since it impacts on one's social standing and on one's ability to be productive. The concern of fathering children results in a number of extra marital affairs where the people involved are looking to have children and it results in the reduced use of condoms.

4.2.5 Condom use

According to Dover (2005) in reference to Shona men (in a Zambian village), importance is placed on semen as a life giving substance. As a result, men would like to ejaculate their semen in a woman and produce children. One can understand the general dislike of condoms (Dover 2005). The fact that men like to ejaculate in a woman and to father children results in the reduced use of condoms as Peacock and Levack (2005: 177) assert, "Traditional men's gender roles lead to more negative condom attitudes and less consistent condom use". There are a number of other reasons why condom use is regarded as unmanly. The shuffling that goes on when one wants to wear a condom is considered unmanly as Foreman (1999: 22) says in reference of condoms "because in the middle of sexual conquest they can't put one on without feeling ridiculous". Furthermore, Foreman, (1999) asserts that real men have real sex and the only real sex is "flesh on flesh". This is shown by the assertion by some respondents that if their partner wants to have protected sex they will go out and find some women who are willing to have unprotected sex.

Negotiation of a use of a condom is a very tricky thing; unfortunately the problem always comes back to a woman to say how you are managing it. You can enforce use of a condom and then encourage that man to actually look for someone where he can have sex without a condom. So if there was no problem he can simply say so you are actually suspecting me of sleeping out fine you want a condom so I am going to go somewhere where I can have sex without a condom. (R11)

The responses I got from my respondents regarding condom use were mainly based on the vignette that portrayed a married man who was possibly promiscuous. I asked the respondents in light of the scenario presented in the vignette what they thought of condom use and the majority referred to condom use in the context of a marriage. The general consensus was that a man should not use a condom when having sexual intercourse with his wife. R16 says this of marriage and condom use

Marriage is a different terrain from other kinds of relations, when we get into marriage the understanding is that we are free with each other and so freedom implies many things, it implies that I cannot be barred from doing anything on my wife and vice versa. (R16)

Many of my respondents leaned heavily towards this kind of thinking. Most of the respondents proclaimed that they would be very angry with their wives if they suggested that they use a condom even if they were engaging in extramarital affairs. R1 says this

I will be furious to be honest with you, I will be very furious because why, why use a condom all of a sudden. Even if I was cheating, it doesn't matter. Because she is your wife period. I will be angry because, because honestly how can you ask me to use a condom? (R1)

The reason R1 gives for not using a condom is simply that the woman is his wife. This links with the discussion below that shows how masculinity makes women vulnerable to HIV. R10 refers to issues of power where the man has all the power in the relationship and by asking the man to use a condom she will be undermining his authority.

Or in other respects assuming that you are asking about issues of masculinity, the issue of power might come in and they say okay if they are determined not to say where they have been equally then it's a clear sign of some kind of chauvinism and they can force themselves on the woman even without using a condom. (R10)

Some respondents also referred to condom use in other relationships outside marriage. The general belief is that condom use is only for sexual encounters with prostitutes. R5 states that

I think protection is used mostly for the girlfriend because those tend to have other guys. (R5)

R6 affirms this claim but goes on to differentiate between sex with a prostitute and sex with a mistress. According to R6 in a relationship with a mistress, the use of condoms quickly wears off thereby increasing the chances of contracting and transmitting HIV.

Outside the marriage if he is having relationships I cannot call them relationships with prostitutes in most cases they use condoms. Most prostitutes use condoms but if he is having a mistress somewhere that is complementing his marriage, initially in the first few days he can use condoms but as time goes on they phase out the condoms. (R6)

4.2.6 “The need for sex is beyond my control”

The contention that a man’s need for sex is beyond his control coupled with the claim that it is a man’s privilege to have his sexual needs met are depictions of masculinity that also fuel the spread of HIV. Foreman (1999) proclaims that in some societies it is considered natural for men to be lustful. Polygamy is accepted in most African societies and this acceptance formalizes the belief that a man cannot be restricted to one woman sexually (Foreman, 1999). This also results in legitimization of what is referred to as “small houses” in Zimbabwe where it is acceptable for a man to have another girlfriend outside marriage even with the knowledge of the wife. Relationships such as the “small house” are instrumental in the spread of HIV since the man has unprotected sex with his wife and mistress or in some cases mistresses and in turn, the “small house” can be a “small house” to more than one man.

From the interviews, I tried to find out whether men considered themselves as having an insatiable desire for sex that was beyond their control. When asked if there were any differences between men and women the respondents were quick to point out that men want to have sex more than women and they cannot help it.

I don’t know about women but we want to have sex always. Women can live without sex but a lot of men right now cannot live for 2 weeks without it, it’s just how God created us because I think our hormones are actually more active than women’s. (R1)

I think men want to have sex more and women want to talk more. Because that's the way that it is. Men were just built to be more physical than women in all aspects; they are just born like that. (R3)

Generally, I think men want to have sex more than women do. I think it's biological basically I think why men would like to have sex more is to do with natural selection and basically spreading of seed. You find that in other animals, male species have multiple partners the reason being they want to ensure that the species don't go extinct so basically it's natural for men to engage in sex more than women (R8)

While it is interesting to note that the respondents believe that men want to have sex more than women, what is more interesting is the fact that they attribute this to creation or natural causes, causes that cannot be easily changed. They attribute this to how God created them, to biology and even as R3 emphatically states “that’s the way it is”. It is something that they view as God given and/or natural. R4 points to a different cause and attributes their wanting to have sex more to the way they are brought up.

I think it's because of the way we were brought up so being brought up having the man dissing the women all the time. Men's approach to sex is different; it's more physical because in any case what attracts them to women are physical aspects mostly. Anywhere you are if you are sitting in a group the first thing that attracts men is the physical aspect before actually getting to know the person, for women its probably different, they want to get to know you well firstly, then comes the sex. That's the general trend, if you are sitting in a group with men and they see a pretty woman passing they are not gonna say ah she seems like a very social person lets get to know her and then build up a relationship, it's usually the physical aspect. So they will probably say ah those clothes fit, man those clothes fit. (R4)

This feeds in to the discussion in Chapter 1 that states that the issue of masculinity is not as simple as it would appear. Here some respondents concur with the essentialist theory of gender and others with the constructionist theory concerning what causes them to be more physical when it comes to sex. Whatever theory one chooses the fact remains that men view themselves as wanting to have sex more. This has

consequences for the spread of HIV because for example where a man's partner is away for some time he can have sex with other women under the guise that unlike women he has to have sex all the time coupled with social tolerance and legitimization of male promiscuity as shown by the discussions by R10 and R18.

A very good example is our forefathers. They would go down South from Zimbabwe and they would not come back. What would happen in most cases is that when they come back it's either they have a woman or they left a woman there. I actually know my uncle he left a woman in Botswana when he went to Botswana. So biologically, men need sex more than women do, women can stay for, I remember my granny she stayed for quite some years alone I don't think she slept around during my grandfather's absence, so naturally I don't know whether it's an issues of suppression and women suppress it more than men or if men are so overt and they are aggressive but I find men more sexually active than women.(R10)

Men would marry customary wives and would leave them in the rural areas and go to work in towns and marry an urban wife; it's a clear indication that men are more sexually inclined than women. How many cases have you heard about traditional wives who when the man comes back found the wife pregnant or being married to someone else? Very few cases so I think it's self explanatory. (R18)

In a worse case scenario, this claim of men being out of control when it comes to sex encourages sexual violence and as Kalichman (2007) affirms, "sexual violence has been linked to HIV risk factors in many countries". This "masculine" attribute is one reason why men abuse women sexually and even to go as far as raping women claiming that they were out of control facilitating the spread of HIV.

The discussion thus far depicts men as possessing a strong, difficult to control urge to have sex. The question according to Bujra (2002: 214-215) is do we attribute this urge to involuntary consequences of sexual abstinence (in the case of labor migration for example)? The answer will be no, if I were to use my respondents' views. Male promiscuity is not limited to involuntary consequences, some men engage in extra marital affairs even if they have a wife who is willing to satisfy their sexual needs. Is

it attributed to a genetic predisposition towards promiscuity then? This is a view that most of my respondents took as is shown by the discussion above where they portray their need to have sex as natural. This view however, has been discounted as mere biological reductionism because as Chapter 5 will show not all men are the same. Doyle (2002: 202) proposes an interesting opinion in this regard. In his words, “Why do men use sex workers? The answer is because they can; structural considerations and gender identity provide the enabling environment”. R11 alludes to the fact that men are given the opportunity more than women are.

I think men controlling their sexual urge I think it's a problem it's also to do with opportunities to be able to explore that idea and men have them.
(R11)

Furthermore, some men either believe that turning a woman down is very difficult or presents them as unmanly, almost like they would have failed in their duty as a man to satisfy a woman sexually.

For men to say no it's very hard. When a woman comes up and wants to have sex a man can't say no but women can. (R1)

If they get an opportunity at any time I know they will take it. It's a man thing. Look a girl will say no but very few guys will say no to a girl. (R5)

R13 talks of the difficulty of resisting pressure from a woman and even links it to the biblical story of Adam and Eve.

Yes because you see Adam was not pressurised as such but we can say that it came from Eve that's why he ended up committing the crime. I believe that it's some sort of power women have over men that if a woman says to you do this it is very difficult to say no. I have experienced it and it's not easy, it's very difficult to say no to a woman, I don't know if it's physiological or natural if men were created like that but I realise it started from the Garden of Eden. If a woman says do this chances are the man will do it, it's difficult for them to say I can't do this or I don't want.
(R13)

This perpetuates the spread of HIV in that many men are going to engage in a number of sexual encounters because they simply cannot say no.

The fact that men view sex and feelings or emotions as different entities also contributes to the spread of HIV. This is because they can have intercourse with anyone even with people they are not emotionally involved with but physically attracted to.

You should realise that there are two ways of looking at sex for men if the motive is just to have sex you will find that men will get satisfaction with having sex with just anybody, as soon as its done there is no connection its over (R11)

Generally, they have a high sex drive, I think with many men they are men who are able to sleep with a different woman everyday and to them it doesn't mean anything. (R11)

R15 presents another scenario that portrays men as unemotional.

I mean to a man anytime is teatime. And to a woman some times are not tea time to her and it depends on what you did to her in the morning and what you did to her in the afternoon. One man was talking about a woman's world being one big world where everything else is in that big room but a man's world is compartmentalised. When I come out of the bathroom or out of the toilet, to me I just forget about what was happening in the toilet and when I get to the bedroom it has changed, when I see my wife everything has changed, I can just have an erection and we just go on. But for the woman what happens in the bathroom or in the kitchen affects what happens in the bedroom. (R15)

This shows how easy it is for some men to have sex. Furthermore, this contribution by R15 feeds into the discussion in Chapter 1 about how masculinity (and femininity) is constructed. The view by R15 leans towards the essentialist theory because it appears as though the man cannot help but have an erection when he is with his wife in the bedroom in the same way that the wife cannot help feeling upset about what has happened before entering the bedroom. This serves to confirm that the subject of gender is not straightforward and how difficult it is to choose one theory over the other in trying to understand gender differences.

4.2.7 Men's health seeking behavior

Also central to the spread of HIV is the declaration that “real man do not get sick” (Foreman 1999). This encourages men to view health seeking-behavior as a sign of weakness and according to Gibbs (2005) results in men's reluctance to acknowledge illness and access health care service. Peacock and Levack (2004) and Beck (2004) give examples of how in South Africa health seeking behavior is seen as a sign of weakness in men. In Cape Town the Voluntary, Counseling and Testing Centre in Khayelitsha has 30% uptake by men and 70% women (Peacock and Levack, 2004). Additionally, the CD4 count of women at initiation of treatment is higher than that of men, about 100 cells in women and 85 in men according to Peacock and Levack (2004). In the Shona culture, men are encouraged to appear strong and not show any sign of weakness as is shown by the respondents. R4 and R9 cite some examples in their lives that show that any sign of weakness on the part of man was unacceptable.

The idea of men repressing their feelings. If you are brought up in the Shona culture men are not expected to cry as much as a woman you know, which is strange because I think it defeats the whole purpose. It doesn't make sense for you not to express how you feel if you are feeling the same amount of grief as the woman but because you are a man you are not supposed to cry, you are supposed to be chilled at a funeral. (R9)

Culture continues to perpetuate what seem to be myths now but when you are brought up, they seem very realistic. You fall down off your bike your mother comes to you ok that's enough crying boys don't cry, if it's a girl they will make her cry the whole day. So obviously, I don't know I have never been able to understand why it's like that but it seems the Shona culture defines masculinity by appearing to be more strong and stable.

They don't give you a leeway to express how you feel. (R4)

It starts with being tough having fallen off a bike to repressing your feelings at a funeral of a loved one. This infiltrates to health seeking behaviour where seeking medical attention is confirmation that one is weak and requires help as R4 states

If you have been brought up thinking males are meant to be strong and being sick is a sign of weakness some may be affected in that they won't

tell people they have got HIV until it is too late when you could get help and live longer. (R4)

4.2.8 Personal problems

The fact that men should not discuss their personal issues is also a drawback in as far as HIV/AIDS is concerned. In the Shona culture, being a man also includes being able to deal with your own personal problems and not discussing them openly. Discussion of personal problems with friends or family can result in disapproval or criticism. Here are some responses on the issue of discussing personal problems and whether it made one lose respect.

I don't share very personal problems with anyone; I am not comfortable with that, I would feel vulnerable. (R5)

Yah I think I have had that problem you see when you talk about your personal problems to friends part of you shows that you don't have the capacity to deal with the problems and you don't lose respect you just show how vulnerable you are so very few men talk about their problems (R11)

What I know is if the problem has to do with their sexuality or a certain defect they will always be hesitant to talk about it and sometimes it will take a lot of determination on the sides of friends and family to try and find out what's the problem and they can be defensive or harsh. (R15)

Personal problems also include health problems. A man who believes that personal problems should be kept to himself is also likely to keep his HIV status to himself in the event that he is HIV positive because he feels vulnerable to all the criticisms and judgments he is likely to undergo. It seems that problems that involve one's sexuality or that are disease related are viewed as more private. Other problems such as financial ones are in a way acceptable for one to discuss with others.

The fact that men should not discuss personal problems with women is also detrimental for health seeking behavior. Hospital staff is mainly comprised of women,

and women attend hospitals more frequently than men do such that men view them as women's spaces. In the study by Beck (2004), one man says:

Because in our culture even if there is a ceremony men used to just be by themselves and women belong to the other side and men belong to the other side. (Beck, 2004:16)

The same applies for the Shona culture as previously discussed in Chapter 3. This results in men being hesitant to visit health facilities since they are largely serviced by women and largely frequented by women. Additionally, men also do not want to be treated by men or discuss health problems with male doctors or male nurses. This is so especially when this has to do with sex or their sex organs and when it requires actual viewing and handling of the sex organ by another male. The flaccid and/or diseased penis is something most men would rather keep secret or hidden. R15 talks of how men are not comfortable with discussing their ailments especially if these are sexual in nature with men and women alike.

I think naturally men can be afraid of or hesitant of talking of such things. Especially when the source of the problem is himself, that maybe he has developed some biological problem, maybe a lack of erection I think naturally men will be hesitant but about other things they do it depends on the thing. What I know is if the problem has to do with their sexuality or a certain defect they will always be hesitant to talk about it.

4.2.9 Alcohol use

Alcohol use is also one notion that has been linked to masculinity. The amount of alcohol you consume translates to whether you are a real man or not. A number of my respondents stated that indeed alcohol use is a measure of one's manliness in some circles.

A man that does not drink beer is not a man at all, sorry, he is not a man at all especially a man that doesn't drink beer he is not a man. You have to consume alcohol for you to be called a man, its just proper (R1)

From what I have seen around I can say to an extent yes people think that every man should take alcohol, that's what many men think and you are not man enough if you don't take it but I don't believe it. (R12)

I would say maybe among my peers those who can drink the fastest and the most feel a bit masculine at times but I mean it's not really a big issue. (R7)

Yah in the rural areas people who drink are considered men you have to drink and I have had many friends that I parted ways with because they were pushing me into drinking. It was like 'sekuru hamumwi saka muri murume pakai' (Uncle, you don't drink so you are not a man at all), 'bhururu haumwe, ah madzimai vapei coke' (Friend you don't drink, ah he is a woman give him a coke). We have had these satirical expressions that if you don't drink you are not man enough (R10)

Alcohol abuse is also instrumental in the spread of HIV in that in their intoxicated states men can lack rational judgment and have unprotected sex with many partners and also their regular partner as is shown by the assertions by R6 and R8

In relation to alcohol and as much as I drink myself I believe that it breaks down your barriers and your judgement becomes impaired and you can do things you otherwise would not have done if you were sober like having unprotected sex. (R8)

So by this I mean consumption of alcohol can lead to deviant behaviour in a way. In most cases when you hear of a man having slept with a prostitute it's normally under the influence of alcohol and when you consume alcohol you are at liberty to do anything even things you would not do when you are sober so alcohol leads to a lot of tragedies in life. (R6)

4.2.0 Negotiating subordinate masculinities

It is important to recognize that not all men adhere to principles of hegemonic masculinity. However, just the fact that it exists places even those that do not adhere to it at risk of contracting and transmitting HIV. Foreman (1999: 19) avers that "many live in conscious or subconscious fear that they do not live up to masculine ideas". This fear manifests in different ways that can place the men at risk. Alcohol abuse and the use of violence (discussed above) are ways in which men can try to measure up to masculine ideals. Gay men are an example of men that do not adhere to hegemonic

masculinity. In a country like Zimbabwe where homosexuality is a taboo in both the cultural and political arena, it will be difficult for gay men (Epprecht, 1998). Homosexuality is seldom spoken of except in a negative and derogative manner. As a result, gay men live a secret life and cannot obtain information on anal sex and the supplies necessary to protect them (Varga, 2001). The stigmatization and marginalization of gay men lead to them not seeking medical attention.

4.3 How masculinities make women vulnerable to HIV/AIDS.

4.3.1 Subordination of women

In most societies women have always been subordinated to men and have no voice in most if not all matters as is stated by Buchbinder (1994: 15)

Throughout history, women have generally been subordinated – physically, sexually, domestically, socially, politically and economically – to men.

This subordination has resulted in a number of issues that are detrimental to their health. The Shona culture possesses a strong patriarchal system that sees women as subordinate to men. As a result, the husband mainly makes most decisions in the home. Holleman (1969) asserts that being a man in the Shona culture means that you are the head of the family unit and you make most if not all the decisions. This is supported by R13 in response to the question “in an intimate relationship between a man and a woman whose responsibility is it to initiate discussions about sex?”

*The man in the typical Zimbabwean sense, but not only sex about everything, because there is a perception of being a man. Being a husband it's understood to mean being like the one who is not only in control but the one who dictates everything that has to happen, who commands, who directs, who plans everything, **totally everything** except maybe what kind of pots to buy. (R13) (Emphasis mine)*

Holleman (1969) goes on to say that, the husband does not have to account for his movements or absences from home. This is supported by R4's claim below.

It seems like this Chipso character has been brought up in the typical Shona culture where the wife is submissive to the husband, which is why she is afraid to confront the husband. But I think there are some man who do it and being brought up in the Shona culture and been told that the man

is the head of the house, some man don't expect their wives to question them. The majority seem to be men that do not want to be questioned especially by their wives; they are the head of the household so they can make their own decisions. (R4)

This has a number of consequences for HIV/AIDS. To begin with, the women cannot even question their partners on where they have been and as a result, men get away with staying away late from home and even in engaging in extramarital affairs. When I presented my respondents with a vignette that portrayed a husband that comes home late and asked them what they thought would happen when the husband returned after midnight the typical answer I got was

The wife probably wants an explanation but the husband wants to eat or wants to sleep or something like that. Usually though the man feels like he does not owe the wife an explanation (R3)

The wife is probably expecting an explanation although her aunts tell her that's what men do. The husband on the other hand is probably expecting the wife to not say anything probably just give him his dinner and go to sleep. (R4)

In the classic Zimbabwean sense usually you would expect the woman to remain quiet and she is gonna get the food or something and of course the dramatization the husband is gonna be hey don't ask me anything, don't ask me questions whatever, that is typical. (R7)

These are just three responses I selected but the general view was that the woman does not ask any questions, brings him food and in some instances has sexual intercourse. This could result in the woman contracting HIV because she does not know who he has been with and has no right to question her partner.

4.3.2 Inability to negotiate sex

The subordination discussed above even infiltrates into decisions about sexual issues. Women have no liberty to discuss issues regarding sex with their partners. Assertions by the men I interviewed affirm this claim.

In reality, men do not give their wives or their spouses you know privilege to talk about sex. If a woman starts talking about sex you know the African man will begin to feel that maybe the woman is bitching somewhere or is now becoming too big for her boots and things like that. So women really do not have that power or authority to talk about sex in as much as they may desire a lot to talk about it but they just can't do it because they are scared of men. You can be punished for something that you don't know. (R6)

I think men always wanna have sex and they portray it whereas women I think they do wanna have sex but they don't show it. Because like now a girl who always wanna have sex is labelled like ha she is a slut, she is loose, whereas guys who always wanna have sex like ah they are cool, they're players. (R2)

The assertions by the respondents above show that by and large any discussions about sex are not open for women to discuss. The respondents refer to how one can be labeled as a “slut” or “loose” or can be seen as “bitching” around. The strong derogative terms that are used to describe the women show how seriously these respondents regard this matter of women not openly discussing sex. This has gotten to an extent where women themselves in the opinion of men believe that they should not engage in these matters as is shown by R5 and R15

Some girls okay most girls I come across they seem to be reluctant to initiate such conversations, they want to be told what to do and then give suggestions, they don't want to be the ones to start because I think maybe they feel they will be labelled if they initiate. (R5)

I mean I have seen it in my experience in marriage and interacting with people that are in marriage. One thing that I have heard is that a number of women, maybe it has to do with their upbringing or socialisation, my understanding is that women are sometimes not very proactive in terms of initiating sexual intercourse, they always kind of wait for the man to initiate. (R15)

These responses are based on some respondents who are not married and others who are on average married for less than six years. This could be the reason why women

are not afforded room to initiate discussions about sex. Perhaps couples in more established relationships are free to discuss sex. However, in the case of HIV/AIDS if it takes more than six years of marriage or of establishing relationships before women can freely discuss sex (but engage in it) it would be too late; the virus would probably have been contracted by then.

Inability to negotiate sex includes the inability to introduce condom use. It is difficult for a woman to negotiate for condom use even when she knows or suspects that her partner is seeing other women as is shown by R7

So in terms of the African way of life a man deserves conjugal rights and it is not within the jurisdiction of the wife to introduce condoms into the family, that will be just like prostitution, just prostitution. Being Africans I believe it is the husband's duty.

This bold statement by R7 shows that the wife is not at liberty to introduce condoms in the marriage. Furthermore, the wife cannot easily say no to sexual advances by her partner as shown by the following responses to the question “to what extent are both men and women free to say no to sex”.

*AAHHH!! In as much as we are talking about issues of equal rights and other things I don't think women are that free, even with those rights I don't think they are afforded the opportunity to say no if they want to. If they are afforded the opportunity to say no in terms of the chances of them saying no I don't think that, I don't think their chances of winning are higher, more often than not they could be forced into it even if they don't want partly because this issue of culture could be influencing some how.
(R10)*

I think men can say no but for women it becomes very difficult because for a woman to say no there are these implications to say if I say no to him what is he going to do, maybe he will go out there and find someone else so it becomes a problem(R11)

For women it might be very tricky because I am sure it is the reason that many men give especially when they say they are going out with other

women its because they say their wives are refusing them their conjugal rights(R12)

Refusing sexual intercourse with the husband can result in the husband actually going out to find someone who is willing to have sex with him. R6 gives some reasons why women have to have sex with their partners

You would find that the world is changing so fast these days there are strip clubs and there is so much that is happening in night life, you know, sex is sold, you choose the type of sex that you want which your wife might not be in a position to offer you.(R6)

For that reason, the woman is afraid of losing him to other women and would rather have sex with him just to keep him happy placing herself at risk of HIV infection.

In some instances economic reliance on men by the women results in such scenarios. The woman is afraid of losing the man who provides financially for her and her children. Another related issue is that of payment of the bride price, it becomes difficult for a woman to say no in a case where the husband feels he owns her because he paid for her as R16 says

The problem is the African society, even if the woman doesn't want and the man wants, its very rare for the woman to say that I don't want because the man will say that I paid for you or something like that, I paid lobola so there is no way you can say no(R16)

Social status can also be another reason especially in the Shona culture we are looking into. A married woman takes on the surname of her husband and she is now referred to as *Mai* (Mrs.) So-and-so. The status of a married woman is highly regarded in the Shona culture and greatly aspired to by many and divorce or divorced women are held in high disdain by society. Therefore, if one is in a marriage one will try to stay in it even if it places you at risk of HIV infection.

On some occasions women might consider saying no to sexual advances by their partners but are afraid of the violence that can be employed on them as R18 says

If she is courageous enough and there was good communication before that, she can tell him that I am suspecting that you are seeing someone

else. She can do that but she will be risking her teeth. She is gonna be beaten if the husband is a hothead. (R16)

If he is a typical man like what I see in my society or the greater community that I grew up in she may get even verbally abused and at worse physically abused for just asking that. So I think the fact that this wife is already afraid of the husband it gives me the impression that this man is the typical Shona man or typical Zimbabwean man so if she might ask it might even worsen the situation and may become physical. (R13)

The remarks by the two respondents above show that questioning a man or refusing to have intercourse with him can result in physical abuse. That is one reason why some women would rather do what the husband wants even if it places them at risk of infection.

The discussion thus far shows how masculinity puts women at risk of HIV infection. Women find themselves vulnerable to HIV/AIDS because of a number of issues among them, subordination to men, inability to negotiate sex, economic and societal reliance on men, their low positions in family and social structures and their traditional role as caregivers. The declaration by Peacock and Levack (2004: 176) puts it all together soundly.

This oppression has devastating health consequences for women, placing them at risk of violence, limiting their ability to negotiate the terms and conditions of sex, and severely compromising their sexual and reproductive health, including the vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and placing the burden of care and support for people living with AIDS squarely on women's shoulders.

4.4 Chapter summary

The account on the influence of masculinity above does not suggest that the accounts given are true of all the men in Zimbabwe or all the men I interviewed. Foreman (1999) could not have put it any better when he said

This picture of men as sexually aggressive, insecure and heedless of the consequences of their actions is painted with a broad brush. Individual

attitudes and actions vary widely and many men consciously and subconsciously reject some or all masculine ideas. (Foreman 1994: 23)

In the same line of thought Shire (1994) states

There is no universalized “Zimbabweanness” or “Shonanness”, just as there is no single, universalized masculinity. (Shire, 1994: 147)

These assertions show that we cannot really talk of masculinity as if it were unitary and whole. The theory of constructionism shows that masculinity is made by the processes one goes through in life and it is a fluid process. Different processes furnish the man with different ideals of masculinity and these ideals are forever changing. This is not to suggest that the old model of masculinity (hegemony) has disappeared, it has not as evidenced by the above accounts. Therefore, it remains vital to look into the masculine attributes that make men and women vulnerable to HIV infection and attempt to find ways to dislodge these attributes.

There is however, need to recognize that a new masculine identity is emerging. There is need to recognize that men themselves are aware of the fact that the traditional masculinity is not the desirable one and that in some cases, it disadvantages women in various ways and exposes men to a number of vulnerabilities. As a result men might now look to a new type of masculinity (or masculinities as we have already highlighted since it is not a unitary concept) that has positive aspects in this regard. The following chapter looks into the new masculine identities that are emerging and their effect on HIV/AIDS.

Chapter 5: Emergence of a New Age Guy

5.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter shows that some notions of masculinity do indeed place both men and women at a heightened risk of HIV infection. It however, concludes by showing that not all men adhere to hegemonic principles. There is a noticeable change in how an increasing number of men now define their masculinity. However, it is vital to note that the new ways in which men define their masculinity do not replace the old ways as Kimmel (1987: 9) points out

Men are changing – not perhaps, with the bang of transformation, but also not simply with a whispered hint of a slight nudge in a new direction. New role models for men have not replaced older ones, but have grown alongside them, creating a dynamic tension between ambitious breadwinner and compassionate father...

Just as we have looked into the effect of the “ambitious breadwinner” (the traditional hegemonic ideal type of masculinity) on HIV the same should also be done for the “compassionate father” (the new man). We cannot ignore the changes that are occurring in how masculinity is perceived because according to Morrell (2001) gender change is important because it shows that masculinity can and does change and that it is not fixed and it reveals that men are different. It is therefore of importance to this study to look into the changes of masculine ideals especially with regard to HIV/AIDS. Any change that is positive can effect positive change with regards to HIV infections and spread. Morrell (2000: 7) could not have put it any better when he stated that

*Masculinities are constantly being protected and defended, are constantly breaking down and being recreated. For gender activists this conceptualization provides space for optimism because it acknowledges the possibility of intervening in the politics of masculinity to promote masculinities that are more peaceful and harmonious. For gender scholars, **the challenge is to identify what forces operate to effect change in masculinities, when, where and how such changes occur and what their effects are.** (Emphasis mine)*

Therefore, this chapter looks into the emerging masculinity which Buchbinder (1994) refers to as the New Age Guy or the Sensitive New Age Guy. Morrell (2001) defines the new age guy or the new man as

'New Man', this was a term coined to refer to men who did not subscribe to stereotyped ideas such as that all women were nags, that women's place was in the home or that women should look nice but say little. New men were in favor of women's liberation, looked after the children, supported women in their desire to develop careers, and were sensitive and introspective people. (Morrell 2001:4)

The new man as defined by Morrell above might have a positive influence on issues of HIV/AIDS discussed thus far. It is however, important to acknowledge at the outset that much as the new man can have a positive influence concerning HIV/AIDS he might also have a negative impact. The ensuing discussion examines how the new man has been received in the Shona culture using the interviews I conducted as basis of the discussion and the influence he might have on transmission and contraction of HIV/AIDS.

5.2 Men and their responses to change

Change in the hegemonic masculinity is regarded by society in many ways. One way is of viewing the change as having a positive influence in that it places men and women on equal footing with the ability of both having an equal say in decision making, parenting, work roles to mention only a few. Peacock and Levack (2004) assert that given the opportunity and the knowledge many men are eager to challenge customs and practices that endanger women as is shown by R8.

On my part if I decide to get married, I would go for an HIV test and even in a relationship, I would really push for an HIV test. Paternalism where the woman is subservient to the husband I feel that is moving away, which I feel is a good thing we are basically heading towards a situation where women and men are on the same footing. (R8)

This emerging masculinity is not without its drawbacks. Men and women regard it, according to Buchbinder (1994), with suspicion. Some men who uphold the notions of the dominant masculinity will view the aspiring new age guy as having sold out his

birthright as a man to women and in turn ridicule the aspirant. Equally, a new age man might appeal to many women because of his 'sensitivity' and he might have a lot of sex because of this – thus exposing him and his partners to risk of infection. Morrell (2001) forwards three categories on how men react to change in masculinities namely, reactive or defensive response, accommodating response and progressive response. Below these categories are put to use to show how men react to changing masculinities centering on responses from the interviews I conducted.

5.2.1 Reactive or defensive response

A change in the gender order now sees women occupying positions, making decisions and engaging in activities that were not normally viewed as appropriate for women. Segal (2007: xix) states that

From the boardroom to the bedroom, women have not only been found sitting at the highest table, if in rather small numbers, but perhaps initiating the action. Meanwhile male managers while still in fact overwhelmingly monopolizing power and influence, say they feel 'besieged' on all sides by economic changes and new competition from younger women...

Epprecht (1998) concurs with Segal in reference to the situation in Zimbabwe. In his words:

African women have made rapid advances into public sphere, politics and employment, at men's expense in the eyes of many.

As Segal (2007) and Epprecht (1998), show change is to some men unnerving to the extent that they feel they are being undermined. R13 talks of how material possession has always been one way of ascertaining one's manhood but he feels it has been undermined with women now having material possessions of their own.

Even people of my generation have not realised that things are changing. It was easy long ago to associate being a man with being able to be head of house in terms of material possessions. But things are changing because we now have wives or women who are far much better than men are materially and financially. In that respect men now have a problem because they no longer see the headship of the family because headship

meant being the breadwinner so now people can live even better without them so I think those people have a problem (R13)

Men have always used financial or material possessions as a decoy for women to stay with them even if they were unfaithful as R7 observes.

I think the problem, the inherent problem in our culture is the thing that most men fall back on is that I feed you, I buy you your clothes, I take care of the family and a woman finds herself in a situation where she can't really do anything because she doesn't have anything to fall back on (R7).

Because men have for long been in a position of power this change to them is an imbalance and they attempt other ways to balance it out. Men find ways in which they can have their power felt and Morrell (2001) refers to this as the reactive or defensive response. However, mostly women bear the brunt of most of the feelings of the emasculation and compensatory entitlement that the men undergo (Morrell, 2001). Acts of violence as a way of asserting dominance of men over women is one way he cites that is also affirmed by R5 when he says

I think violent men tend to be more insecure men who I think through violence they feel they are asserting their manhood. (R5)

Another way could be of neglecting the wife in search of other women of a lower status so that he can feel that he is a man by providing for her.

5.2.2 Accommodating response

This is a situation where men accommodate change, they put up with it. At this stage, men tolerate change but do not necessarily go looking for it. This is shown according to Morrell (2001) by the tolerance of the gay men and improvement of women. Women who want to progress in academic or career lives are given the go-ahead by their husbands. R17 comments on who should take care of financial matters in the home

I think in this day and age women are now educated and independent I think sharing it is an ideal situation and also it builds this respect in a relationship if the woman can do her own thing.(R17)

Men are not only accommodating women in terms of academic progression but also with regards to decisions made in the home. Some men now give women room to talk about sexual issues. R9 says this of a request by his wife to use a condom

It would depend on the husband, if I were in that position and if I knew I had been promiscuous I think it would be fair enough and I would have to accept. (R9)

This is a big change from some responses discussed in Chapter 4 where men were totally against the use of condoms especially in a marriage. R3 also shows that a woman's decision not to have sex should be respected

If she doesn't want to have sex she doesn't want to. Even in a marriage, because a marriage is not a contractual agreement about having sex or not having sex, it's concerning your life with that person. (R3)

R2 also talks of how one should respond when confronted about infidelity and he is really cheating

I think the guy ethically (I know this is never going to happen) he should be honest with his wife and tell her you know this is what is happening and not lie to her, because HIV is a big thing. Sleeping around with someone else and then sleeping with your wife and contracting HIV, you don't want to do that to someone you love. (R2)

It is interesting that these respondents use expressions such as "respect in a relationship", "life with the other person" and "love" in contrast to the discussion in Chapter 4 that revolved around power and dominance. There indeed seems to be emergence of a more sensitive man who regards the feelings of the woman. However, at this stage the man wants to maintain his headship or leadership role as is shown by the statement made by R13

So my understanding is that as a man while I am the head I am not a dominator. My responsibility is providing and giving security to my family, fending for them, helping them, making life easy and enjoyable for them, fully satisfying my wife's conjugal rights and that requires a lot of understanding from me, what does she want when it comes to that. If she needs me to help with household chores and so be it, just create time for that. (R13)

This response of accommodating women seems to have a positive influence as far as HIV is concerned. To begin with, suggestions from the female partner are accepted and put into use. This means that if the wife suggests measures that could prevent them from contracting HIV these will be put into practice.

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5.2.3 Progressive response

This is where men not only accept change but also initiate change. Morrell (2001) gives examples of men who are involved in men's groups that are engaged in gender consciousness raising, who practise equal division of labour and equal childcare and support women's professional goals. The respondents from my interviews also showed progressive change. What was most interesting was that ten out of the eighteen respondents have tested for HIV and showed that they were keen to test again as is shown by R8.

On my part if I decide to get married, I would go for an HIV test and even in a relationship, I would really push for an HIV test. (R8)

A number of respondents denounced some pejorative attributes of masculinity. R6 disapproves of having multiple sexual partners as being manly. This is a positive direction for change in that the new man has changed the way he experiences his sexuality. Reduction in the number of sexual partners can also result in a reduction in the spread of HIV.

But there are many schools of thought that men should have lots of mistresses and things like that but I don't subscribe to that because it has resulted in a lot of stresses in families, untimely deaths and things like that. (R6)

R12 below shows that he does not see any affiliation between a man's masculinity and the number of children he has. This is also positive in that it could result in an increase in condom use and hence a decrease in the spread of HIV.

I don't believe that, I don't believe my manhood is derived from making a woman pregnant but from knowing who I am as an individual, that I am a man outside of a wife or without a wife. (R12)

Other respondents below cite a number of other negative attributes, including alcohol abuse, subordination of women and poor health seeking behaviour.

A man is a man that's what I think it's dumb to think if you don't consume alcohol you are less of a man. (R3)

There was a time when I felt that being a man is to be a king and being served by the wife and even if you are sick you don't tell your wife that you are sick, you just keep quiet and assume some kind of bravado and keep on going and that you should hide things from her. With education and the church and modern life, it changes you. (R15)

These proclamations show a shift in how masculinities are defined. It is important in the case of HIV/AIDS because men who according to Foreman (1999) “determine the path of the disease” are now taking the initiative to thin out the path of the disease. The fact that men not only acknowledge and implement suggestions given by the female partner but also come up with their own suggestions like R8 who claims that he will push for an HIV test is very relevant for contraction and transmission of HIV/AIDS. For a long time men have been seen as the driving force behind the epidemic and their behavior has been individualized. Responses such as these coming from men themselves show that masculinity is not cast in stone it can change and it shows not all men are the same. This dispels dangerous assumptions that all men are the same as echoed in the Shona popular saying “*varume vanoita sevakazvarwa nemunhu umwe chete*” (men are all the same, they act as if they were born of the same woman).

Having identified that some change is recognizable “the challenge is to identify what forces operate to effect change in masculinities, when, where and how such changes occur and what their effects are” (Morrell, 2001). The following discussion tries to find what generates the changes in masculinities based on the interviews I conducted.

5.3 What changes men?

This is probably the most important question in this study of masculinities and HIV, to find out what brings about the positive change. Although the change appears to be on a small scale as Segal (2007) states, that it happens in “slow motion”, it is important to look into how and why it is evident. It is also important to look into the reason why the change is slow, what is holding it back and find out if there is any way in which it can be speeded up.

First, it is important to note that any change, not necessarily gender change, is subject to resistance and even reversal. Take political change for example. In Zimbabwe, there is a message of change of governance that is circulating and a lot of resistance by some people is still meeting it. The same applies to masculinity. Even though the traditional hegemonic type places men and women at risk of HIV infection like we have observed some men still do not accept new types of masculinities that could be positively influential. That could be due to the uncertainty that change brings with it. Some men are uncertain as to what will happen to their position as men and whether this will in any way compromise the dominance that they have had since time immemorial.

However, Segal (2007: 30) claims that some men have no real wish to change and that they are happy as men to exploit women and to have the other privileges that come with being men. On the other hand, it seems as though there are other men who wish to change but feel that they are being held back. Three of the men that I interviewed said to me that they know that the dominant mode of masculinity puts them and their partners at risk of HIV infection. They know that they are supposed to adopt new forms that do not jeopardise their health but they just hold on to some attributes of the old model, as if there is an unseen force that acts within them. This is in line with the question posed by Segal (2007: 30) “what underlies the clash between thought and deed in men?” Tony Bradman (cited in Segal, 2007: 30) blames this disjuncture on society

Men have changed... but society itself hasn't changed sufficiently to make life easier for fathers and families.

Culture can also be cited as a reason for the slowness of change. According to Giddens (1994), tradition (culture) is equated with nature and what is natural remains outside the scope of human interventions. Some men would view their manliness as such and hence have no desire to change. Furthermore, Giddens (2004) refers to tradition as a medium of identity and any changes regarding how manliness is defined can be viewed as loss of the identity ‘men’. A number of other reasons could be cited for the slow nature of change of masculinity. These include, religion, environment, privileges it confers on men, to mention only a few. R11 gives a detailed analysis of why change is slow and I felt that he encapsulate most of the respondents’ views.

And the challenge for us is that having grown in an environment where our fathers were really in control, now we are realizing that, because the image that I have of a family is what my parents went through so I would like to do the same. So I am also dealing with a change, I am managing a change situation in the environment that I am in to say, I can't do what my father used to do to my mother. So we are also trying to readjust though it's difficult. I think as much as, the way I look at it is the man is the head of the family and that is very important. We have responsibilities men and women but I have noticed that women are getting to an extent where they are now trying to overrun man and part of it I don't like it and that's a huge problem because we are not used to it. It can happen to the generation of our kids, they can do it because they live in an environment where they can see that responsibilities are shared. But for us there needs to be a readjustment to say you know what because of the background but I think there is also this tendency in women to think that they can just turn the clock and at times it can break a relationship. The positive change is accepting that a woman can advance herself, the idea of respecting a woman and that we all share responsibilities but I also want the level of respect when we get into the household to be different. You can't have a flat structure in a house where you are all equal it's not possible. The person who should be directly responsible for making sure that the house is clean and the cooking is the wife. (R11)

In as much as the above discussion shows how difficult it is to effect change in how masculinities are defined we cannot write off the achievements of those who have been able to change even in the slightest of way. The men that I interviewed viewed themselves as having a new kind of masculinity that is not the dominant hegemonic form, much as I thought that most of them fell between the two types. Even those respondents who viewed themselves as the dominant types had other attributes that made them fall into the new category. Most of the respondents felt that they were largely “new men” but it was interesting to note that they fell into some attributes of the traditional type. Earlier on, an assertion by Kimmel (1987) suggested that the hegemonic masculinity and the new age masculinities exist in a parallel manner, without one necessarily replacing the other. From the interviews I conducted, I

gathered that as much as they exist side by side they influence and affect one another to the extent that an individual chooses attributes from both. I could not find one respondent that fitted one model and not the other; others leaned heavily towards the hegemonic and others towards the new man.

The topic of this chapter is “emergence of a new age guy” and that in itself shows that in my view the new age guy is emerging, he is not yet established but emerging. As reflected in the above discussion he might be instrumental in preventing the spread of HIV. It is therefore important to find out what is bringing about this new guy. Most of my respondents attributed this change to education, religion, globalization, feminism and HIV/AIDS.

I think now I am a multi kind of social man, a multi layered man, I now understand manhood from different angles, biologically, in terms of religious orientation, in terms of educational orientation. (R15)

Because of globalization, feminism and HIV things are changing and women have more say in relationships. (R8)

5.3.1 HIV/AIDS

In any crisis, there is marked gender change. A prime example is that of the time of war where men go off to fight and women take up roles that were previously assigned for men like looking after the cattle or making firearms. In the same way in the time of the crisis of HIV/AIDS a change in masculinity has resulted as Morrell (2001: 30) asserts

The tragedy of AIDS is also contributing to gender change. While on one hand, the spread of AIDS is promoted by misogynistic and heterosexual masculinity, its consequences, on the other hand, are forcing men to confront death and its attendant emotions.

The responses below from my respondents affirm Morrell’s claim and show that men are indeed changing because of HIV/AIDS.

Not in this day and age with a lot of HIV/AIDS and things like that, gone are the days when people believed that men should just be moving around

you know, screwing anything that has got a hole in between the legs, these days you got to be very very careful because you can die of AIDS (R6)

You really need to have someone very close to you in one way or the other it might be a friend, a relative or whoever you know who you actually see dying of AIDS. I am telling you even if you are a man of bad behaviour the moment you really see that thing happening to people immediate to you it's actually a life changing thing. Even when you look back at your past behaviour, say the past 10, 15 years you regret so many things when you have seen other people succumbing to HIV. But the problem is many people don't believe it unless it happens to their own families (R18)

This shows that some men are changing for fear of contracting HIV. With the high numbers of people dying from AIDS everyday one would expect that all men would find alternative ways to define their masculinity besides sexual prowess. However, one has to realize that HIV happens in intimate circumstances that are rewarding in their own way, people actually enjoy sex. Additionally, HIV is not instant; people do not immediately know that they have HIV. According to Wallace and Wolf (1995: 296), people make choices based on the rewards they get. In this case, some people will value instant sexual gratification over preventing themselves from HIV infection (which is not definite that they will be infected).

On many occasions, people are in a situation of uncertainty or risk, where they cannot be sure of the outcomes of their actions or, therefore, be sure of which is the most "valuable" alternative. ...people will multiply the value of an action's possible reward by the probability of it actually materializing and then choose on the basis of these results.

In other circumstances some people will make a fatalistic choice as is revealed by a popular Shona saying "*kusiri kufa ndekupi*" (we are all going to die anyway).

5.3.2 Globalization

The other reason most respondents cited for the change in masculinities is globalization or the availability of sub-cultures. There is a mixing of cultures through various means that include traveling, the media, and the internet. According to

Morrell (2002: 310), globalization involves increase in information technology, gives free play to market forces and is “a powerful dissolving and constitutive cultural force”. As a result, we can no longer refer to a specific Shona culture because it has been mixed with other cultures and other new technologies such as television, cell phones, and computers. The increase in information technology has seen an expansion of horizons. People are exposed to other cultures that in some cases question their own cultures. Free market play, colonialism and programmes such as the Economic Structural Adjustment Programmes (ESAP) all had an impact on gender change. R8 and R9 refer to how they have experienced a mixing of cultures.

I think for myself and some other guys the Shona culture hasn't influenced us that much as it did with our parents. (R8)

I think so because culture was different from what it is today, they had their own standards and limits of what being a man is. The reason is the whole culture change and the mixing of cultures because now it's about what you believe in and what you think. (R9)

As a result, they receive a number of messages on what it means to be a man and as R9 asserts it is up to the individual to take up the meanings he desires.

5.3.3 Education

Other respondents point to education as an important factor as far as change is concerned. The influence education has on masculinity is fully discussed in Chapter 3. The discussion points to the fact that some respondents view education as a positive influence in changing masculinities. This is through the development of curriculums that educate men on the dangers of attributes of masculinity such as sexual prowess that is instrumental in the spread of HIV/AIDS. The fact that men and women are afforded the same opportunities in schools and the lessons on gender equality offered in the educational system affords men an opening to treat women equally. On the other hand, other respondents feel that education is in accordance with the dominant masculinity in that educated men are seen as more of men than uneducated men are and use this attribute to have multiple sex partners. This shows that education does indeed influence masculinity. The challenge therefore is to initiate an educational system that challenges gender stereotypes. Furthermore, reference should be made to

informal education to include education one gets from parents, other family members, peers and from different media sources. These sources should also provide a message that highlights the dangers of some of the attributes of masculinity.

5.4. Possible interventions: One size does not fit all.

Having highlighted how masculinities are constructed and attempted to find out what changes men the next step would be to implement the strategies that promote change. However, it is important to note that we cannot implement a strategy that will be successful for all men and that will on its own bring about the desired change. From the responses I got from my interviews, no one man attributed one specific aspect to the change he is experiencing. In addition, one attribute that seemed to work for one man, education for example did not work for another. Furthermore, some reasons that some respondents gave for their change are limited to them, HIV/AIDS being an example. Limited in the sense that a number of people have not experienced HIV/AIDS on a personal level, either by losing someone close to AIDS or having someone close suffer from it or by being HIV positive themselves. R16 and R18 claim that unless you have someone close to you die you cannot comprehend the severity of the disease.

The impact of HIV/AIDS on society, having been affected by losing people I love due to AIDS that changed me completely. In general I don't think society is changing that much, the places I go, I go to bars or clubs you know it's actually getting worse, you have to be affected as an individual for you to undergo some change. (R16)

You really need to have someone very close to you in one way or the other it might be a friend, a relative or whoever you know who you actually see dying of AIDS. ... But the problem is many people don't believe it unless it happens to their own families (R18)

These comments suggest that an approach to garner any change cannot be a one size fits all approach but a comprehensive plan that possibly caters for different types of men at different levels and in different environments.

From the discussion in Chapter 3, it looks like the family has a lot of influence on how masculinity is constructed and it is tempting to say that family dynamics should be reviewed and changed where necessary. However, largely intervention directly in the family life is not feasible. In the African culture, the Shona culture in particular, parents do not discuss issues that involve sex with their parents and the roles of the *tetes* and the *sekurus* (aunts and uncles) are phasing out. Other institutions can be used to educate boys on how to be men such as the school and the media. Direction should be taken in schools to make sure that teachers are well equipped and informed on gender and sexual issues, to include the danger of multiple sex partners, the correct and consistent use of condoms, the equal treatment of girls or women by the opposite sex and vice versa, to mention only a few. It is important to make sure that the teachers are able and prepared to issue the curriculum bearing in mind that they too are part of the same society and culture. Measures should be taken to bring in a special teacher for example who will be responsible for the curriculum or to group the students according to their sex. A follow up should also be made to find out if the curriculum is working. There is need for more research in the area of education that also investigates whether schools are the best place for such social learning to take place or if other communal programmes need to be implemented. The role of the media and how it influences an individual's choices and decisions should also be investigated. Other initiatives should be taken like implementing more prevention campaigns, designing male friendly testing and counseling centers, more male oriented clinics and programmes. There is also need to recognize as Mane and Aggleton (2001) point out that gender relations are not things that men do to women, but that they both construct gender relations. As earlier stated some mothers and female relatives reinforce traditional ideas about masculinity. Therefore, interventions should not be restricted to men but also to women and growing girls. Education, the media, the family and the community should focus on men as well as women. The aim is targeting as many areas as possible as Thomson (2002: 169) states.

However, in order to influence cultural changes, a multi-pronged approach is needed: legislation, social policy and services, training of professionals, capacity building of local community groups, as well as work with the community.

Moreover, more research in the field of masculinities and HIV/AIDS cannot be over emphasized. As this research has shown, there is indeed a link between masculinity and transmission and contraction of HIV. More research in this area could go a long way in providing possible implementations that could see a reduction in the spread of HIV linked to masculinity.

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Chapter 6: Conclusion

The study aimed at exploring the assumption that some notions of masculinity make both men and women vulnerable to HIV/AIDS using interviews done among 18 Shona speaking Zimbabwean men and suggesting that there are other masculinities, such as the emerging new age masculinity that appear to be less HIV/AIDS facilitating. The first chapter was introductory and it introduced the two broad topics under study, masculinities and HIV. It highlighted the influence HIV/AIDS has had on Zimbabwe thus far. It also attempted to give a definition of masculinity rooting it in two major gender theories, essentialism and constructionism. It showed how difficult it is to restrict oneself to any one of these theories when trying to understand masculinities. Advocates of both these theories bring out some interesting and valid points in their attempt to explain masculinity. In trying to work out which one of these theories works best, I concluded that theories help us to understand reality but sometimes do not capture all of it. So the battle does not lie in trying to fit reality to a specific theory but in using both theories to acknowledge that masculinity or gender in general is not a very straightforward subject but it is complicated and as Segal (2007) purports the more we try to study and make sense of it, it in fact becomes more obscure. The first chapter also highlights that masculinity is not an integrated homogenous concept but that we should rather refer to it as masculinities and realize that there are many different masculinities and they operate in a hierarchy. A brief history of African masculinities and their link to colonialism was also incorporated and the chapter ended with an explanation of how masculinities are perceived among the Shona speaking Zimbabweans.

Chapter 2 gave a detailed account of the method I used to collect the data for this study. It gives the reason for the use of in-depth interviews, how the respondents were selected and how ethical issues were dealt with. This chapter also has a section that accounts for me as the researcher. It takes into consideration the nature of the study, being sensitive. It deals with issues of HIV/AIDS, which in itself is a sensitive issue due to the stigma attached to the disease and the fact that it is mostly transmitted sexually and issues that involve sex are considered private. The fact that I am a female researcher investigating a male domain was also discussed in this chapter.

It was important before finding out if indeed masculinities put men and women at risk of infection to find out how these are constructed. Finding this out is important if any intervention is to be made because this is the point where it can be implemented. Chapter 3 explored the different ways in which masculinities are constructed. This chapter also shows that construction of masculinities is not an obvious process. A number of agents are instrumental in the construction of masculinities that include family, culture, religion, education and the media. However, what is important to note is that one is not simply constructed passively but that each individual responds differently to these agents and has their own individual agency in deciding what masculinity is.

Chapter 4 shows the linkages between masculinity and HIV. It shows that masculinity does indeed place women at risk of HIV infection. It also shows that masculinities not only place women at risk of infection but men as well. The chapter does this by showing that some characteristics of what it means to be a Shona man are the very same characteristics that are favorable to the spread of HIV. These include equating masculinity with sexual prowess, subordination of women, reduced use of condoms, men's unwillingness to practice health seeking behavior, alcohol abuse and the undermining of subordinate masculinities.

Chapter 5 questions whether there is any change in what it means to be a man in light of all the factors that influence masculinity and in the face of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. It shows that there is emergence of the New Age Guy observable among the Zimbabwean men and it seeks to ascertain what is influencing its emergence and how this can be used to implement strategies that can promote and propagate change in how masculinities are defined as a step towards reducing contraction and transmission of HIV/AIDS.

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Appendices

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Appendix A: Consent form

I, _____ (name), agree to participate in this research that is being conducted by Elizabeth Mumbengegwi to explore the linkages between masculinity and HIV/AIDS. I understand that the results are going to be used in a minor dissertation that is part of the requirements of the degree Masters in Philosophy in HIV/AIDS and Society she is undertaking.

I understand that the purpose of the study is to hold a face to face interview to find out about my life experiences as a man and how they have shaped my understanding and responses to HIV/AIDS.

I understand that the study involves an interview that lasts an hour or less, which will be audio taped.

I understand that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and that if I wish to withdraw from the study or to leave, I may do so at any time, and that I do not need to give any reasons or explanations for doing so. If I withdraw from the study, I understand that this will have no effect on my relationship with any of the individuals involved or with UCT.

I understand that because of this study, there could be no violations of my own and others' privacy. I have been asked not to talk about any of my own or others' private experiences that I would consider too personal or revealing.

I understand that all the information I give will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law, and that the names of all the people in the study will be kept confidential.

I understand that I may not receive any direct benefit from participating in this study, but that my participation may help others in the future.

The interviewer has offered to answer any questions I may have about the study and what I am expected to do.

I have read and understand this information and I agree to take part in the study.

Date: _____

Signature: _____

If you have any concerns about this study, please contact the researcher.

Appendix B: Interview schedule

The vignette below is read out to the respondents and then questions are asked.

Vignette

It is after midnight and Chipo is tossing and turning waiting for her husband to come home. This is not the first time that she has spent a sleepless night worrying about the whereabouts of her husband. When she tries to ask where he has been all she gets is “out with my friends”. She has heard rumours about her husband and how he is seeing other women. She is afraid of contracting HIV but also afraid of confronting her husband. When she has tried to complain to her mother or her aunts all she gets is “*Ndizvo zvinoita varume*” (that’s what men do).

Questions

1. What is the couple going to do when the husband returns?
2. Do you think that the man and the woman might have different expectations about what will happen? Explain.
3. How do you think the man might feel if the woman asked him to use a condom? How would he respond?
4. What do you think the man will say if he is confronted about his infidelity?
5. When it comes to sexual relationships, do you think that men and women different? If so how?
6. In an intimate relation between a man and a woman, whose responsibility is it to initiate discussions about sex?
7. To what extent are both men and women free to say when they do not want sex?
8. Do you think that the man should always leave the woman at home or should occasionally take her out with him? Explain.
9. What does it mean to be a man in the Shona culture?
10. Are there any cultural expectations to be ‘a man’ that you feel make you vulnerable or anxious?
11. Does your perception of what it means to be a man differ from that of your culture? If so how?
12. Is there anything in particular that makes you feel “masculine” or manly?

13. If you make a woman pregnant today will that confirm that you are a real man?
14. What do you think of the statement that “A man who does not consume alcohol is less of a real man”?
15. What do you think of the assertion that the financial burden of running the household should lie squarely on the husband’s shoulders?
16. Do you think that a man loses respect if he talks about his personal problems?
17. Have you ever been tested for HIV?

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