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15

**White Men Speaking:
An Exploration of Intersections, Tensions and Alternative Ways of Being White
and a Man in South Africa**

By

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A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award
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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.

Signature:

Signed by candidate

Date:

29/03/05

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My deepest debt is to Adam, Andrew, Bryan, Carl, David, Justin and Mark. They know who they are. This dissertation is built on their stories and I thank them for sharing them so openly with me. I have learnt so much from them.

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ABSTRACT

It is becoming widely recognised that those at the centres of power are also responsible for social transformation. In South Africa, white men still dominate these centres. Some white men have recognised this and have taken on the task of confronting their prejudice and acknowledging their privilege, in order to forge more transformative ways of being a white man in South Africa. These ways of being, however, remain marginal. Hegemonic masculinities and whitenesses continue to dominate South African society, hampering transformation. In order to counter these hegemonic ways of being, alternatives need to be actively engaged and emboldened. This can be achieved partly by disaggregating narratives of masculinity and whiteness, as neither are homogenous. In so doing, dominant discourse is challenged and a more robust discursive space for alternative ways of being is allowed to emerge.

This dissertation draws on fourteen in-depth interviews. Two one hour long in-depth interviews were held with each of seven white middle-class men in Cape Town. This data was analysed drawing on two theoretical frames. First, Grounded Theory was used to explore themes emerging from the transcripts. This approach enabled close attention to the complexity of the men's voices and helped prevent the unproblematic reproduction of dominant constructions of whiteness and masculinity. QSR Nvivo facilitated this analysis. Second, critical discourse theory was used to explore the ideological positioning of and power dynamics implicated in the discursive resources accessed by these men. An important part of this process was the positioning of discourse emerging in the transcripts relative to "master" narratives and the active exploration of counter hegemonic discourse. Furthermore, intersections between race, class and gender were examined.

The analysis revealed the complexity of these men's identities. It confirmed that gender is not about "being" but rather about the active "doing" of gender projects. It revealed a tension between holding in place historically sanctioned ways of "doing" whiteness and masculinity, and ways that interrogate and disrupt privilege. Furthermore, it showed that this tension varied both within and between individual narratives. The analysis shed light on the hierarchies between different versions of masculinity and whiteness. It revealed the significant "others" in the emergence of these identities, most notably fathers, sisters, domestic workers, English-speakers/Afrikaans-speakers, heterosexuals/homosexuals. Exploring these hierarchies and relationships with "others" highlighted how class, race and gender intersect and are actively co-constructed. The analysis further revealed the tension between benefits and costs incurred by patriarchal enactment. It pointed to the systematic violence experienced by some of these men, most notably in particular school environments. These benefits and costs are located in the context of the material reality of South African society. Importantly, the analysis revealed how some of these white men grapple with these apparent contradictions and in doing so rearticulate their masculinities and whitenesses in ways which challenge the hegemony.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1	Introduction	1
1.1.	The Limitations of this Work	2
1.2.	The Value of this Work	3
1.3.	The Purpose Of This Study	3
CHAPTER 2	Literature Review	5
2.1.	Masculinities	5
2.1.1.	Gender is Socially Constructed	5
2.1.2.	Multiple Masculinities	5
2.1.3.	Hegemonies and Subordination	6
2.2.	Whitenesses	7
2.2.1.	Invisibility/Normativity	8
2.2.2.	Narratives of Whiteness in South Africa	9
2.3.	Intersections: Whiteness and Masculinity	9
CHAPTER 3	Methodology	11
3.1.	Conceptual Framework	11
3.2.	Narrative and Identity	11
3.3.	Profile of Participants	13
3.4.	Method - Procedures	14
3.4.1.	The Pilot Study	14
3.4.2.	Reflexivity	15
3.4.3.	Gaining Access	16
3.4.4.	The Interviews	16
3.4.5.	The Interview Questions	17
3.5.	Transcription	17
3.6.	Coding	18
3.7.	Analytical Tools	18
CHAPTER 4	Analysis	21
Part 1 - Masculinities		21
4.1.	Doing Gender	21
4.2.	Women as Other	22
4.3.	Gendered Bodies	24

4.4. Policing Heterosexuality	26
4.5. Fathers	29
4.6. The Middle Class White Man	32
Part 2 – Engaging Race	35
4.7. Seeing Black, Becoming White	35
4.8. Being White: An Exercise in Evasion	39
4.9. “Bare and Basic” Afrikaners and “Sophisticated and Glamorous” Englishmen	42
Part 3 – Benefits and Costs	45
4.10. Victimised Perpetrators / Perpetrating Victims	45
4.11. “Almost like going to war”	46
4.12. “The Sporting Boy”	47
4.13. Rough and Tough	50
4.14. Collusion and Resistance	52
4.15. “I am the last resort”	53
4.16. “This is no longer my brother, he is his father’s son”	55
4.17. Babies	58
Part 4 – Grappling with Privilege	60
4.18. Masculinity and Privilege	60
4.19. Whiteness and Privilege	62
Part 5 - Other Voices and the Road to Transformation	66
CHAPTER 5 Closing Remarks	69
REFERENCES	
APPENDICES	

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Briggs-Wengraf Model of Components of the Interview Situation	i
2. Call for Participation for Social Circle	ii
3. Call for Participation for Men's Group	iii
4. Interview Agreement	iv
5. Interview Questions	v
6. Wengraf's Algorithm	vii
7. Codes	viii
8. Profiles	ix
9. Lifelines	xi
9.1. Adam	
9.2. Andrew	
9.3. Bryan	
9.4. Carl	
9.5. David	
9.6. Justin	
9.7. Mark	

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Academic and popular interest in the study of masculinities is growing worldwide. In March 2004 the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women released its first set of agreed conclusions on *The role of men and boys in achieving gender equality* (U.N. Commission on the Status of Women, 48th Session, 2004). In South Africa these processes are echoed by endeavours such as the *Fatherhood Project* headed by the Human Sciences Research Council. It is becoming accepted that gender equality “demands that men take on the challenge of changing themselves” (Morrell, 17/10/2003). The struggle for men to see the privilege they have is central to this process (Wildman and Davis, 2002; Steyn, 2001; Frankenberg, 1993) and it can only be achieved through the inclusion of men in the struggle towards gender justice.

Although radical feminisms have been criticised for the demonisation and exclusion of men, more inclusive feminisms have emerged. These acknowledge the value of men’s involvement in the project of realising gender justice. A “third wave” (Frankenberg, 1993) of feminism has endeavoured to undertake this project in the context of other axes of oppression, especially race¹ and racism², the driving rationale being that gender and race do not simply present versions of each other but actively constitute each other (Lerner, 1997). African feminisms have pointed out that African women’s realities are shaped by a “plurality of values of which Africa consists” and that sound scholarship around gender needs to be “located in that history” (Modupe-Kolawole, 2002, p. 93). The reality of African women’s oppression is criss-crossed by factors such as culture, nationalism, religion, globalisation, colonialisation and race. Gender is but one layer in the fight for equality. Modupe-Kolawole (2002) goes on to say “feminism” is viewed by many African men as a “divisive concept” (p. 92) employed by the West to undermine the struggle against racism. It is also viewed with skepticism by women, perceived by some to have been imported to “ruin nice African homes” (Aidoo cited in Modupe-Kolawole, 2002, p. 93). Not only does this illustrate the very intersectional nature of gender and racial oppression but also the fact that gender needs to be addressed simultaneously as other forms of oppression in Africa.

In the same way that mainstream academic focus is shifting from women as the “problem”, the “problem” of race can no longer be seen as “coming from” blacks (Lipsitz cited in Steyn, 2001, p.xxix) but rather needs to be “located and addressed in the discourses, socialization, political and economic privilege of white people” (Steyn, 2001, p. xxix). In the past the analysis of race has focused largely on black people (Giroux, 1997) but as bell hooks (cited in Giroux, 1997, p.291) argues, very little has been done “to investigate and justify all aspects of White culture from a standpoint of difference”. More recently however, for those engaged in critical analysis,

¹ In this study the concept of race is recognised, not as the biological and social criteria set out by Apartheid, but rather as a social reality (Lerner, 1997; Frankenberg, 1993; Erasmus with De Wet, 2003) defined, like class, by the social resources made available to one on the basis of certain criteria. In South Africa the criteria of skin colour, through Apartheid, has been “overdetermined” (Epstein, 1998, p. 52) to shape that reality.

² “Racism emerges not only as an ideology or political orientation chosen or rejected at will but also as a system of material relationships with a set of ideas linked to and embedded in those material relations” (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 70). Furthermore, it exists as “everyday racism” which is “expressed and contested in ordinary situations” (Essed, 2002, p. 203). As such this study “relates day-to-day experiences of racial discrimination [both by target and agent] to the macrostructural context of group inequalities” (ibid.) and understands it as a means to determine social reality through the everyday exercise of ideological power.

the same way in which men have become gendered, whiteness has become raced, (Steyn, 2001; Frankenberg, 1993) and the primary task of whites is to “deterritorialize the territory of the White, to expose, examine and disrupt ... so that like other positions it may be placed under critical analysis” (Nakayama and Krizek cited in Giroux, p. 292).

Furthermore, the active co-construction of race and gender suggests that we cannot gaze on one without the other and to do so means failing to engage the complexity of these positionalities³ (Lerner, 1997; Frankenberg, 1993). This study is located within a critical postmodern paradigm and stands at the intersection of work around masculinities and whiteness. This study joins the increasingly broad scope of work which examines the social construction of the complexities of masculinities and whitenesses, the way in which they interact and the implications that these interactions have for power, and the realisation of social justice. Furthermore, this project hopes to broaden debates around post-colonialism. Through a series of in-depth interviews with white men about being a man and white in South Africa, this study joins a growing body of literature “looking head on at the site of dominance” (Frankenberg, 1993, p.6), actively challenging it through direct engagement.

All the interviews share a common uniqueness in first, their willingness to participate in this, a potentially threatening exercise and second, the depth and honesty of their experiences shared with me, the researcher. I have been truly blessed by the risk that these men agreed to take with me and it is with this in mind that I engage this work. I am fully aware that I hold the power to represent these men and create them, as it were, in my own image. As Bhavnani (cited in Erasmus, 2000) and Steyn (2001) point out, it is a great power and intimidating responsibility and I hope that I am able to rise to the challenge with both integrity and sensitivity. Having said that, there is always the risk of betraying the trust that has been afforded me. I have to remain true to my critical frame and personal conviction and I will have to say critical and, therefore, difficult things. At the same time I hope to do this with sensitivity to the complexity of these stories. Furthermore, by their very participation in this study, I know that all these men are in some way asking questions around their positions as white men in South Africa. I trust that this work will contribute to their journeys through these difficult questions, as it has mine. I also trust that any critical commentary is experienced in the manner in which it is intended, with the greatest respect and sincerest gratitude.

1.1. The Limitations of this Work

This study aims to look at a very particular gendered and raced positionality and does not directly engage femininities or blacknesses, other than to contextualise the white masculinities under investigation. It also does not engage class other than as a co-constructor of these positionalities. Furthermore, this study does not aim to generalise about the nature of white masculinities in South Africa. The respondents make up a small number of white men from a very particular class experience. As such this study is limited to this context.

³ In this study positionality is literally taken to mean an individual's social positioning, within and relative to social groups. This positioning is permeated by power relations and related to identity. “Our identities are defined in relation to how others identify us and they do so in terms of groups which are already associated with specific attributes, stereotypes and norms” (Young, 2000, p38). This does, however, not preclude the notion of agency to re/define identity within these positionings.

1.2. The Value of this Work

Rather than making generalisations around white masculinities, this study is motivated by the importance of the particularisation and localisation of both gender and race identity (Steyn, 2001; Frankenberg, 1993; Connell, 1995), in order to fully engage with the theoretical articulations of “multiplicity” (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 10) of these positionalities. The value of this study lies in its exploration of some of the complexities of identity as experienced and reported by a particular group of white men in South Africa today. The value further lies in the exploration of how the various threads of their identities weave together to form the complex tapestry of their lives. Nevertheless, the implications of this study are both particular and general, both exploring individual articulations and examining “how each is inscribed in differing ways into a shared history” (Frankenberg, 1993, p.18).

Although this study does not examine other positionalities, it actively engages these as the “others” in relation to which whitenesses and masculinities are constructed and concerns itself with the power dynamics that permeate these relationships of otherness. It also examines the ideological framework and consequences of these constructions.

1.3. The Purpose Of This Study

Literature in the area of men’s studies in South Africa has failed to address the complexities of men’s gender projects (Morrell, 2001; Shefer and Ruiters, 1998; Oyegun, 1998; Ratele, 2001). This is particularly true for white masculinities which seem to have slipped under the academic radar. A case in point was the *Symposium on Manhood and Masculinities* held at WISER (September, 2004) in which one out of twenty five papers, presented over three days, focused on white masculinities whilst a whole morning was presented on black masculinities. Furthermore, a lot of the work, which was unnamed in terms of race, was about black masculinities. It may be that this particular masculine hegemony is still doing a pretty good job of not exposing itself, but it may also be that the complexity of that hegemony, and challenges to it are not being adequately engaged. This is what this study serves to do.

More broadly, however, some theorists have argued, the exercise of conceptualising masculinity tends to result in the fitting of men’s experiences into pre-existing frames (Ratele, 2001). The result is that the masculine subject is not allowed to change. In fact, it can be argued that the rearticulation of problematic masculinities further entrenches them. At the aforementioned *Symposium on Manhood and Masculinity*, Robert Morrell cautioned against the unproblematic assumptions undergirding many men’s studies, of what he calls the man/power and man/violence couplet. He argued that to engage in the study of men from this theoretical platform is to lock the understanding of gender into these dichotomous relationships and to lose the complexity and nuance that characterises gendered identity, and the complexity of the way in which power permeates them.

Although this argument has been made about masculinity, the same dynamic applies to whiteness. After Giroux (1997) Steyn (2001) argues that equating whiteness with racism “is paralyzing for those whites who seek

liberating subject positions” (p. xxx). Giroux expands this point in arguing that what is necessary is an approach that gives whites the “possibility of rearticulating Whiteness, rather than either simply accepting its dominant normative assumptions or rejecting it as a racist form of identity” (p. 293). He further argues that the result of equating whiteness to racism is that white people have “few resources to question and rearticulate whiteness” (p. 296) and as a result retreat into a “general sense of angst over racial politics” (p. 296). However, Steyn (2001) notes how Giroux makes the distinction between “whiteness as a racial ideology and the many subject positions that are open to and adopted by, white people (p. xxx). The disaggregation of whiteness in this way allows the space for whites to “reconceptualise their identities in emancipatory ways” (ibid.) and in so doing take on the responsibilities of social transformation. The same holds true for gender identities.

The purpose of this study is to explore some of the “many subject” positions that Steyn, talks about and in so doing contribute to discourse around more “emancipatory” ways of being both white and a man. *Everything But The Burden* (2004), a group of young white men doing anti-racist and anti-sexist work in the USA, make the point that it would be very cynical to believe that “most white heterosexual males, if given the choice would trade the health of the people and the world’s ecosystems for their own well being” (p. 2). I also agree, however, that in the current climate of world affairs, white men actually stand in a unique position to bring about changes in that system. It is about working to dismantle this power and in doing so, “inhabiting” it differently (Erasmus, 2004). It is about shifting the responsibility for transformation to the centres. Crucial to this shifting of responsibility is the productive engagement of those who are by virtue of historical legacy, centered, in this case white men, in these processes:

Change in practice... Can be the long and difficult remaking of an inherited (determined) practical consciousness: a process often described as development but in practice a struggle at the roots of the mind – not casting off an ideology, or learning phrases about it, but confronting hegemony in the fibres of the self and the hard practical substance of effective and continuing relationships (Williams cited in Sideris, 2004, p. 88)

Sideris (2004) goes on to argue that “the pressure to conform to the dominant standard is not founded on an uncomplicated desire for power” (p.89) but rather plays out in the conflict of identity and a coherent sense of self. The pressure to yield to the hegemonic is greatest when there is no social support for alternative practices (ibid.). The disaggregation of the hegemonies of white masculinity, by giving voice to those who critique and “interrupt” (Steyn, 2001, p. xxviii) them, is central in the process of creating these alternative discursive spaces. It is these alternative spaces that this study serves to explore and in so doing contribute to the growing engagement of white men in processes of social transformation.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

2.1. Masculinities

2.1.1. Gender is Socially Constructed

“Gender is a way in which social practice is ordered” (Connell, 1995, p. 71) and when we speak of masculinity or femininity we are simply labeling these “configurations of gender practice” (ibid, p.72). Connell goes on to say that it is not simply *what* gender is that is significant but *how* it happens. This process of acquiring gender is what he refers to as a “gender project” (ibid.) in which an individual actively engages within a particular cultural and ideological context. The key word being *actively*. Within that context “of class, race and other factors” (Morrell, 2001, p.8), gender becomes a subject position that can actively be taken up (Hollway, 1984). The socially constructed nature of gender is the epistemological foundation of this study.

Central to the notion of gender, however, is that it is by definition relational (Connell, 1995; Hollway, 1984). It was a feminist, Simone de Beauvoir, who first introduced the concept that gender is oppositionally constructed, “women being constituted as ‘other’ to men” (Connell, 1995, p.18). She argued that women did not exist except in relation to men. More recent gender analysts have argued the corollary, that “masculinity does not exist except in contrast with femininity” (ibid, p. 69). It is therefore impossible to articulate the masculine without reference to the feminine, a key point of tension around which the conceptualisation of gender as constructed, not biological, revolves, and a key tension in the analysis of this work.

2.1.2. Multiple Masculinities

Assuming that gender is a project wrought of social resources, we are forced to reconsider the term masculinity and refer rather to “multiple masculinities” (Connell, 1995, p. 76) so as to appreciate the “diversity of men’s projects” (Wetherell, 1996, p. 322). As Holland et al (1994) put it, there are various ways in which “men do masculinity” (p. 123) and how they do that masculinity is determined by the cultural resources available to them (Edley and Wetherell, 1997; Wetherell, 1996; Morrell, 1998). The disaggregation of masculine identity in this way is crucial in the realisation of more “emancipatory” ways of being, which lies as the central purpose of the study. However, these ways of being exist in particular socio-cultural contexts.

The process of constructing gendered identity has been described as the “narrowing of choice which takes place in the context of the “other”, most notably and obviously those of class and, especially, race” (Frosh et al, 2001, p. 146). This process is, however, not simply one of different races, classes and cultures creating different masculinities (ibid.). “Since cultural practices are racialised and gendered as well as classed, racialised masculinities are both culturally produced and productive of cultural practices” (ibid.). They do not simply provide different contexts for each other to emerge through but serve to actively co-construct each other (Lerner, 1997). This conceptualisation is central in this work as it is the co-constructed nature of masculinity and whiteness, and the realisation of disaggregation of these positionalities, which is the critical focus of the study.

2.1.3. Hegemonies and Subordination

The only thing that can be generalised is that the “patriarchal dividend” (Connell, 1995, p. 82) does not pay out equally to all men. Connell defines the “patriarchal dividend” as the accumulate advantage that men experience relative to women. This dividend is the result of hegemony. Hegemony is the “cultural dynamic by which a group claims and sustains a leading position in social life” (ibid, p. 77). Gender is one dimension of that position and it intersects identity with equally powerful axes, like race and class. Hegemony is a central concept in this study in that it captures the power of certain versions of masculinity over others. In the exercise of working towards more progressive versions and the obstacles to them, this is an important tension.

However, the concept of hegemonic masculinity has come under the spotlight of late. According to Connell (1995) hegemonic masculinity can be defined as the “configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken for granted to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women” (p. 77). Even if a man is himself not actively involved in the systematic oppression of women he, by virtue of being a man, reaps the rewards of patriarchal domination. This argument has however been criticised for being too simplistic (Morrell, 2001). The interplay of race and class becomes crucial to appreciating the complexity of gender relations in South Africa and the notion of a singular masculine hegemony needs to be further dissected (Epstein, 1998).

Different versions of masculinity become dominant in different contexts. To assume that the Euro-American version of hegemonic masculinity (the homogeneity of such a concept itself being problematic) is *the* hegemonic version of masculinity is in itself an act of cultural hegemony. For the same reason then that we speak of masculinities we should speak of *hegemonies* (Connell, *Symposium on Manhood and Masculinities*, WISER, September 2004). An important tool for exploring the nature of these hegemonies, and the relationships that they have with each other and other less dominant versions of masculinity, is that of subordination (Connell, 1995). This is an important development in the conceptualisation of this work in that white masculinity is not conceived as *the* hegemonic version of masculinity in South Africa, but as one of many. This allows for the conceptualisation of more than one dominant way of being a man and white and in different contexts, further contributing to a more nuanced understanding white masculine identities. This is crucial in capturing *all* the ways in which *all* these versions of masculinity serve to entrench male privilege.

What hegemonies translate into, are cultural ideals of masculinity and within the framework of male dominance over women, there is a hierarchy of accepted forms of masculinity and a process of domination and subordination between them (Connell, 1995). This process has become more complex through globalisation where localised hegemonies may be subordinated by more globally dominant hegemonies (Connell, *Symposium on Manhood and Masculinities*, WISER, September 2004). In the much skewed power relationships resulting from globalisation, these imported versions of masculinity may in fact, become new cultural ideals. This dynamic relies on one of the central characteristics of hegemonies; that they are only likely to be established if they are linked with some form of institutional power (Connell, 1995). It is for this reason that this study locates

the subjective experience of being a white man in South Africa, very firmly in the reality of current socio-economic arrangements.

South Africa's long colonial history and Apartheid meant that institutional power and resources were for a long time in the hands of one particular group of men, white men. Although since the new dispensation this arrangement has been rendered more complex, it is largely still in place (Epstein, 1998). For example, according to the South African Department of Labour's Employment Equity Report for 2003, white men still dominate top management positions at 67%, while Indian, African, and Coloured men hold 18% and women (white 9% and black 6%) make up the rest. Furthermore unskilled labour is dominated by African men, who make up 62% of the total unskilled labour market, and African women who make up 22%. White men and women make up 1% each (South African Department of Labour, 2003). The exercise of colonialism was one that relied on a particular version of masculinity to achieve its aims. One that was dominant and one that was white.

2.2. Whitenesses

The colonial endeavour was based on the "superiority" of the colonisers which was physically marked by their paler skin colour and socially by their "civilized" customs. Conversely the "inferiority" of the colonised, marked by darker skin colour and less "civilized" customs (Steyn, 2001). Furthermore, the existence and legitimacy of whiteness in Africa relied on the "inferiority" of dark skinned Africans. Whiteness represented civilization, progress and moral enlightenment, which Africa was seen as clearly lacking, and in need of (ibid.). With God and science on its side, whiteness could claim, not only moral superiority, but endogenous superiority, to a continent perceived as further down the evolutionary ladder. Whiteness relied on the deprivation and subhuman position of the African in order to stake its rightful claim to Africa. This study approaches whiteness from within this historical frame of colonial exploitation⁴. This is an important theoretical point of entry in that it locates whiteness within a particular historical power dynamic. What this study serves to do is interrogate this power and in so doing work towards dismantling it.

According to Steyn (2001) Apartheid South Africa was *the* society most overtly organised by race. Arendt and Hobson (cited in Steyn, 2001) see South Africa as the "fullest expression of Imperialism's logic" (p. 23) where a European narrative of white superiority took a particularly strong hold. But Steyn (2001) adds that South African whiteness has two distinguishing characteristics. Firstly, it exists in an environment where whites are vastly outnumbered by the indigenous population (ibid.). As a result whiteness in South Africa has always in some way "been constellated around discourses of resistance against a constant threat" and although South Africa's history is located within the colonial "master narrative" of whiteness, it produced a particularly "rampant" version thereof (ibid, p. 25).

Secondly, she argues, it has been "reluctantly" shared "by two major groups of European stock" (Steyn, 2001, p.25) – the Afrikaners and the English. The relationship between the two is shaped by the legacy of British imperial conquest over the Afrikaner. As a result "the texture of Afrikaner whiteness then, was coarsened by

⁴ Requirements of length do not allow for in-depth historical contextualisation. Although it is not explicitly described, there is an assumption of this context.

discourses of indignation and rebellion toward the more confident whiteness of overlordship assumed by the English” (ibid, p. 26). The narrative of whiteness in South Africa then is not a homogenous one, but rather fragmented and characterised, in particular, by this significant schism. The acknowledgement of this schism within South African whiteness is a crucial theoretical platform to engage in the exploration of the disaggregation of racial identities, as it is this disaggregation which allows for the possibility of alternative ways of being white to emerge.

However, Steyn (2001) notes that, although divided, what both groups have in common is that they primarily defined themselves “in dissociation with the ‘non-white’ racial groups”(p.25) and in terms of their own superiority over them.

2.2.1. Invisibility/Normativity

Steyn (2001) argues that the need for the superiority of whiteness to be accorded in relation to the inferiority of the black “other” alludes to the inherent fragility of that superiority. The position of the powerful is always precarious. The nature of such precarious superiority is that it must constitute itself as infallible, as the only version of reality, the “master narrative”, the framework from within which all other versions of reality, narratives, are interpreted. This was achieved in large by the naturalization of the colonial order of things, dissociating it from the social and economic, and locating it in the endogenous characteristics of the groups. The effect that this had, however, was to mark the dominated as deviant from a norm which was “naturally” located in the dominant positionality. When the dominated are thus marked “the dominating position is unmarked, allowing freedom and greater possibilities, and simultaneously setting itself up as normal, positioned beyond any obligation to explain itself” (ibid, p.21). In placing itself beyond explanation, power is allowed to reproduce unchecked and dominance ensured. The precarious nature of dominant positions requires that it remains invisible for it to remain as such.

Whiteness has, however, never really been invisible in South Africa, in that it was this whiteness which was invoked to claim superiority (Epstein, 1998). The power of whiteness in South Africa has been such, that it has remained largely normative. White people have been able to ignore the way in which race has shaped their lives (Frankenberg, 1993) and thus “as the privileged group whites have tended to take their identity as the standard by which everyone else is measured” (Steyn, 2001, p. xxvi). But in the light of counter narratives emerging out of the postcolonial project, whiteness is becoming more problematised. Narratives of “white disadvantage” and “reverse discrimination”, as evident in the work of Charles Gallagher (1995) and Giroux (1997), are becoming more prominent and require “a more nuanced analyses of whiteness” (Steyn, 2001, p. xxix). Furthermore, Giroux (1997) argues that although whiteness is increasingly becoming an “object of critical analysis”, “there have been few attempts to provide a theoretical language” for white people to view themselves as “both White and anti-racist at the same time” (p.294). This is a valuable insight for this study in that it does not automatically equate whiteness with racism but, with full consciousness of the insidious nature of systematic racism and white privilege, endeavours to allow anti-racist subject positions to emerge. An important aspect of this undertaking is

the examination of less centered varieties of whiteness, like white women (Ware, 1992) and by including the experience of whites who seek alternative subjectivities to those presented by the master narrative (Steyn, 2001).

2.2.2. Narratives of Whiteness in South Africa

Steyn (2001) identifies five narratives of whiteness engaged by white South Africans. All these narratives are underwritten by the Apartheid version of the master narrative of whiteness but define varying relative positions to it. *Still colonial after all these years* is a narrative which basically assumes an unchanged power relationship between blacks and whites; whites superior, blacks inferior. *This shouldn't happen to a white* constructs whites as victims in a situation which is a reversal of the ways things should be, that is whites superior and blacks inferior. The narrators of *Don't think white it's alright* acknowledge the change in the power relationship between black and whites, however, and are "trying to find practical, even creative, ways to remain white in the new South Africa" (ibid, p.58). Then there are those who did not "internalise the enculturation of racialised South African society" (ibid.). Theirs is a tale of evasion and captured in *A whiter shade of white*. Finally there are those "who are moving away from their whiteness" (ibid.) in different ways – they tell the story of *Under African skies* or *White but not quite*. The significance of these narratives is that they complicate the notion of a homogenous whiteness and illustrate Erasmus' (2004) point that race can be "inhabited" in different ways. They are useful to this work in that they provide a critical point of entry into the exploration of alternative ways of being white in South Africa.

2.3. Intersections: Whiteness and Masculinity

In their hegemonic forms both whiteness and the masculine hold the "centre" and, as such, employ similar dynamics to retain that dominant position. In fact, "the very same mechanisms that were used to elevate whiteness, were utilised to elevate maleness as a natural category in opposition women" (Steyn, 2001, p. 20). The domination of women was an important mechanism for maintaining racial dominance (Frye, cited in Steyn, 2001; Frankenberg, 1993; Ware, 1992). The protection of "vulnerable" and "precious" white women often served to justify oppressive relations between men, black men being constructed as sexually deviant and aggressive (Frankenberg, 1993; Steyn, 2001). Conversely, the construction of the black "other" as a threat, relied on the construction of white women as vulnerable. White women's sexuality was policed not only for their own protection, but also to ensure the continuation of the superior race. Lerner (1997) illustrates how this same logic, for the policing of white women's sexuality, was used to protect and entrench class privilege. Furthermore, the blatant and often violent "appropriation" of black women by the colonizers marked their superiority and domination over black men (Frankenberg, 1993; Steyn, 2001; Ware, 1992). Whiteness as conceived by the colonial master narrative is "absolutely centered, unitary, masculine" (Owens cited in Steyn, 2001, p. 151). Moreover, in South Africa it can be argued that the masculinity as conceived by this colonial narrative is, unerringly, white and that whiteness remains a powerful narrative in the rendering of the gender project (Epstein, 1998).

The intersectionality of these subject positions and the implications they have for constellating power relations, particularly within a postcolonial context, is clear. It is these intersections and constellations of power that this

study serves to unpack. Furthermore, it is directly because of the power afforded, by historical legacy, to this particular intersection and this version of masculinity that the focus of this study is on white men. This work endeavours to “look head on at the site of dominance” (Frankenberg, 1993, p.6) and examine how, through narratives of masculinity and whiteness, this dominance is “interrupted” or rearticulated.

However, although race remains a very powerful axis in the construction of gendered identity, Ratele (1998) and Epstein (1998) argue that it is necessary to reject the notions of a singular black or white masculinity, as neither are homogenous. South Africa is a strongly racialised society and this has shaped the types of masculinity available to black and white men (Epstein, 1998; Morrell, 2001; Ratele, 2001) but it has not resulted in two homogenous masculinities. What this alludes to is that although we may speak of master narratives of both whiteness and masculinity, we must not lump together that which is a very diverse group, a group that contains both more dominant and marginal versions of itself. A good example is the previously mentioned divide which still exists between white Afrikaans- and English-speaking South Africans (Steyn, 2001) who, although they share a dominant position in society because of their whiteness, are subject to power dynamics between themselves. Similarly, the growing class and urban/rural divide, further serve to complicate the notion of singular white and black masculinities.

It is this process of disaggregation which lies at the heart of this study’s aim to contribute to a more complex appreciation of these masculinities. The result of disaggregating ideological constructions such as whiteness and masculinity into whitenesses and masculinities, is that in the case where alternative versions of “self” exist, subject positions can and do change. These changes depend on the investment a particular individual has in taking up a certain subject position and the subject positions available, the nature of each being a function of historical processes (Morrell, 2001; Epstein, 1998). With the political illegitimation of the colonial narrative as marked by the new dispensation in South Africa, came the illegitimation of the masculinity with which it was associated. Not only was the colonial version of masculinity no longer viable but in the wake of its unraveling, alternative positionalities were made more viable. In the context of the changes that South Africa has undergone, the gender projects that white men are engaging in at the moment are particularly tricky (Epstein, 1998). More than ever there are “no clear models” (Frosh et al, 2001, p. 1) for white men to follow, along with the reconstruction of the political system came the “chance for the remaking of masculinities” (Epstein, 1998, p. 50). “Different masculinities become relevant, common or even possible, in different historical times, in different places and in different political situations” (ibid, p.49). This has never been more true than for white men in the new South Africa.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

3.1. Conceptual Framework

Neiswiadomy (cited in Seibold, 2002) defines the conceptual framework as “the linking of concepts selected from several theories, or from previous research, or from the researcher’s own experience” (p. 4). Furthermore “A conceptual framework is seen as an impetus for the formulation of theory” (ibid.). The theory the researcher chooses to drive the methodology are informed by the conceptual framework.

The methodological tools are all mechanisms to engage the complexity and to capture the “remaking” of these masculinities. To this end the conceptual framework, driving the methodology, is driven by the theoretical grounding explored in the literature review. It is further informed by a particular grounding in social constructionism.

3.2. Narrative and Identity

It is through hearing stories... that children learn what the cast of characters may be in the drama into which they have been born and what the ways of the world are (MacIntyre cited in Gergen, 1994, p. 19)

Social constructionism is based on one important assumption: subjectivity is rooted in language (Hollway, 1984; Wetherell, 1996; Johnson, 1997; Potter and Wetherell, 1987; Potter, 1996; Wetherell and Potter, 1988; Billig, 1988). The idea that gender is an active project which draws on cultural resources derives from the idea that those resources are based in language, and that the project is largely a linguistic one. The resources in question exist in the form of discourse or culturally informed “interpretative repertoires” (Wetherell and Potter, 1988, p.172) which are “ways of seeing and understanding” (Foucault cited in Epstein, 1998, p. 50) and are actively engaged with, in the process of racialisation and engendering. They provide the subject positions to which we relatively position ourselves (Hollway, 1984). These subject positions can be theorised as roles within a “cultural repertoire of stories” (Mishler, 1995, p. 99). That is, our subjectivities are informed by what can be termed “narrative”.

Theodore Sarbin (1986) proposes that narrative is the organising principle for human subjectivity, that “human beings think, perceive, imagine and make moral choices according to narrative structures” (p.8). Riessman (1993) adds that “the primary way individuals make sense of experience is by casting it in narrative form” (p. 4). In other words it’s through the telling of our life stories that subjectivities are constructed (Gergen, 1994; Connell, 1995; Hollway, 1984; Frosh, 2001; Mishler, 1986 a and b, 1995; Sarbin, 1986; Riessman, 1993). It is through these life stories that “culture speaks itself” (Riessman, 1993, p. 5) because in constructing our own narratives we draw off larger cultural narratives, and in turn rearticulate or disrupt the roles we play therein. The

purpose of this thesis is to capture the stories of the participants through in-depth interviews and examine these stories with a critical discursive framework in order to explore how these stories are “spoken to”, and in turn “speak” and “interrupt”, the cultural narratives of masculinity and whiteness. Furthermore, Connell (1995) identifies how these personal stories are central in contributing to a localised and particularised understanding of “the material, cultural, and psychic practices and constraints that produce formations of masculinity” (Haywood and Mac an Ghail, 2003, p. 9).

One of the major characteristics of narratives is that they are constructed to be as coherent as possible, in terms of individual events, the overall point of the story and general cultural values (Agar and Hobbs cited in Mishler, 1986 a and b). This renders the subject position coherent and legitimate. Narratives need to fit into a cultural frame of reference to carry social weight. A legitimate story is constructed through mitigation with canonical narratives, that is stories which have social legitimacy (Bruner, 1990). Canons are, in a sense, like “master narratives” which “define rights and duties and incorporate the values of dominant social and political groups” and thereby “conceal patterns of domination and submission” (Boje cited in Mishler, 1995, p.115). Personal narratives are constructed relative to these master narratives and locate these personal experiences in relation to broader social processes (Steyn, 2001). In this sense narratives are not so much “literal stories” but rather each is a means through which:

Respondents organise their memories, make sense of recent events, imagine the motives of others as they create coherent plot lines, to explain racial [and gendered]⁵ relationships, engage in impression management, and use the cultural resources available to them to fashion identities under changing circumstances (Steyn, 2001, p.xxxvii).

Furthermore “an interview is not, in any simple sense, the telling of a life so much as it is an incomplete story angled toward my questions and each woman’s [and man’s]⁶ ever-changing sense of self and of how the world works” (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 41). It is the role of discourse analysis to re-contextualise these incomplete stories within a larger cultural, political and historical frame, and deconstruct implications for power in the way in which these meaningful acts hang together.

This study works with the stories of being a man and being white in South Africa. In doing so it hopes to examine the ways in which these identities are rendered coherent through the location of personal experiences relative to the broader sense-making frames of master narratives and the extent to which these are perpetuated or challenged. Furthermore, it seeks to examine the way in which the roles of the self and “other” are conceived and the implications this has for coherence of self. Finally, because this is my interpretation and re-orientation of these stories, my “metastory” (Steyn, 2001, p.xxxvii), the practice of self-reflexivity is intimately woven into the methodology.

⁵ My addition

⁶ My addition

3.3. Profile of Participants

The men who participated in this study are among those white South African men who are willing to take the risk of exploring alternative ways of being with regards to whiteness and masculinity. They are, for this reason, rare. Seven white men living in the Cape Town area were interviewed. They were drawn from two major sources, my extended social circle and a men's group which will remain unnamed.⁷

Three of the men were from my extended social group. The initial motivation for this study was borne out of my experience of this group. I know many white men my age, including friends, a brother and a partner whom I do not believe fit the mould of "all-purpose oppressor" (Johnson, 1997, p.11) and who seem to be engaged in a sometimes conflicted process with regards to their position in South Africa as white and men. Frequent discussions around affirmative action in sport and work speak to a very real sense of insecurity and threat. Furthermore, there is much evidence of the "New Man" that Edley and Wetherell (1997) talk about in my social circle, and yet in the same breath these men do and say things that I can only consider downright problematic. Although the issues are far more complex than this, it was this seeming contradiction that suggested that the construction of white masculine identities is at times, both difficult and complex. At the same time I, as a white South African, am engaged in my own struggle with my whiteness, a struggle that I know to be a complex one. My growing awareness of issues of power and oppression and how they operate in sometimes insidious ways, made me more and more aware of the great amount of work that is being done discursively, within my own social circle, to try and render a coherent sense of self in changing times. Through my friends I saw the opportunity to contribute to my process. These men, who reflected elements of myself, formed the first choice as participants.

This study is also theoretically motivated. For this reason the other four men were approached through a contact at a men's organisation. Through their work with this organisation these men have started engaging with issues related to their gendered and racialised selves. In light of the fact that this research is motivated primarily by exploring alternative and more transformative ways of being a man and white, it was suggested that an organisation of this nature, in which the members are potentially engaging in these alternatives, be approached (Diversity Studies Dissertation Meeting, University of Cape Town, personal communication, 02/06/2004).

The process of deciding on criteria for participation had to remain flexible so as to ensure that I did not fix participants into my own idea of what is white, masculine and South African. To that end a provisional list of characteristics was drawn up, and adapted in light of conversations with potential participants. The shared characteristics of the group, as listed below, are the joint product of that initial list of theoretically driven characteristics and conversations with the men themselves, as to what the criteria should be. It is based in terms of how the men identify themselves, and in general all participants self-identify as white men. Secondly, all men are approximately between twenty-five and thirty-five years of age. There was a lot of debate around the age of

⁷ Although I am not bound to confidentiality in terms of naming the organisation I would prefer not to. The rationale for this decision is that I would prefer the reader to engage these men as individuals, rather than as members of an organisation that the reader may or may not have a preconceived opinion about.

the men who should participate. Many of the men from the men's group who replied were older than this and it was suggested that the age criteria fall away but after much thought it was retained. All these men have a very different social environment in which to negotiate their masculine identities to their fathers, and thus are the first generation, since the new dispensation, to have "no clear models" (Frosh et al, 2001, p.1), making their projects particularly tricky. They are also the first generation of men who have the opportunity to "remake" their masculinities, in light of the major political and social changes which occurred in South Africa (Epstein, 1998). Furthermore, they represent my extended social group, observation of whom prompted the research question. Thirdly, they are South African. This criterion was also put under scrutiny. One of the participants did not grow up in South Africa, but in Zimbabwe. Although he has a valid identity book and has spent the last ten years in South Africa, he does not identify as South African. *I*, however believed him to be, and he is a member of my social group and one of the inspirations for this work, and so was included. Another participant did also not strictly grow up in South Africa but rather spent a few years of his childhood here, years which he identifies as the most formative of his life. He may not have fitted *my* definition of South African, but he identifies as such and so was included. Finally, one of the participants identifies as homosexual, while the others all identify as heterosexual.

3.4. Method - Procedures

3.4.1. The Pilot Study

In addition to the theoretical considerations, the pilot study was another important factor driving the methodology.

The pilot consisted of an hour-long interview with a white man. This interview was done as an assignment for a Masters level In-Depth Interviewing course at the University of Cape Town in March 2004. The richness and depth of the data gathered by the pilot interview illustrated the power of using this methodological tool in eliciting narratives and through these narratives, exploring the complex and often conflictual nature of gendered and racialised identity.

The pilot also, however, illustrated the power of the conceptual framework (Seibold, 2002) that the researcher brings to the research and how this influences the results. Although the aim of the interview was to explore alternative ways of being white and a man, the interview questions were too narrowly focused and did not allow for these counter constructions to emerge.

Furthermore, the analysis was approached with a limited range of "interpretative repertoires" (as dictated by theory) and was not grounded enough in the text. As a result the complexity of the text was lost, conclusions reached too early and Bhavnani's (cited in Erasmus, 2003) first rule of praxis broken, dominant representations unproblematically reproduced. The most serious consequence of this was that the original intention of the research was undermined and alternative ways of being were not engaged. The pitfalls of the pilot interview

schedule helped me redesign my interview questions, interview technique and analytical tools in such a way that allowed much more space for the voices of respondents to emerge.

3.4.2. Reflexivity

The pilot interview illustrated how very powerful personal and theoretical considerations are and how not being reflexive on these considerations, I as researcher, may undermine the rationale for the research. The need for reflexivity is particularly important in light of my own positionality as a white woman. Ware (1992) illustrates how historically white women “occupy both sides of a binary opposition” (p.237), both privileged and not. This study is then simultaneously an investigation of the “other”, within a particular disadvantaged power dynamic, and the self (Frankenberg, 1993).

Central in the self-reflexive process is the recognition of the interview as a socially, historically and politically located event (Erasmus, 2000; Wengraf, 2001; Kvale, 1996; Mishler, 1986 a and b) which is enacted along a power balance between respondent and interviewer. In the interview this power is manifest first, in the historical position of interviewer vis-a-vis the participant (e.g. race, gender, class etc.), second, in the historical context of the interview as social practice, where the interviewer holds the official position of power and third, in the interview dynamics where power may tip in either the interviewer’s or participant’s direction (Wengraf, 2001). Wengraf (2001) provides us with a very useful model, the Briggs-Wengraf Model (*see Appendix 1*) which alerts us to all the components of the interview situation. This model was actively considered when conducting the interviews.

This is important not only for reflexivity in the study but alludes to a deeper ethical issue. Ultimately the representation of the participant is up to the researcher (Erasmus, 2000) and this is a major responsibility. For this reason the power dynamics of the research process need to be addressed. Bhavnani (cited in Erasmus, 2000) argues that this should be achieved through a praxis based on three principles: accountability, positioning and partiality. Accountability involves questioning the reproduction of dominant representations of respondents; positioning emphasises the importance of micro politics; and partiality considers how difference is dealt with in the research process. Accountability was a particularly important consideration in achieving the aims of the study, exploring non-dominant representations.

Keeping a research journal was central in my self-reflexive practice as a researcher. The contextually constructed nature of gender and race alludes to an often overlooked aspect of the interviewing process, the interviewer’s experience, which is as significant as the participants’ (Frosh et al, 2001). To capture this I completed a summary of my experience after each interview. In particular, I reflected on aspects of the content which evoked an emotional response or that struck a personal chord with me. The journal was not limited to the immediate post-interview experience, but served as a tool for reflection throughout coding and analysis, as well as writing of the research paper. The journal reflections are woven into the analysis to clarify some analytical decisions.

3.4.3. Gaining Access

A call for participation (*See Appendix 2*) was emailed to all my friends, both men and women, in Cape Town who were asked to forward the message on to anyone they thought might be interested in participating. Another call for participation (*See Appendix 3*) was emailed to a contact at the men's group who posted the letter on the men's group mail serve. Interested parties contacted me and interview meetings arranged. Ten men from the men's group replied and were enthusiastic to participate. Based on the required characteristics of the participants, only four were selected to participate. Four men from my extended social group showed an active interest in participation. Of the four only three committed themselves to actually participating in the interviews.

3.4.4. The Interviews

Two in-depth interviews of about an hour were held with each participant, bringing the total number of interviews to fourteen. The outcome of the pilot interview suggested that in-depth interviews would be a useful data collection method. This methodological decision was, however, also theoretically motivated. According to Sarbin (1986) interviews serve as "an instrument for story making and story telling" (p. xvi) thus rendering them useful tools for eliciting personal narratives. This direction is followed in the work of Connell (1995) and Frosh et al (2001) who use in depth interviews as their methodological tools for eliciting personal narratives around masculine identity. It is these personal stories that this study aims to explore.

An interview agreement was signed by both myself and the participants (*see Appendix 4*). I conducted the interviews. All interviews were recorded and then transcribed for analysis. Participants were assured of anonymity and limited confidentiality as per the interview agreement. To this end all people and most place names were changed in the transcripts.

Both interviews were structured around an interview schedule (*see Appendix 5*). The interviews were conducted so as to be participant centered and in addition to discussing questions I probed for theoretically informed issues. Furthermore, as the interviews progressed I closely considered themes that I saw as emerging and added these to areas to probe for. Participants were encouraged to keep a journal, in which they could record thoughts, ideas and emotions around the issues that were discussed in the first interview. None of the participants were able to write a journal but most had thought about, and were able to reflect on, their experiences in the second interview.

The first interview focused on the participants' life stories and was structured around the participants' graphical depiction of their lives. Respondents were asked to depict their lives along a line and indicate anything that they considered significant (*See Appendix 9 for Respondents' Lifelines*). This served to ground participants in their personal narratives and subsequent questions around masculinity and whiteness were located in the narrated experience. The second interview created a space for more critical reflection on issues related to masculinities and whiteness. Many of the respondents reported that the second interview was more demanding than the first. Before conducting the second interview, I listened to the first interview and created extensive notes.

Participants were asked to provide feedback on their experience of the interviews. All participants experienced the interviews as positive and thought provoking. Some participants reported that they sometimes felt a bit unsure of what to say and did not know if they were answering the questions “correctly”. Participants were also encouraged to communicate with me after the interviews and during the writing of the report, so that they could contribute more to the research process if they so wished. They were also sent a copy of the analysis for comment.

3.4.5. The Interview Questions

An interview schedule (*See Appendix 5*) was designed to elicit the experience of being white and a man in South Africa today. All questions were designed to be open-ended and to assume as little as possible about the nature of being a man and being white in South Africa. Wengraf’s (2001) (*See Appendix 6*) algorithm was a useful tool in ensuring that the interview questions reflected the research question and that the questions were not leading as had been the case in the pilot interview.

The interview questions were closely informed by the pilot interview and were redesigned to be more open and to allow respondents’ voices to emerge. This enabled alternative constructions to emerge.

Probes around various topics were prepared. Although these topics make assumptions about, and enforce a particular hegemonic nature of masculine subjectivity, they have, based on the review of the literature, been identified as being important sites for the consideration of masculinities. Furthermore, these areas were only probed if mentioned in the context of the questions on the schedule. The topics probed include: Sport (Connell, 1995; Morrell, 2001; Kantikar, 1994), relationships with parents (Frosh et al, 2001; Haywood and Mac an Ghail, 2003), relationships with friends (Frosh et al, 2001), relationships with lovers/partners (Connell, 1995; Hollway, 1984; Wetherell, 1996; Holland et al, 1994; Shefer and Ruiters, 1998; Frosh et al, 2001), sex (Connell, 1995; Hollway, 1984; Wetherell, 1996; Holland et al, 1994; Shefer and Ruiters, 1998; Frosh et al, 2001), school (Frosh et al, 2001; Morrell, 2001; Kantikar, 1994; Epstein, 1998; Haywood and Mac an Ghail, 2003) and work (Connell, 1995; Haywood and Mac an Ghail, 2003; Wilmott and Griffin, 1997).

I also probed areas I felt were emerging as significant. These areas included relationships with domestic workers and relationships with siblings, especially sisters.

3.5. Transcription

Although transcription is the first level of analysis, in that it is theoretically driven (Wengraf, 2001; Riesmann, 1993; Kvale, 1996) and should ideally be conducted by the researcher, this is not always possible. Transcription was completed in two parts. I transcribed three of the participants’ interviews. Due to time constraints, a professional was hired to transcribe the other four participants. The transcriber used my texts as a protocol for transcription. I thoroughly checked the transcription produced by the transcriber. Where I conducted the transcription, extensive memos were taken during transcription. Where interviews were professionally transcribed, I took notes whilst checking the texts.

3.6. Coding

Coffey and Atkinson (1996) argue that coding is the first stage of analysis in that it “reflects our analytic ideas” (p.26). Codes are the link between the raw data and the researcher’s theoretical concepts. Attaching codes is a way of “identifying data, allowing the data to be thought of in different ways” (ibid, p.29). Codes are then not simply labels but heuristic devices. Bearing this in mind, codes can be used to expand and transform data and open up new analytical possibilities.

The reason for this close attention to this analytical process, is that the consequences of a lack thereof can jeopardise the purpose of the study. This was powerfully illustrated in the pilot which simply seemed to reproduce interpretations of this masculinity as quite uncomplicatedly sexist and racist. The ease with which these codes were generated highlighted Bhavnani’s (cited in Erasmus, 2000) first principle of research praxis: accountability, and that the researcher must “caution against the reproducing dominant representations of informants” (p. 74). On closer inspection, however, these codes were not so much a product of the text but rather the imposition of my interests and very powerful conceptual framework. The analytical process was compromised by a danger that Miles and Huberman (1994) warn about: “getting locked too quickly into naming a pattern, assuming you understand it, and then thrusting the name onto data that fits it poorly” (p. 70). This danger was addressed by engaging in three systematic rounds of coding.

The first round of coding was simply a matter of locating the text in relation to the interview questions. This allowed me to get a broad view of “what came up where” and to get a sense of emerging themes. The second round involved coding for those theoretically driven issues, that I had probed for. This gave me further opportunity develop the sense for emerging themes and how they interacted with the theoretically pre-determined codes. These first two rounds of coding were facilitated by the use of the qualitative data analysis software package, QSR Nvivo. The use of Nvivo not only allowed for better management of the texts but more flexibility in the coding and allowed for the systematic fragmentation of the data, thereby forcing the focus onto the text. The third round involved actively taking a more “grounded” approach originally advocated by Glasser and Strauss (cited in Miles and Huberman, 1994) in which *in vivo* or bottom up codes are induced from the data. Importantly codes were used as what Coffey and Atkinson (1996) call “tools to think with” (p. 32) and were changed and adapted. These emerging codes were noted during the first two rounds and then manually coded onto the coding reports generated by Nvivo and cross-referenced with the original interview texts.

Codes are listed in *Appendix 7*.

3.7. Analytical Tools

Two major paradigms were engaged with in order to undertake this analysis.

Firstly, a grounded and interpretive approach was taken to fully appreciate what was “really” there. This was a necessary analytical step to take in light of the aim of the research, to explore alternative narratives and discourse, and not fall into the trap of simply rearticulating dominant discourse.

Secondly, critical discursive analyses, were then conducted to more fully explore this which was “really” there, particularly for implications for power. The texts were examined for different elements through various analytical processes, as developed by various theorists. These processes occurred simultaneously and to a greater or lesser extent in different sections of the analysis.

Wetherell and Potter’s (1988) concept of “interpretive repertoires” was an important analytical tool. Interpretive repertoires can be conceptualised as “explanatory resources” or “building blocks” (p. 172) which people make use of in constructing narratives. Particular repertoires are constituted out of a “restricted range of terms” (ibid.) most commonly centered around a key metaphor. They are as Frankenberg (1993) uses them “clusterings of discursive elements” (p. 17) which circulate in narratives.

Furthermore, Wetherell and Potter (1988) alert us to the function that language serves and how the mobilisation of a particular interpretive repertoire contributes to that function. Their rationale is that when a particular interpretive repertoire is “deployed” (p. 169) there are consequences, which may or may not be understood by the speaker. These functions are exercised along a continuum: from serving “interpersonal functions” to having more “ideological effects”. It is these ideological effects that this study focuses on and to more fully inform this element of the analysis, refers to the work of Billig (1988).

According to Billig (1988) ideology refers to “a pattern of ideas, values and interpretations ” (p. 200) and is characterised by “different styles and traditions of explaining social events” (p. 201). He goes on to say that “it is possible to study ideology by attempting to situate discourse within its wider ideological context” and that “an individual’s thinking should therefore be interpreted in terms of broader social and historical patterns” (ibid.). Along the same logic I locate the mobilisation of particular interpretive repertoires within these broader patterns.

Inherent in the conceptualisation of ideology are implications for power. What engagement of ideology in this way does, is examine the way in which power relations, as manifest in these broader social and historical processes, are either perpetuated or challenged, in the telling of these stories.

In asking whether these narratives perpetuate or challenge dominant ideologies, another useful tool was engaged. Bauman (cited in Steyn, 2002) makes the distinction between dominant and demotic discourse. Dominant discourse is that which keeps intact dominant power dynamics and demotic is that which disrupts these dynamics and creates opportunity for change. They are used in the same way that Frankenberg (1993) used the concepts of “dominant and counter hegemonic discourses” (p. 22).

A central concept in this process is that of master narratives (Bruner, 1990). These are dominant patterns of discourse to which individual narratives stand relative. An important analytical strategy was to examine where

and how discourse around masculinity and whiteness challenged master narratives, rendering alternative discursive spaces for the articulation of white masculinities, and where and how they rearticulated it. Another key strategy was to examine where and how these intersect and how they serve to co- or de-construct each other.

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER 4

Analysis of Interviews

The analysis is divided into five parts. Part One focuses on the emergence of masculine identities. Part Two engages race. Part Three speaks to the tension between the costs and benefits of these masculinities and whitenesses. Part Four, further explores this tension by examining engagement with privilege. Finally Part Five explores projects challenging the hegemony and the emergence of alternative, more transformative ways of being.

Part 1

Masculinities

The only generalisation that can be made about the men who participated in this study is that they truly embody the “diversity of men’s projects” that Wetherell (1996, p. 322) talks about. They are, however, located as white and as men in a particular time and place and therefore share certain experiences and sense-making frames. The aim of this analysis is to document and critically examine these broader sense-making structures, but to locate these firmly in the diversity of these unique life stories.

These narratives are not neatly packaged but fraught with conflict and only rendered coherent with much discursive work. As such they oscillate between and within, often conflictual, interpretative repertoires; at once challenging and buying into dominant discourse. It is these tensions that this analysis endeavours to capture.

4.1. Doing Gender

Adam’s narrative highlights Connell’s (1995) point that gender is an active “project” (p. 72). He identifies as gay and is very aware of the “work” that “being” a man entails:

Claire: So how has not being “this thing” [other boys], impacted on how you are today?

Adam: There is a constant understanding of myself as different and at times it's a great thing, it's a good thing and I celebrate it and I think that the opportunity **to be different allows me the privilege to objectify**⁸ and from that position to objectify, it allows me the opportunity to possibly look back in and possibly reflect off. **But it's work rather than just being**, if that makes sense? I'm at the moment, not completely convinced that most men have experienced that. I think most men have some level of being a man being work rather than just being. **Although I've witnessed a lot of men also who seem to just be enough rather than work at being enough**. And of course the exhaustion that comes with all of those things (Adam, Int. 2, 26/8/ 2004)

⁸ Parts of the excerpts that are in **bold** are significant to the analysis.

Although he constructs his being able to objectify as a privilege it is only “at times” “a great thing”. Moreover, it is “work”, exhausting work, which stands juxtaposed to privilege by “but”. It is also work, rather than just being, which is the other option, an option open to other men but not him, and an option which almost seems to discredit the masculinity he has to work so hard at. He does acknowledge that most men “have some level of being a man being work” but also that a lot of men do seem to be able to just be. It is here that the first tension exists in the very, being and doing:

Sjoe! **I've always been a boy**, hey. Pretty much. (Andrew, Int. 1, 16/9/2004)

I didn't ever really think about it, I guess **I always was a boy**. (Bryan, Int. 1, 5/8/2004)

If gender is an active project the rendering of that project as just “being” rather than doing, serves to obscure the nature of that “doing”. The use of the verb “to be” in the above extracts serves to naturalise and in so doing normalise the “doing”. This is a characteristic of hegemonies and a function of privilege (Steyn, 2001).

It is almost as if “real” masculinity should not have to be work. David goes so far as to invalidate his own masculinity -“I'm not 100% if I really am a man”- because he associates it with particular activities:

David: So they all, not the fishing example, but shaving, the wallet, car keys, those are not supposed to be for me it's not supposed to be, what should make you a man or not a man. **But that's what I associated it with. So that's why I say to you I'm not 100% if I really am a man now.**

Claire: It's interesting that you say it's not what it's [masculinity] supposed to be, what for you then is it supposed to be?

David: It's supposed to be, for me it's supposed to be real, in the sense of **being not doing, being is real**. For me it's supposed to be, it's almost a silent non-visible aura, it's just there's a man same as you'd see with that's a woman. (David, Int. 1, 23/7/2004)

For David real masculinity is about being, not doing. Both he and Adam serve to undermine their own masculinities because it has been work and not just “a non-visible” aura which other men seem to have.

Even though this tension exists between being and doing, social constructionism rejects the notion of an invisible aura of masculinity or femininity. “Being” can itself be deconstructed as doing gender in such a way so as to naturalise and normalise particular gendered practise. In fact all of gender, is doing (Epstein, 1988).

4.2. Women as Other

The masculine is always constituted in relation to the feminine and as Connell (1995) points out “masculinity does not exist except in contrast with femininity” (p. 69). It is therefore not surprising that doing masculinity is experienced in the context of doing femininity. There are times where this dynamic is explicit. When asked about becoming aware of being a boy many respondents talked about things that they did. Most often the things

they did were positioned relative to what other people did, most notably, girls. What boys do and what girls do is very distinct:

She [his sister] also did a lot of sport and stuff so that it wasn't so much that but ja I guess it's the old cliché of **girls play with dolls** and **guys played with trucks and Lego and Mechano** and stuff. So it was just ja I dunno I guess she would go into the kitchen and help my mom bake cakes and what ever and she loved that and I would go out and help dad fix the lawnmower and build, we used to build radio-controlled gliders from quite a young age. (Bryan, Int. 1, 5/8/2004)

The normativity of this gendered arrangement of activity does not go unnoticed by Bryan who refers to it as an "old cliché". He does not, however, problematise it. In fact, he reinforces the legitimacy of the arrangement by referring to how his sister "loved it". Adam on the other hand does disrupt it. Although the activities are similar he admits, that those assigned for girls were more comfortable for him:

Being a boy meant being in a game, being somewhat tough, being more rugged, definitely being able to defend yourself physically, climbing trees, playing in mud, that sort of thing. **Being a boy was working in my grandfather's garage, it was riding bicycles, skate boarding, being active.** **Being a girl, which often felt much more comfortable for me,** as are the activities of being a girl: cooking, sewing, being quiet and having conversations, being much more inward. (Adam, Int. 1, 29/7/2004)

The masculine is constructed as physically potent- "somewhat tough, being more rugged, definitely being able to defend yourself physically"- and technically skilled (suggested by working on models and the lawnmower). The feminine on the other hand is physically passive- "being quiet and having conversations, being much more inward" – and skilled in domestic tasks like baking and cooking.

These accounts reflect very particular gender dichotomies. First of all, they resonate, with a particular discourse which relies on a gendered spatial division between public and domestic spheres, which according to Hollway (cited in Haywood and Mac an Ghaill, 2003) "helped sustain middle class ideologies of femininity and masculinity" (p. 21). Over the course of the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries work became placed in a "breadwinner/homemaker dichotomy" (ibid.), locating women firmly in the home with children and men at work, away from their children. It is a dichotomy which, according to Morgan (cited in Haywood and Mac an Ghaill, 2003), became characterised by a "range of polarities" (p. 22) which informed these gender roles, including skilled/unskilled, dirty/clean, dangerous/less dangerous and mobile/immobile. These constructions of boyhood within in this dichotomy are located firmly within, a particular classed and hegemonic version of masculinity.

Another aspect of these gender dichotomies is the active masculine and passive feminine; a dynamic which speaks to a very colonial narrative around gender (Steyn, 2001). Frankenberg (1993) explores in great depth how the active white masculine was constructed as the protector of the passive white feminine, from black

threat. The following extract illustrates this need to protect the passive feminine, as opposed to the active masculine, which should be able to “handle himself in the world”:

To the point, just thinking about when I have a daughter, you know, the responsibility on a family of having a daughter, especially in this day and age is more than having a woman with the risks on earth now - the type of people that walk round the earth, the things that, let's say, can happen to a woman like rape, or mugging or... **You need to protect your daughter; your son can potentially after a certain age, handle himself in the world.** (Andrew, Int. 1, 16/9/2004)

These expectations around what girls and boys do are rooted in very powerful discourse, like that of capitalism and colonialism. It is no surprise then that not doing, or doing the wrong things is met with serious consequences. In this case, the invalidation of the masculine. As with Adam earlier, Justin admits that he actually enjoyed the activities set aside for girls, in this case cooking. The consequence, however, was to be a “Mummy’s boy”, that is, to have a less legitimate masculinity:

I did quite enjoy cooking then but then I'd be a Mummy's boy and all of that stuff. (Justin, Int. 1, 4/8/2004)

For Adam his preference for the feminine meant that not only was his masculinity invalidated but denied:

It was the same experience that I had later on in life, from aged fifteen, sixteen up to even my thirties, of **masculinity being something that other men own**, that I didn't have access to. I had as a very young child with my cousins, my older male cousins, that they would be the rugby players, and the athletes and whatever, and **I could witness them, I could be with them as a quiet witness but I couldn't participate in it.** That's when I got the message and what the message was - it was very much that boys are outdoors and active and by themselves and independent, without grownups, doing their own thing, ja. (Adam, Int. 1, 29/7/2004)

Masculinity was “something that other men owned”. Those other men were those who did the right things “the rugby players, the athletes”, those who were active and independent and by virtue of the fact that he “couldn't participate” and could only be a “quiet witness”, he was denied his masculinity.

4.3. Gendered Bodies

The notion of an “active” masculine and “passive” feminine seems to speak to a very physical experience of gender. Connell (1995) suggests that “bodily experience is often central in memories” (p. 53) in that “a physical sense of maleness and femaleness is central to the cultural interpretation of gender” (p. 52). Although a sense of the masculine being located in the body, might seem to suggest “being” rather than “doing”, “both biology and social influence combine to produce gender” (ibid, p. 46) and the body is an ever changing surface on which

“cultural meanings are inscribed” (Pringle cited in Connell, 1995, p. 51). It is what is done with these bodies, the work, which confirms or denies legitimate masculinities.

It is not surprising then that changes that occur at puberty serve as markers to some men of their developing masculinities. The changes in question are those associated with the sexual maturation of the male body, like the voice breaking and facial hair:

Claire: When is the first time that you became aware of being a man as opposed to boy?

David: I think when simple examples might be the **first time I shaved, the first where my voice sounded differently**. (David, Int. 1, 23/7/2004)

Claire: So what would you say marked your transition from boyhood to manhood?

Mark: There was no defining sort of moment that I thought Oh well I've kinda hit manhood here. Of course **when your voice dropped it did help** (laughs). Ja, it's such an awkward stage going through as a guy when you, your voice starts going all pitchy and you're talking all over the place (high pitch) and when you're finally through it and **you start growing you first facial hair** and stuff you, ja it's definitely something that **you get kinda amped** about, like going Ja I've got a hair on my chin, ja. (Mark, Int. 2, 10/8/2004)

The sense of the masculine as being physically and sexually located also manifests earlier, in boyhood, for some men. In these cases, it does so in direct relation to girls and in the two examples below, in the form of sexual games:

Claire: Ok well can you think then of other times when you were aware of being a boy?

Mark: You mean besides **playing doctor doctor** in the shed? (laughs)

Claire: In what ways did this make you aware of being a boy?

Mark: I think you just **exploring and seeing your differences and just finding out how guys are different to women and, or that stage girls**. Ja I think it's just experimentation and learning as you do, you're trying to assimilate things as a kid and I suppose that's one way of doing it. (Mark, Int. 1, 23/7/2004)

And then there was this other incident where I remember these family friends and they had a daughter. **I don't know what happened but anyway she invited me to investigate her nether regions which I did and being absolutely fascinated and thinking, Gosh, that's very different!** Because it didn't really occur to me as a distinction. I knew there was something different but I didn't really know how. (Justin, Int. 1, 4/8/2004)

In some cases the mother serves as the woman that marks physical and sexual difference. In the following extract, Carl's physical development makes it inappropriate for him to be in the room while his mother dresses and it is this physical awareness that makes him aware of his of his masculinity:

There was a time when it became pretty clear that okay, now I'm not allowed in my parent's room anymore or when my mom gets dressed, kind of thing. When we were small, we woke up and we went to go and lie in my dad and mom's bed and she would get dressed while we'd lie with my dad and then the time came when that wasn't appropriate anymore, we're too big for this now. Ja, I guess, pre-puberty, when **I became aware that I've got something that girls don't have and it does different things I guess.** (Carl, Int. 2, 11/8/2004)

This masculinity however, is not simply a matter of having "something that girls don't" but that "it does different things". What "it" "does" is central in the enacting of the masculine project.

4.4. Policing Heterosexuality

"Sexuality is central in a man's struggle to become masculine" (Holland et al, 1994, p.122). That is, heterosexuality. The defining feature of hegemonic masculinity is that it is heterosexual (Connell, 1995; Shefer and Ruiters, 1998; Segal, 1990; Holland et al, Frosh et al, 2001; Wetherell, 1996; Giddens, 1992). Shefer and Ruiters use the example of a 12 year old South African child who was asked what it means to be a man: "... to have sex with a woman" (p.39) he answered.

Although the earlier extracts illustrate how masculinity was located for some in a physical and sexual sense, and in relation to girls, the discovery of sexuality does not necessarily emerge in the presence of girls. For Adam it emerged in the presence of other boys:

I was aware of my sexuality very early; I was five years old when I discovered liking another boy at the pre-school. I didn't of course know what it meant and the next year when I went to school **I realized that there was something about me which was different than the other boys** but still of course I didn't know what it was. Then around seven, eight, I discovered sex and the meaning of that and then about nine, ten, I discovered my own homosexuality. (Adam, Int. 1, 29/7/2004)

What his emerging homosexuality does, however, is mark Adam as different. Not only different, but illegitimate. In the same way that not *doing* the things that boys do, playing rugby, doing athletics, being active etc, made masculinity something that "other men own", so not *doing* heterosexuality meant that:

Masculinity was something removed from me, it wasn't something that I had access to. And at the time I had framed it for myself to be like that because I was gay. When you grow up as a gay individual, a gay man - let me make it of myself - as a gay man growing up in a homophobic world, the way that masculinity is constructed for you is that **if you are gay, you are not a man**, it's as simple as that and you get that message from as early as I can remember. (Adam, Int. 1, 29/7/2004)

So far removed, in fact, that “if you are gay you are not a man”. The importance of homosexuality, as the “other” in the construction of the “legitimate” masculine is further evident in a story that Justin tells. Following a similar pattern to the sexual games played between boys and girls, he relates the story of how he told his friends at school that he had played a game called “rudies”:

So the **game to play was called “rudies” where we basically sucked each other’s dicks**, you know. It didn’t occur... I knew it was weird, I knew it was a bit odd and obviously it was on some level sexual but it just... I just didn’t know. So I sucked his willy and that was it and that was it. And then, now I’m like twelve years old or whatever, where it’s really important to be appreciated and one of the crowd and all of this kind of stuff. So I say, Oh, I’ve got this story to tell you. So I then tell the story to the and then of course, you can imagine, it’s like, **Ooh, faggot, weirdo, gay, he sucks willies! All that kind of stuff. And I can remember it was just a horrible, horrible like, Oh my God, what have I done, what have I said!** And I think just went through that real weird, weird period of puberty where **not prepared for it, no idea what was happening, things happening to my body, but no-one had actually talked me through**, like this is what happens or anything like that, so then just suddenly these question marks and one of them was like, **Oh, my God, maybe I’m gay! And that was like the most terrible, fearful thing because gay people were...!** (Justin, Int. 1, 4/8/2004)

Even though he “just didn’t know” exactly what this encounter meant he is aware that it is sexually located and also “a bit odd”. Nevertheless, it is simply a game until he tells the other boys at school. It is in relation to their response that he becomes fully aware of the social significance of what his and other boys’ “different things” do. In other words it is in relation to the other boys’ response that the social meaning of his action is inscribed onto his physical self. His physical self is complicated by the social expectations around what his body should and should not be doing. The result is confusion and fear that he is the one thing that he knows, he as a boy, should not be, gay – “Oh, my God, maybe I’m gay!” But it is not merely a concern it is “the most terrible, fearful thing”. The power of this fear illustrates the centrality of heterosex in the masculine project. Although Adam is homosexual and Justin heterosexual, both their accounts speak to the consequences of not meeting the hegemonic standard. If the consequence of not doing heterosexuality is not doing masculinity, it would seem that Shefer and Ruiters (1998) are correct in saying that “it is through heterosexual sex that boys ascend to hegemonic masculinity” (p.39).

But although heterosex is central in the ascendance to hegemonic masculinities, there is within this hierarchy a further hierarchy of different forms of heterosexuality. Hegemonic masculinities feature a very particular type of sexuality:

Claire: When did you first become aware of being a man?

Justin: I can tell you the **first time I became aware of not being a man** which might have some insight into being a man. (Justin, Int. 1, 4/8/2004)

He goes onto relate the story how another man commented on the size of his penis and his reaction to it:

The decision that I made about myself was that just because this guy had said this thing and what I'd decided by myself was that as a man **I wasn't as well-endowed as other men and therefore I wasn't really worth anything, I wasn't a man**, which was just horrific! (Justin, Int. 1, 4/8/2004)

The effects of not meeting the requirements of this sexuality, which in this case is penis size, has a similar effect to not doing this sexuality at all: masculinity is denied – “I became aware of not being a man” and “I wasn't a man”. This sexuality is, like the masculinities explored earlier, located in the body, in this case the penis. Furthermore, it is located in the performance of that body (Connell, 1995), the active masculine, echoed in the earlier stories of playing sport and climbing trees. This link is evident in Carl's experience of his limited heterosexual success which is directly linked to his limited success as a swimmer:

They were in Standard Five and they'd already gone through that first bit of becoming a man thing and **their bodies are strong and they'd just dive there and they'd just beat me and the girls just cling onto them** and (laughs). Hello! I've been here for a long while, remember, but I'm still here and I'll still carry on swimming. So that's what I mean that **I didn't have much going for me**, I wasn't exactly like the other guys, that wasn't me. **I was sad about it but it wasn't me**. (Carl, Int. 2, 11/8/2004)

The “strong bodies” of the other boys enabled their superior sporting ability depicted in “they'd just dive there and they'd just beat me”. This meant that they were heterosexually successful as “the girls just cling onto them”. This is in direct opposition to himself who “didn't have much going” for him and even has to remind the girls of his presence.

In the same way that not playing rugby and athletics meant that Adam was denied a masculine subject position, Carl is denied a successful heterosexuality, and therefore masculinity, by not performing to the correct standards. Like Justin his physicality and what he does with it, is inadequate. Therefore the definition of man eludes him– “they had gone through that man thing” but “that wasn't me”.

Powerful as these hegemonic narratives may be however, they are being challenged by less central sexualities like homosexuality and different versions of heterosexuality. It is in the very naming of hegemonic standards and the emotional reaction to them, that subversive and counter hegemonic discourse emerge. The frame of reference for these masculinities is that of a compulsory heterosexuality, a hegemonic formation. On the other hand, the emotional discourse, combined with the interrogation of these experiences, and the relationship that it signifies with their masculine identities, is not a feature of hegemonic versions of masculine identity. These discursive features serve to undermine and disrupt the dynamics of hegemony, a characteristic of demotic discourse (Bauman cited in Steyn, 2001). The realisation of a legitimate masculinity featuring homosexuality is in itself an act of subversion and opens up numerous avenues for undermining the “masculine = heterosexual” dynamic. Adam relates an experience at the gym:

I went into the locker rooms, my training was done for the day, and all those men were naked in the showers and on some level it was really highly sexualised and **sexual fantasy de luxe**, you know this was absolutely the extreme of it. But what was as interesting, I can't say more interesting, but as interesting and what took as much of my attention was **the different way in which these men interacted in an environment which I considered to be highly intimate - I mean, when I'm naked with a man, it's sexualised for me**, the only way that I've ever been naked with a man has been sexualised even when it was with men who are not necessarily sexually interested in me, from my side there's a sexual awareness of them - but when I was in this locker room **it was the first time it was blatantly obvious to me how men, when they are naked in the showers with each other**, it's difficult to verbalise, **there's an awareness of physicality and there's a playful awareness of sexuality which is completely not sexual.** (Adam, Int. 1, 29/7/2004)

Adam shows us how his sexuality is very differently defined to the other men. Although this situation is sexualised, in that there is a “playful awareness of sexuality”, it is “completely not sexual”. For him on the other hand it is a “sexual fantasy deluxe” because for him, when he is “naked with a man it is sexualised for me”. By sexualising this environment, through his own narrative, he serves to completely undermine the homophobia of masculine hegemonies. By introducing a discourse of sexual fantasy and arousal to this hegemonically “completely” unsexualised space he creates an alternative way of being in that space. It is noticeable, however, that he refers to this time as the “first time it was blatantly obvious to me how men” are “with each other”. His use of men rather than “other” men or “these” men as he does previously, suggests that this is the way in which *men* behave and because he does not, he is not a man. The process of relating coherent narratives is a complex one and Adam’s example illustrates how both demotic and dominant discourse can intersect in one narration.

The examination of heterosexuality reveals an important characteristic of these accounts of emerging masculine identities: the act of policing masculinities is conducted in relationship to, and in some cases, by other men and boys. All accounts around hetero- and homosexuality emerge in the presence of these others.

4.5. Fathers

One of the most significant male others in these narratives are fathers, who feature much more prominently than mothers. These relationships are fraught with conflict and, most dominantly, a sense of fathers either not being available or not being fathers at all:

My father has definitely been probably the **most important influence in my life** but not necessarily in the typical way. I study a lot about men and men's issues and father-son relationships and **I'm very envious of sons who have been well-fathered** and sons who had very healthy, strong relationships with their fathers. I didn't have that with my father, I didn't have a healthy, strong, mature, man-to-man relationship with my father. **I've more had a frustrated, angry, not enough, relationship with my father. I've often felt like my father's father**, I've often felt like he's the son and I'm the parent, I've often felt that I have to take responsibility for him in many different ways, which **there's a little part**

of me that feels privileged to have had that, but most of it has left me with anger and resentment.
(Adam, Int. 1, 29/7/2004)

Adam's conflict stems from a "not enough" relationship with his father, leaving him envious of boys who have been "well fathered". His sense of not having being "well fathered" resonates with much literature on boy's relationships with their fathers which laments the loss of "initiation processes which supposedly offered young men clear structures of role and identity as they moved into adulthood" (Bly cited in Frosh et al, 2001, p. 225). The loss of this link with strong and confident fathers has been theorised as being the root cause of the so-called "crisis" in masculinity (Frosh et al, 2001). This sense of loss is evident in Adam's narrative in that his resentment stems not only from this lack of fathering but that he as son "often felt like my father's father". As a result the role of son and the existence of a "real" father being was denied him. Although this has also meant a sense of privilege it has left him mostly with "anger and resentment". As a result his father is the most "powerful influence" in his life but "in a negative way":

My father has been a very powerful influence but in a negative way not in a positive way and yet in a very powerful way. If my father hadn't been as powerfully negative as he's been, I don't think I would have been as powerfully motivated to be different. (Adam, Int. 1, 29/7/2004)

Adam's reaction, however, does not feel like "crisis", which calls into question this link between not "being well fathered" and "crisis". For Adam, although characterised by negativity, his relationship with his father has motivated him to be different - a reaction, which is both empowering and transformative.

Justin's relationship with his father is also characterised by absence:

Because my experience with my dad was that he didn't really, **he kinda paid lip service to his role as a father, he wasn't really there for us.** To be more specific, I would hear him saying wonderful things about me, from other people but **I would never really hear them from him** or if he said them I couldn't hear them. Being a priest and he speaks beautifully from the pulpit and people would say, Gosh, that's so amazing. And I'd go, Yeah, I wish he'd be more like that at home. (Justin, Int. 1, 4/8/2004)

Justin's father is denied him because he was not available – "he wasn't really there for us". He is distant, on the pulpit, with other people and so he never hears the good things his father says about him. The distance as experienced by both Adam and Justin is a dominant feature in the literature relating to relationships between children and their fathers (Frosh et al, 2001; Haywood and Mac an Ghail, 2003). This distance manifests both emotionally, like Adam, and physically, like Justin. This very personal experience of distance can, however, be located historically where in the twentieth century the primary narrative of the father was that of the father "removed from the home as exemplified in the primary image of the distant breadwinner" (Haywood and Mac an Ghail, p. 47). These experiences of fatherhood are then located within a particular historical gender dichotomy dictated by capitalist labour arrangements, explored earlier. But further to that, these broader socio-

economic arrangements have interpersonal effects, the “distant breadwinner” is also the emotionally distant man, a common image in popular discourse, and clearly apparent in these narratives.

Carl’s relationship with his father also taps into this interpretative repertoire of distance, but in this case it is mediated by a very particular emotional fracture, which is related to Carl’s legitimacy as man:

I always wanted my dad to really like me but he’s like a boy’s man and my brother’s a boy’s boy and I’m a nerd. I go to the Karoo with them and I put cream on my face. It doesn’t quite... so I got labelled as I don’t enjoy it but instead it’s like, Just leave me, I hear what I need to hear here. **I don’t do it your way but just let me be.** (Carl, Int. 1, 20/7/2004)

Because his brother is a “boy’s boy”, he is closer to his father than Carl, who is a “nerd”. The act of putting cream on his face demarcates him as such and as a result he feels his father does not like him as much as his brother. There is a real need for acceptance – “I always wanted my dad to really like me”- and a sense of sadness because he does not, but at the same time Carl wants his father to like him for who he is, to “just let me be”. As with the other narratives Carl’s is characterised by conflict between the desire for his father’s love and approval and his distance from him.

The nature of Carl’s distance is important. He is distanced by his father because his behaviour is not that of a “boy’s boy”, like his brother. His putting cream on his face is not a legitimately hegemonic masculine act and thus relegated to “nerd”-dom. It highlights an important role that fathers play in their son’s lives, the policing of hegemonic masculinities. In the same way that Carl’s father encouraged him to study a subject that he hated so that he could make lots of money, thereby perpetuating his middle-classedness, so his distancing of his son for “unmasculine” behaviours serves to demarcate what is acceptable and what is not. This is particularly true for the two most diametrical others, homosexuals and women:

The boy was programmed to be **what my dad always wanted to be** and could never be, so the boy was, the boy would skip this, he must be a man now, a man, you know don’t cry, don’t do this, **cissies do the following, no cissies would do that and don’t speak with a moffie stemmetjie**⁹ or you know, you’re a boy you’re a man you’re a man you’re a man. (David, Int. 1, 23/7/2004)

The direct reference to “moffie” and “cissie” directly link certain actions and ways of doing with being homosexual. It is what “cissies” do and speaking like a “moffie” that must be avoided in order for men to be accepted by other men in this hegemonic frame of reference. This is also true for girls:

My first memory of me thinking in terms of boy/girl is that **my father always used to ask me this question Are you a little girl? And I’d go No I’m a man.** (Mark, Int.1, 23/7/2004)

⁹ “Moffie” is a derogatory term for gay man in Afrikaans; “Stemmetjie” can be translated to “little voice” in English

Mark's father makes it very clear that being a "girl" is not acceptable, if you are to be a "man". In fact, this is Mark's first memory of being a boy, a powerful indicator of the role that his father played in instilling his masculine identity. Furthermore, as with David, Mark is not encouraged to be a boy, but a man.

Although fathers are mostly described as distant, they are powerful influences in their sons' lives. Importantly they seem to be the primary policers of hegemonic masculinities, which, in this case, are heterosexual and middle class.

4.6. The Middle Class White Man

If we refer back to the definition of hegemony as a "cultural dynamic by which a group claims and sustains a leading position in social life" (Connell, 1995, p. 77), we can see how a masculinity which perpetuates class privilege ensures that that masculinity remains materially dominant, and hence hegemonic. The construction of these masculinities serve to entrench a particular class dynamic, which in turn defines the masculinity, and is an important example of the co-construction of positionality as illustrated by Lerner (1997). The following extracts reveal this particular intersection in some respondents' narratives:

But there's constantly an awareness that I'm thirty-three, next week I'll be thirty-four and **I don't own property yet and the car that I drive is almost ten years old and my bank balance doesn't reflect my age and what position do I have in society professionally, socially, personally - I'm single.** That's the pressure I'm talking about it, is that **I haven't achieved a set goal, the markers in a particular timeline.** (Adam, Int.2, 26/8/2004)

Owning property and a suitable car, having a suitable bank balance, a job that holds social "position" and a relationship are all external "markers" of what a man should be doing at a particular age. There is much pressure to do these things because what these markers serve to do is to position one relative to others:

At the moment now being **two steps behind everyone else**, still having to buy the house, still having to you know settle down and just kinda get on my life at **the stage that I should be at this point in time, on the benchmark of where everyone else is** at this time, ja. (Mark, Int. 2, 10/8/2004)

It is significant that neither Mark nor Adam have achieved the benchmarks they feel they should have. Adam feels pressure because he has not "achieved a set goal, the markers in a particular timeline". Mark is concerned that he is "two steps behind" everyone else and that he is not "where he should be at this point in time".

Although Mark and Adam are different in that Mark has been studying for a year, taking him out of the paid labour market, the pressure that both these men feel is a direct result of these benchmarks. This is because their function is to serve as a measure of the masculinity of the self, versus hegemonic expectations, as policed by fathers and other men. Like the sexual they can serve to exclude men who do not measure up. In talking about his friends Andrew notes that they serve as a means to "peg your progression":

So they are definitely a release and they are also a **nice way to peg your progression**. (Andrew, Int. 1, 8/10/2004)

The consequence of progressing at different rates, however, is that they no longer remain friends:

If you've got one friend living somewhere like Bishopscourt¹⁰ and someone else is living...I see **my brother has grown away from his friends who have necessarily not furthered their careers as he has** - and I would hate for that to happen, as well. (Andrew, Int. 1, 8/10/2004)

The “everyone else” that Mark refers to earlier, gain an identity in Andrew’s narrative. They are friends, but friends who share a similar class, as indicated by the area that they live in and the extent that they have performed at their jobs. The striking characteristic is that all the benchmarks mentioned in the context of being a man, speak to a very classed masculinity, in that in the achievement of these class indicators, such as owning property in a certain area, a car, a certain salary and status, so masculinity is achieved.

It is in the context of these middle-classed masculinities that both university and travel emerged as significant life events. Travel and university were cited by six out of the seven men as significant times in their lives.

University is a site of the reproduction of these classed expectations:

I've always wanted to study medicine and work with sport and physics and stuff like that and in Standard Nine or Matric or whenever you do your university applications, my dad one day said, You know, **we've got someone in the family that's an actuary and he's making stacks of money**, if you do Actuarial Science you are almost guaranteed getting a bursary and **you'll earn stacks of money** and you like Maths, so just do it. (Carl, Int. 1, 20/7/2004)

Carl is expected, by his father, to pursue a profession that is more financially lucrative than what he actually wants to do. He does so, and as the rest of this long narrative account shows, to the detriment of his happiness. The pressure to perpetuate a certain class position continues into the present day where he continues to study, in order to maintain a certain standard of living. But it is also a pressure he experiences in relation to expectations around his role as man:

If I quit [studying] I can't work here anymore, I'm not going to be working for someone for the rest of my life and I'm earning **enough now to keep us going**. (Carl, Int. 1, 20/7/2004)

He needs to study to work where he does so that he can “keep” his family “going”, but it is also about progressing in his career so that he won't need to be “working for someone” else for the rest of his life, and in so doing ensuring his upwardly mobile class position. The importance of work as a marker for class success is also illustrated by David:

¹⁰ Bishopscourt is an upmarket suburb in Cape Town

I could work as a barman for 6 months if I wanted to in London, my dad would tell people you know Oh David's is in, is working in London, so there's no consequences for him either so it was a free feeling of **I'm not gonna, through failure, I'm not gonna disappoint anybody else**. So that was what was great. (David, Int. 1, 23/7/2004)

In the confines of pressure exerted from his father, working as a barman is considered a “failure” and a disappointment. This classed expectation around suitable work speaks to Adam's earlier accounts of masculine identity being marked by having a job that has particular social standing and being a barman does not make the grade. The significance of travel is that it allows respite from these expectations and freedom from the “consequences” of not meeting them. However, there is something qualitatively different about being a barman in London to being a barman in South Africa. It is as if being a barman in London is more valued and that it somehow meets his father's classed expectations in a way that being a barman in South Africa cannot. Once again the father is the primary “other”. Outside the rigid confines of these expectations, the time abroad is also a time of learning and personal development and learning:

I also went **overseas** for quite a long time, **my development period** was there with **all these questions** asked, and I think **if I was coloured at that stage that journey would have been more or less the same, apart from the fact that I had money to fly to overseas**, I didn't have money there, **but it was just an aeroplane ticket money** difference between the two. (David, Int. 1, 23/7/2004)

But, travel is a very middle class phenomenon and as David illustrates, also highly racialised. He notes that if he were coloured he would not have had the money to fly overseas. The racial nature of the class dynamic is further illustrated in reference to education:

I do know that the type of person I am now I'd like to think that **I wouldn't be living in a shanty town, I would have made something of myself**. But **would I have had the education** to, I don't know. (Mark, Int. 1, 23/7/2004)

Mark links “living in a shanty town” versus “making something of himself” to opportunity for “education”. Class (as marked by living in a shanty town) is in this case a function of education and vice-versa. The significance of this connection is that it is made in the context of the difference between being black or white during Apartheid. The connection between the importance of property and suitable professional and societal status in the enactment of successful masculinities, is here linked with race adding important insight into the co-constructed nature of these axes of identity (Lerner, 1997). The significance of university and travel in these lives is very much a function of class and race, which in turn informs the masculinity that shapes these particular experiences of race and class.

Although the intersection of class, race and gender is clear in this talk of travel and university, there is also an active understating of race as a variable. Both Mark and David's accounts are characterised by a tension between acknowledging systematic race privilege and evading it. In juxtaposing his opportunity to travel as a

white person with what it may have been like as a coloured person, he first acknowledges his structural privilege: “I had money to fly to overseas” and in the next sentence underplays it: “*but it was just an aeroplane ticket money*”. This racial distinction is also couched in terms of resources, rendering it the same time, a classed racialisation. Mark’s account holds a similar tension around race privilege, acknowledgement: “would I have had the education” and underplaying: “I wouldn’t be living in a shanty town, I would have made something of myself”. Mark’s mechanism for evading systematic privilege is important. Couched in the folds of liberal humanism it places the experience of race and race privilege and oppression in the realm of personal agency (*I would not, I would*) rather than a broader political frame allowing him to side-step his systematic white privilege (Peck, 1993).

Part 2 Engaging Race

4.7. Seeing Black, Becoming White

The earliest awareness of whiteness emerges in a gendered class dynamic. It emerges in the presence of the family domestic worker, a black woman. This is not surprising and supports Cock’s (1988) point that the institution of domestic work serves to “socialise whites into the dominant ideological order” in that it is the “most significant inter-racial contact that whites encounter” (p. 210). Both Adam and David associate their earliest memories of being white with a black domestic worker:

Claire: Looking back at this history and can you think of the first time that you became aware of being white?

David: I can’t remember a specific time when I was kid that I But I’m white and why’s she black or. **Maybe because I grew up with a woman Clara** [domestic worker] and she was a coloured and, ja she was a coloured woman, and we were very very close and so I didn’t really see a colour difference there. (David, Int. 1, 23/7/2004)

Claire: When did you first become aware of being white?

Adam: Right from the start, from as early as I can remember. **We had a nanny** because my parents, from the time that I can remember she was there and when my parents were at work, my mom and my dad worked together, she was in charge, she looked after us. (Adam, Int. 1, 29/7/2004)

Although David negates it, by saying that he “didn’t really see a colour difference”, the fact that Clara emerges in the context of this question points to the very racialised nature of this relationship.

Cock (1988) goes onto say that whites “experience these relationships in very asymmetrical terms” (p. 210) and that “many white South African children learn the attitudes and styles of racial domination from domestic

relationships” (ibid.). This dynamic does not go unnoticed by some respondents. This ranges from sensing that something was “amiss” to a direct statement about the power dynamic that characterised this relationship:

That’s what I remember and **there was definitely something like amiss or something awry** but I can’t quite put my finger on it. (Justin, Int.1, 4/8/2004)

It was the fact that as a self object, she was very much a self object to me, but because of the relationship between her and my mother, the subservience between her and my real mother, **there was an understanding of her subservience to me** as well but it was right from the word go. (Adam, Int. 1, 29/7/2004)

It is significant that Adam articulates this relationship in contradictory terms, first as “she was in charge” and here as “there was an understanding of her subservience to me”. The nature of this relationship is a complex one and it must be located within the broader context of “systematic abuse along lines of race, class and gender” (Grossman, 1996), in which most middle class white children are directly implicated. And yet the memories are deeply personal and emotional:

I’ve always loved... when I was a baby, well, a toddler, my parents always had live-in domestic workers and they were called maids and I always got on well with them, **I always loved them, I always felt very safe with them.** I remember my first nanny, well the only nanny, later on but she was quite a big woman and one of the most wonderful things that could happen was when I really felt grumpy and, **she would pick me up and with one of her towels, it was rough, it was washed it was hard, she would wrap me on her back; she would tie me to her back and I could protest as much as I liked, she would just do it and it was wonderful; it was the safest thing ever.** It was just comforting and nurturing and all of that. And although I had awareness right from the word go that they’re black and I’m white, **I have privilege, they don’t** - I always had a special place for the women that worked in the house. (Adam, Int. 1, 29/7/2004)

It is significant that at this point my own experience becomes important. It was the image of the rough towel and the memory of being on the back of the domestic worker, **Myna**, who still works for my parents that echoed my experience. It is an issue which I grapple with deeply and painfully: my life, my most comforting childhood moments, having being built on the exploitation of another, whom I love as my own mother, but not. It is a painful contradiction that I sit with daily and one that I have not “solved” for myself. It is with this “baggage” that I approach the analysis of this text.

Adam’s memories of this woman are that of comfort, safety and love. He also acknowledges his privilege, as he has done before. But there is something missing in this narrative, something that until recently I had not included either; her name. And this is true for all accounts. Only Clara is named, but it is unclear if this her real name. The stripping of name is characteristic of the institutional violence of domestic work (Motsei, 1990). It is this violence that we “unknowingly” perpetuate even through our most comforting childhood memories.

A greater violence, however, is that which we commit when we do not acknowledge her experience, when we exclude her voice (Grossman, 2004). It is only in the context of these voices that our childhood memories can be understood. It is to this end that I include the following:

Say for instance you are looking after somebody's children- but you don't even know what your children are doing. You will worry whether they have slept and if they are happy.

And all the time you miss your own children. Your heart is sore, you have love to give to your own children but where are they? You must be careful not to give the madam's children your love. You will find yourself kicked out because she is jealous.

(Excerpts from *Ekitchini* cited in Grossman, 1996, p. 4)

The care and love that both Adam I received was at the expense of our nannies' children. Cock (1988) cites a domestic worker who illustrates this cost when she says that "that the employment of domestic workers explained 'why white people's children don't grow up criminals'" (p. 216). They have someone to take care of them, whilst the domestic worker's children are often looked after by the oldest daughter, who often has to leave school to do so, perpetuating a cycle of gender, race and class oppression. We, as white children, stand at the centre of this oppression, and as much as we harbour these comforting memories of rough towels, safety and love, they are stolen and we must acknowledge that.

The experiences of nannies, maids, domestic workers are overwhelmingly characterised as loving and comforting. In the absence of the voices of the domestic workers, however, there is the risk of stereotyping (Steyn, 2001) and in the most extreme, essentialising:

I firmly believe that one part of why **South African men, white men, has got another dynamic to them than European and American men**, is in a way we are different, I've seen different, we've got another dynamic to us, I don't necessarily know what it is, but I think it's because we got, and the same with South African women, We got brought up by African nannies and **they brought an earthiness to us, a groundedness**, a ja, **let's call it the energies of the earth** in a way that's in us. So I think that what she, I love the earth, I love to be grounded, **the something spiritual that she's brought into my life**. And it's not a religious way but it's spiritual, a spiritual way. (David, Int. 1, 23/7/2004)

What this extract serves to do is to connect "African nannies" as "earthy", "grounded" and "spiritual". This is what renders white South African men and women as different to Americans and Europeans. It's not that we had nannies, it's that they were African and it is their Africaness that brings to our Europeaness, "the energies of the earth" and spirituality. The implication, of course, is that there is something more spiritual about Africans, that they are more closely connected to the earth and nature.

The notion that Africans and in this case African women, are more spiritual and more connected to the earth, than white people, creates what Glick and Fiske (2001) call ambivalent stereotypes. These not wholly negative stereotypes “can be legitimated in ways that purely hostile stereotypes cannot” (p. 279) making them all the more dangerous. Being spiritual and more “earthy” is not necessarily a bad thing but can be mobilised in very problematic ways. As Weaver (1994) illustrates the rational and natural are diametrically opposed, that which is natural in a human sense easily being equated with primitiveness. The construction of the “other” as spiritual, mysterious and exotic, only serves to highlight our own rationality (Chabal, 1996), the rational being the cornerstone of colonial domination. Furthermore the “natural” ability of black women to nurture and care, serves to fix black women as ideal for taking care of children, justifying their dominance in the domestic work sector. As Grossman (2004) points out however, these skills are not “natural”, they are learnt, through necessity and very rarely through formal training.

Although domestic workers are the primary “other” in an emerging sense of whiteness, in keeping with the suggested class dynamics, the black men in these interviewees’ early lives were mainly workers. Justin likens a black man having his bag carried for him at the airport to his experience of the West Indian cricket team, paradigm shifting:

We came over for a holiday to see the family and stuff and **I remember seeing this black man, a luggage attendant was carrying his bag** and that was like a Boing!, **such a paradigm shift**, that just never happened. (Justin, Int. 1, 4/8/2004)

Justin: I was going to say something round... because I love cricket and when I got here to England and then **I saw these black guys who were West Indians playing cricket and it felt like such a mindfuck that these people should be subservient.**

Claire: Can you tell me a bit more about how you reacted to that and why?

Justin: It was like the guy at the airport it was just so odd. It was, **God, these guys can actually do things! I know they can dig ditches and they can do roads but, wow, they can do other things on a par with white people.** (Justin, Int. 1, 4/8/2004)

The fact that he knows that “they can dig ditches and they can do roads” speaks to the boy’s expectations of what “these guys” can do, “be subservient”. It is significant, that it is in the context of playing cricket that the fact that “these guys can do things” becomes apparent to him, sport playing the role it did in defining the power of the colonial (white middle upper class) masculine (*See The Sporting Boy*). To see this enactment of power by black men, truly is a “mindfuck”, in that it is a contradiction in terms. They are expected to be labourers, servants. To see a black man being served is “paradigm shifting” for him.

4.8. Being White: An Exercise in Evasion

Although the experience of masculinity is not always directly engaged with in terms of race and class there can be no doubt that these masculinities are constitutively raced and classed (Frankenberg, 1993; Erasmus with De Wet, 2003).

The interviewees' experiences of their whiteness vary vastly both across and within all accounts. One feature which threads through all of these experiences is a tension between acknowledging and evading race privilege. Race evasion is a common tactic characterised by a "power evasive discursive repertoire' that uses 'polite language' in its 'selective engagement' with race" (Frankenberg, cited in Erasmus with De Wet, 2003, p. 43). Furthermore, to locate this dynamic in the broader social and ideological discourse of whiteness in South Africa, these stories, and the tensions they capture, are at times mapped onto Steyn's (2001) five narratives of whiteness.

Early experiences of whiteness are, for many, located at school. Although these experiences emerge in the context of being white, this racialness is undermined through the mechanism of race evasion (Frankenberg, 1993) and "polite language" is a prominent feature in the talk about race and school:

You know it probably was in '85, when I think back now my first year of school, there was a young guy named Luyanda Mthathi, he started school on the same day as me and at the time was struggling to speak English, came from a Xhosa background, came from the Transkei, and that was probably the first time I realised Oh there's like a bit of difference here. **But it wasn't a big revelation it was just oh this guy's different, he speaks another language and I found it quite interesting, he actually became one of my good friends at school.** (Mark, Int. 1, 23/7/2004))

This, Mark's first time he realised "there's like a bit of difference here" is constructed as not being "a big revelation". Luyanda is different because he speaks a different language, and this seems to be no big deal, in fact they become "good friends". But the strength of this "good "friendship is called into question:

My major memories of that time where **probably playing soccer, this guy knew how to dazzle with the ball**, and also we that was when we they started introducing Zulu into St Marks so although this guy, **Luyanda was Xhosa he handled the language brilliantly because of the close** between the two and listening to him talk about life in the homelands, **singing Zulu songs**, I 'spose it was just things that stuck in my mind. (Mark, Int. 1, 23/7/2004).

Although Luyanda might very well have been good at soccer, spoken Zulu well and sang Zulu songs, the fact that Mark can *only* draw on ambivalent stereotypes (Glick and Fiske, 2001) about black people to describe someone who is a good friend, seems odd and does not speak of a close personal friendship. These contradictions are prevalent throughout the talk of friends at school. This might be a function of what Luisa Passerini (cited in Frankenberg, 1993) calls "all-ready' memory" which is "stereotyped, revealing general views

of the world” versus memory “more directly connected with life experience” (p. 42). This distinction can be used to explore apparent contradictions in narratives. What these contradictions suggest then is that although these interactions are real they are more informed by general stereotypes than lived experience, which calls into question the weight of the black voices in these narratives.

The weight of these black voices alludes to an unspoken power dynamic. This is illustrated in Andrew’s account when he makes the point that he never went to play at black children’s homes, rather - “they were always playing with me, if they were black”. They come to him, he does not go to them, they are the one’s who must do the “work” (Erasmus with De Wet, 2003), not him:

So I had people that I played with but **they were always playing with me, if they were black. Whereas if they were white, I would visit them and they would visit me.** So, seldom would I ever go like to the point where I can’t even remember a time when I would ever have gone to visit or play at a black person’s house. (Andrew, Int. 1, 16/9/2004)

This dynamic is further illustrated by Bryan’s experience:

There were still distinct groups I guess, I guess it was very very difficult for them, because those were the South African black students, who’d obviously grown up at the height of Apartheid. And looking back at it now **I’m amazed that they fitted in as well and as easily as they did, because it must have been helluva difficult for them.** (Bryan, Int.1, 12/8/2004)

Bryan, despite his empathy for the difficulty that these students must have experienced, does not once question the hostile nature of the environment. The seemingly fixed nature of the social groups speaks to the exclusionary nature of the environment. Yet this is downplayed and the ability of these students to “fit in” highlighted as the problem, which places the burden for “race work” with the black children (Erasmus with De Wet, 2003). The fact that these students have to “fit in” speaks to the centrality and normativity of Bryan’s school environment and the obvious outsider status of the black children. He may be sympathetic, but that is not enough to disrupt the deeply uneven power relations that these black children encounter.

The seeming naiveté around the reality of the black children’s experiences of these hostile school environments, the strange sense of distance evident in talk of “friendships”, interacts with the active evasion of race as a factor shaping these relationships. This dynamic is carried over into the context of university:

At UCT I think seeing how easily, **how difficult it was to defend yourself against any charge of racism, if you were accused of being racist, you were sunk because you can’t defend yourself,** if somebody says You’re saying that because you’re a racist, **you either appear defensive** or you, which sort of implicates you by defensiveness, **or you try and joke around the matter, in which case Oh you think it’s a big joke,** so it’s and I think that that, that made me very wary about anybody who’s

too leftist or rightist, I think any sort of **extremist type people I just start becoming wary of them** and I think, but it didn't really affect me as a white guy. (Bryan, Int. 1, 5/8/2004)

Bryan places himself in a catch-22 where no matter what he does, it is misconstrued as racist. What this has resulted in is a mistrust of what he calls "extremist type people". What this serves to do is locate anyone who accuses him of racism as extremist and irrational, and him as securely not racist. To consolidate this he explains his voluntary separation from black people, who were mostly "militant", as a function of this militancy, not race:

So ja at that stage **it wasn't a black versus white thing** it was a political versus non political thing and the militant versus non militant thing. (Bryan, Int. 1, 5/8/2004)

By separating "black versus white" from the "political versus non political" he actively depoliticises race and undermines its very real political effects. What is clearly lacking from these passages is a constructive engagement with "the 'real' effects of race in shaping one's identity, life and learning experiences, and in perpetuating particular relations of power and inequality" (Erasmus with De Wet, 2003, p.43). His evasion in this context speaks to Giroux's (1997) point that in the absence of constructive, transformative narratives of anti-racist whiteness, many people "express a general angst over racial politics" (p. 296). Furthermore, his fear of being labelled racist is one borne out of his discursive grounding in liberal humanism which advocates for the same "colour blindness" (Steyn, 2001; Erasmus with De Wet, 2003) which characterises his talk about school. This discourse was a prominent feature of the white student's responses in Erasmus with De Wet's (2003) paper and a central feature of Steyn's (2001) narrative of evasion, *Whiter than white*.

This discourse of race evasion intersects complexly with two other discourses prominent in Erasmus with De Wet's (2003) white respondents, the discourses of deficit and potential. (Powell cited in Erasmus with De Wet, 2003). The discourse of deficit explains black underachievement in terms of deficit whereas white students are engaged within a discourse of potential where "white students are supported and empowered" and it "just feels like they earned it". The following extract clearly illustrates this dynamic:

Oh ja that, like **there were some black guys around us who were really really struggling when some of my mates had sort of failed out of first year or whatever and these guys were still in there** and you're like Well how does that work? Is there some kind of favouritism going on and there were rumours that circulated. **So it was more just a ja I don't think it was ever really a black versus white thing as such it was just that Hey there's some kind of favouritism here** which just happened to be, ja it doesn't really make sense, **it happened to be black guys** that were suspected of getting favouritism but ja who knows. (Bryan, Int. 1, 5/8/2004)

The black students are "still in there" (university), when they really shouldn't be, because they "were really struggling". The fact that they are still there is, according to this account, due to "favouritism". Within the logic of the discourses of deficit and potential the black students could in no way have "earned" their promotion, they

must be there only because they are black, and his mates, who had in fact failed previously, must have been unfairly treated. Although this is clearly a racial issue for him, as favouritism is meted out in terms of race, he immediately resorts to evading it -“I don’t think it was ever really a black versus white thing as such it was just that “Hey there’s some kind of favouritism here” which “happened to be black guys”. What none of these accounts serve to do is challenge the systematic racism that black people face daily. As such the implications of race and the resulting “race discomfort” (Erasmus with De Wet, 2003, p. 43) are neatly averted, and the reality of racial oppression and privilege left unproblematised.

4.9. “Bare and Basic” Afrikaners and “Sophisticated and Glamorous” Englishmen

Evasion has many faces. The othering of white Afrikaans-speakers is a common strategy amongst white English-speaking South Africans to distance themselves from implication in Apartheid. It is a strategy that I, as an English-speaking South African, have been witness to and engaged in all my life. “Whiteness, racism, Apartheid and Afrikanerdom are all conflated” and the “Afrikaners are seen as the ‘real’ racists, and from ‘their’ politics, Apartheid” (Steyn, 2001, p.107).

This act of othering Afrikaans-speakers is a useful mechanism for English-speakers for avoiding problematic, that is racist, whiteness. This is illustrated in Bryan’s subtle shifting of the responsibility for Apartheid onto the Nationalists:

In terms of ja I think it is, I think **in a very conservative being a man is always gonna have different connotations** to in a more liberal environment, just because of, especially under Apartheid, I mean **Apartheid was a like a Nationalist masterplan** type thing and **the Nationalists were very very conservative.....** (Bryan, Int.2, 12/8/2004)

By converting the issue of being a man during Apartheid into one of conservative versus liberal he distances himself from the defined conservative perpetrators, in that he defines both himself and his family as liberal. In fact his repetition of “liberal” and his qualification of it with “very”, illustrates the power with which he carves out this subject position, resulting in the further distancing from the “conservative”:

I come from a what I’d like to think is a reactively **liberal** family relative to the era they grew up in, I mean obviously my folks aren’t **liberal** in the true sense of the word but in terms of their peers that **they’re very liberal and I think that my sister and I are very liberal** (Bryan, Int. 1, 5/8/2004).

His account epitomises the dynamic identified by Steyn (2001); that more influenced by liberalism, English-speakers did not identify with Afrikaner nationalism but that they nevertheless “enjoyed the comfortable ‘white’ privilege Afrikaner ‘law and order’ protected, without having to take moral censure for the system of Apartheid” (p. 40). But the fact that the Nationalists are, not only conservative, but Afrikaans-speaking which he is not, is used as a mechanism to distance himself not only from the past, but the present. By actively constructing racism

as something that the nationalists were responsible for and what Afrikaans-speaking people do, he is able to position himself in opposition to it:

When I left university I had to go work on the mines and the mines just again, something that **I just could never associate myself with, just the mentality on the mines, very racist**, very well actually fits in quite nicely with your topic (laughs), **very chauvinistic, very old school, very very conservative, without trying to sound like a snob, sort of low class type ja, failures** in the traditional sense of the word that were just ja, so that was a horrible period of my life. And I was made to work with these guys and actually very little positive came out of it, **I've even forgotten how to speak Afrikaans**, so nothing long lasting of any worth came out of it. (Bryan, Int. 1, 5/8/2004)

The fact that he can't relate to the "mentality" which he identifies as being "very racist", "very chauvinistic" and "very conservative" (like the Nationalists) actively distances himself from being this kind of person, "chauvinistic" suggesting man, "racist" suggesting white man. The fact that he refers to these other men as "low class" and "failures" suggests the very classed nature of this masculinity and that he definitely positions himself as superior. That he has "forgotten how to speak Afrikaans" suggests that he had to speak Afrikaans to these men, which means that all of these qualities he does not associate with himself and that he feels superior to, he attributes to these men, who are Afrikaans-speakers.

In the same way that Bryan distances himself from a problematic whiteness, by distancing himself from Afrikaans-speakers, so Andrew distances himself from a problematic masculinity. He does this by attributing certain qualities to Afrikaans-speaking men, qualities which he actively rejects:

And then I think there are also **families out there which are old school** where the guys a complete (*). So, I like to think that I'm not. **I don't want to be the main 'manne'**; I'm not interested, I don't think it's so cool. You go into some people's houses, even in the gay community, I've been around to people's houses where **there's definitely a submissive woman** in one of these guys, where he sits and says hardly anything, serves tea and scones, and cooks **and the one guy sits there like he's Mr. Big**. (Andrew, Int. 2, 8/10/2004)

The conceptualisation of the perceived dominant and submissive roles in a gay relationship within a heteronormative discourse: - "*Mr Big*" versus "*submissive woman*" draws off and perpetuates an unequal gendered arrangement. It is, however, an arrangement that he rejects as his own. The mechanism for doing this is the attribution of this dominant "*Mr Big*" version of masculinity with an "other". The use of the Afrikaans word for men, "manne", suggests who that "other" is. In this case "manne" makes reference to a particular type of masculinity, that which he associates with being Afrikaans-speaking and that he by virtue of his English-speakingness is not implicated in.

The phenomenon of othering Afrikaans-speakers supports an important theoretical point, in the hierarchy of legitimate masculinities and whitenesses; the Afrikaans- and English-speaking version are not equal.

Frankenberg (1993) notes that those in positions of marginality see their own position but also that of the dominant group with particular clarity. It is not surprising then, that the Afrikaans-speaking men alert us to this hierarchy within South African whitenesses:

For most of my life it was something negative; it was something that I saw to be negative. **To be Afrikaans was to be less.** Up to round the age of eighteen, my experience of how I understood it at the time especially **in comparison to other cultures - by other cultures I mean English culture** - was that Afrikaans culture is conservative, it's narrow-minded, it doesn't allow for sophisticated, glamorous opportunities. It's bare, it's basic. (Adam, Int. 1, 29/7/2004)

In his talk Adam renders the Afrikaans-speaking men's relationships with their culture complex and problematised. Although Adam used to feel negatively about his culture he is now "proudly Afrikaans". His identification as "Afrikaans" has changed and this change speaks to the very real post-Apartheid opportunities for redefinition. But this still does not mean that he identifies with that which is "typically Afrikaans":

Over the last two years it's changed, I consider myself to be Afrikaans, **I'm proudly Afrikaans**, I speak Afrikaans when it's appropriate for me to do so - I feel more comfortable speaking English most of the time, professionally, academically, all of that, I feel much more comfortable speaking English. Most of my friends are English, with my Afrikaans friends that I do have I would speak Afrikaans to them and there are times when we would naturally go over to English. **I'm not staunchly Afrikaans, I don't identify with anything typically Afrikaans, Afrikaans culture or Afrikaans way of life.** (Adam, Int. 1, 29/7/2004)

David also distances himself from elements of what he defines as his "Afrikaans culture", and more specifically the masculinity it prescribes:

But in my culture, specifically, a man gets defined by his level of work or his job level, he gets defined by his income, sometimes how many children he has, and sometimes which church he goes to and how many beers he could drink. And that in my culture is how I think what the picture of a man looks like....**It's conflict in many ways, for me there's no way they could meet because I feel that there's no part of my definition of manhood that fits into those categories, so they don't meet.** (David, Int. 2, 2/9/2004)

There are two important points to be made about these reflections. The first is that even within a numerically small group of white men, there is no such thing as homogeneity. The second is that these reflections stand in stark contrast to the English-speakers who do not at any point comment on their positioning as cultural beings. It adds another layer to the conceptualisation of the hegemonies of white masculinities in South Africa; the normative and superior English-speaking, borne out of a legacy of colonial conquest and domination, is in this case, more powerfully hegemonic than the Afrikaans-speaking.

Part 3

Benefits and Costs

A dominant theme through out these interviews is the tension between the costs and payoffs of white patriarchy. As Morrell (*Symposium on Manhood and Masculinities*, WISER, September 2004) pointed out it is essential in the investigation of gender that we engage with these costs but at the same time do not lose sight of the social reality of gender relations.

4.10. Victimised Perpetrators / Perpetrating Victims

According to Hardiman and Jackson (1997) oppression exists when “one social group whether knowingly or unconsciously exploits another social group for its own benefit” (p.17). Within a system of oppression they identify targets, members of social identity groups that are disenfranchised, exploited and victimised” and agents, “members of dominant groups privileged by birth or acquisition, who knowingly or unknowingly exploit or reap unfair advantage over members of target groups” (p. 20). But in the same way that a positionality can inhabit the binary of both target and agent, like white women, so agents are subject to paradox, in that in the process of exercising oppression they themselves are dehumanised (Freire cited in Hardiman and Jackson). Conceptualising gendered identities in this way allows us to disrupt Morrell’s (*Symposium on Manhood and Masculinities*, WISER, September 2004) man/power, woman/victim couplets and engage in dismantling the fixity of the “oppressor role for men” (Jackson, 1998, p.84) for a more fluid understanding of the contested nature of gendered relations. It is a process, however, that must be located firmly in the context of the social and material power of men over women and other men (Jackson, 1998). It is with in this conceptual frame that the talk of victimisation is firmly located.

I think we are victims in a way where **we’re in denial of hurt that we feel that would come from women**, emotional blackmail from mother, emotional blackmail or emotional manipulation from wives, I think we’re victims and some of that might come out in different ways in men’s lives, in anger, might project it, or might manifest in ways that men could never actually relate it to the hurt that they received from women. So I think there’s a lot of emotional pain inflicted on men, not necessarily physically, yes there’s the odd physical as well. **The fact that women would say that men are bastards because men rape, yes I have to own the fact and own the shame but Gee I’m not a rapist, I’m not that, so saying to me you know You men, that hurts. So I’m a victim of that.**
(David, Int. 2, 2/9/2004)

David actively engages with the notion of victimhood -“I think we are victims”- which is constructed not only by the pain that women inflict on men but by the fact that the experience of this pain is denied. The victim status that he accords himself is actively juxtaposed to the victim status that women traditionally hold in popular discourse in his discussion around rape. However, being accused of being a rapist, on one hand, and living as a survivor of rape and/or the constant fear of being raped, on the other, creates two very different kinds of

“victim”. This is not to deny the very real pain that such accusations cause, especially when there is an active engagement with his own implication – “I have to own the fact and own the shame”. We must be wary, however, of drawing what Anderson and Accomando (2002) call “false parallelisms” (p. 505) which set up relationships of equivalency when in fact what is being compared is not equivalent at all (personal communication, Z. Erasmus, 17/01/2005).

Rape, for all that is abhorrent about it, allows us to complicate the conceptualisation of men and victimhood.

And to some extent being victimized, being a victim. I'm smiling because of my own research. I've just read about a man who was raped and then speaking about his experiences he said, **How can one be a victim and still be a man?** And I think that goes to the core of it - **that there is no space to say, But hang on, I'm also hurting, hang on.** (Adam, Int. 2, 26/8/2004)

“How can one be a victim and still be a man?” This is a powerful question. Funk (1997) points out “there is no way to see men as ‘victims’ and still be men” as “there is no way in current myths of manhood to acknowledge being vulnerable and still be a man” (p. 230). This question goes to the heart of dismantling the man/power couplet in that men too are victims of abhorrent crimes, perpetuated by other men. Very often, however, the spectre of male rape is used as an assault on feminism and the mechanism for constructing men as the “real victims” of gender inequality (Scarce, 1997). As Pelka (cited in Scarce, 1997) points out, however, it is because of the foundation laid by feminism that male survivors can tell their stories at all and that “while many men are victimised by rape, all women are oppressed by it and any victimisation of women occurs in a context of oppression that most men do simply not understand” (p.237). The distinction he draws between victimisation and oppression is a useful one, because all these accounts of “victimhood”, although very real, do not occur in the same context of oppression that they would for women. Nevertheless, in the opening of discursive space to engage in men’s pain, we serve to undermine “current myths of manhood” and in so doing create a more nuanced understanding of masculinities.

Thus far the extracts have engaged directly with the costs of patriarchy. These costs are, however, embedded in the very fabric of these men’s experiences and become apparent at important junctures. Significantly these costs are not purely a function of gender but point to a complex intersection with race, class and culture. It is in the talk of school that this intersection is most apparent.

4.11. “Almost like going to war”

Going to a boys’ only boarding school is almost like going to war, probably, because you do have to **fend for yourself all** on your own. At our school for the first year, **you weren’t allowed to see your parents**, that was the deal, so you were to **stand on your own two feet** and get on with it. And there was a hell of a big **seniority system** in place which **knocked you around if you stepped out of line**. I’m not saying it was a good thing, but it was a good thing; I don’t think that any beatings are

necessarily a good thing, but to have that system in place where you earn and learn respect for people.
(Andrew, Int. 1, 16/9/2004)

Within the frame of British imperialism, manhood is achieved through the enactment of rites which “separated them [boys] from home and the familiar, most particularly from their mothers’ care and influence”, where they “were to suffer the dominance of older boys with authority over them” and they “were expected to stand on their own two feet until the time came for them to exercise authority and power in their turn” (Kanitkar, 1994, p. 184). Andrew’s account is almost a carbon copy of Kanitkar’s textbook British imperial schooling system. His war metaphor is spot on as these institutions main purpose was to prepare boys for “positions of military and civil leadership in the far flung British Empire” (ibid.) and to generate new loyalties, to school and sports teams, “preparing boys for later, greater loyalties to regiment, nation and empire” (ibid, p.186).

In his work with South African boarding schools (Morrell cited in Epstein, 1998) illustrates how they are modelled on the British public school and serve to reproduce the same English-speaking upper class masculinities. As Kanitkar (1994) points out the nature of these masculinities is that they are inevitably white. The whiteness of the schooling system is illustrated in Andrew’s strong emotional reaction - “it’s enough to make me cry” - to the post colonial decentering of his whiteness by the fact that his school “has gone completely black”:

And she told me that HighSchool2, which was another boys’ only school that we were fairly competitive with, **has gone completely black**, there’s not one white scholar there now and they **celebrated last year by killing a goat in the centre of the school, our hall, their mess hall, slaughtering a goat**. And I thought you know, jussus man, **it’s enough to make me cry** to think that that school you know you do compete but at the end of the day you’re pretty close and to think that that’s going on now, slaughtering goats and celebrating. (Andrew, Int. 1, 16/9/2004)

The incongruity of the African custom of slaughtering a goat occurring in the school hall, is highly charged for him. The fact that he refers to the hall as “our hall” and must correct himself by referring to it as “their mess hall”, speaks to the apparent incongruity of them, being there in the first place. But within the school environment, the enactment of this imperial masculinity is most evident on the sports field, (Kanitkar, 1994).

4.12. “The Sporting Boy”

Hierarchy is put into place through a combination of age, academic success and sporting success (Morrell cited in Epstein, 1998). Justin who attended a private boy’s school in the Kwa Zulu-Natal Midlands is very aware of how this hierarchy operates:

Claire: In what ways do you think you’d be different if you had stayed in South Africa?

Justin: I think **I’d be a lot less sure of myself. The way you’re measured as being successful at that age is to be either the brightest in the class, you know if you’re the brightest in the class but**

you're crap on the rugby field, that's okay, because you're the brightest in the class or the other way around but I was neither and I think I was probably whisked out at just the right time. I think **my confidence would have been severely knocked.** (Justin, Int. 1, 4/8/2004)

He is also aware of the consequences of this intra-masculine hierarchy and recognises that had he stayed there much longer, and was not "whisked away", he would have been a lot less confident about himself. It is ironic then that the confidence that he would have been denied as a result of not meeting the requirements of sporting excellence in one context, is reinstated by the very same dynamic, in another context:

Well, I left South Africa when I was eleven and **I was just in the C-team** or something, I was not really on the as it were. And then when I got to England and **I was in the 1st Team** for my age group and that was like massive! Again it was a paradigm shift for me because I thought, Wow! **It was a huge ego boost, a huge confidence boost for me, to realise that actually yes, I was someone.** (Justin, Int.1, 4/8/2004)

In this environment he can meet the standards - "I was in the A-team" - as stipulated by the system that he finds himself in. More than a simple confidence booster, he can, as a result of being in the first team, validate his existence - "I was someone".

"Sport provides a continuous play of men's bodies in motion" (Connell, 1995, p. 54). Men's greater sporting prowess, "highly specific skills are, of course, involved" (ibid.), "serves as symbolic proof of men's right to rule" (ibid.). Sport, especially the organised team sports, like rugby, cricket and soccer, is an important site for the enactment of hegemonic masculinities (Morrell, 2001). It is therefore not surprising that "the sporting boy" is a key trope around which imperial masculinities are constructed (Kanitkar, 1994, p.186), in that sport is the stylised enactment of domination and superiority.

This sentiment is supported in a particularly sensitive insight by Justin, who links beating girls at games as a child with his actions in his relationships with women. He tells the story of how he and his brothers beat a group of girls at an avocado pear fight:

And there was something around **we're better than them because we won**, we won the avocado pear fight, right, so obviously we were... So that was one incident. (Justin, Int. 1, 4/8/2004)

He links winning the game to being "better than" the girls and in a particularly insightful reflection, finds that it translates into him not taking women seriously:

One of the things I notice is I don't take... in my automatic way of behaving, **I don't take women very seriously**... So I'm thinking about how does that relate to as a boy... what's the word, demeaning or like **an invalidation of girls because we can outgun them in the avo fight** or we can, whatever, and being one of three boys as well. (Justin, Int.2, 15/9/2004)

He makes the direct link between being able to “outgun” (note the war metaphor) the girls “in the avo fight” to not taking women seriously. This “invalidation” is important in that it has like all forms of oppression, material consequences:

Mark: Besides **women being crap at sport**, no (laughs).

Claire: Have you thought that women are crap at sport?

Mark: No **just less powerful**. I have a serious problem with for instance women’s tennis where women complain that they don’t get paid enough and they don’t, then I think Well then why don’t you play 5 games of tennis as well or five sets of tennis rather than 3, things like that and it’s just (laughs). I think equality is great and I think it’s very important but then make it equality for equality’s sake and not equality but you get special kind of preference or whatever. **I think if it’s equal then it should be equal all on the same playing field and I think the same about gender specific and race specific.**

(Mark, Int.2, 10/8/2004)

What Mark’s comments imply is that because men are perceived as physically stronger and therefore play longer and harder, it is only right that they be paid more. What is interesting is that he links his gender argument to the same logic that prevails around racial equity in sport. His comments feed into discourse around standards and performance and do not question the way in which these standards actively serve to exclude women and other marginal groups through what Anderson and Accomando (2002) call a “false neutrality” (p. 505). This false neutrality is constructed by reference to the fact that “if it’s equal then it should be equal all on the same playing field” which “makes sense only if the larger context of male [and white]¹¹ power is ignored” (ibid.). Furthermore, in the context of sport, these comments reinforce the notion of the physical being a legitimate means of domination, in this case financial, and rearticulate the biological as being an essential and legitimate social organiser.

Mark’s conflation of gender and race in equity in sport is important. Sport is one of the markers of manhood not only because it is a show of superiority over girls and women but it is also a show of superiority among men:

I definitely also feel that there was bigger competition between the boys only and the boys only schools that were boarding and they looked at the boys only schools and or the co-ed school that were day boarding or day scholars as **inferior because we always beat them at sport**. (Andrew, Int. 1, 16/9/2004)

Furthermore “class and race values are institutionalised on and through the sports field” (Kanitkar, 1994). This is most evident in the great rugby/soccer divide which is clearly a racial one. Morrell (2001) illustrates how soccer, with it’s emphasis on artistry came to be the sport of black township boys while rugby with its focus on “physical confrontation, perseverance and skill” was “equated with white masculinity” (p. 23). The emphasis on artistry in the black sportsmen and skill in the white, taps into a broader interpretative repertoire; artistry speaks to natural ability, while skill speaks to learnt technical ability (personal communication, Z. Erasmus,

¹¹ My addition

15/03/2005). The effect of locating black and white sportsmen in this dichotomy is similar to that seen in the talk about domestic workers, locating black and white on opposite ends of a natural/primitive and skilled/rational continuum (Weaver, 1994), with problematic ideological effects. The racialised nature of this divide is clearly articulated in some of the narratives:

My major memories of that time were probably playing soccer, **this guy** [a black friend at school] **knew how to dazzle with the ball.** (Mark, Int. 1, 23/7/2004).

You go to rugby, I went to go and watch a UCT first team rugby game on Tuesday night, they were playing Maties and like you look at the breakdowns and it's still the majority of the people, like **the overwhelming majority, are white, that play rugby**, and supporters. In terms of soccer we go play touch rugby at UCT quite a bit, and **if you look at the soccer team it's completely the other way round.** (Bryan, Int.2, 12/8/2004)

This demarcation of race through sport illustrates the very co-constructive nature of masculinities and race. The stylised enactment of rugby may produce the masculine but it also secures the white. This echoes with Justin's encounter with the West Indian cricket team, cricket being the domain of white colonial endeavour, which upset his racialised expectations of black men.

4.13. Rough and Tough

Although the analysis thus far has focused on the experience of English speaking men at boarding school, Epstein (1998) notes how the same mechanisms of masculinisation are evident in schools throughout South Africa, the most notable characteristic of those mechanisms being violence.

The importance of "manly sports" like rugby and other mechanisms, like strong hierarchy and separation from families, "which serve to toughen boys up" (Epstein, 1998, p.56), alludes to an important characteristic of the masculinity under construction. Through his use of the war metaphor, Andrew alerts us that these masculinities emerge in the context of violence. "War was a reflection of the aggressive masculinity implicit in imperial policy" (Morrell, 2001, p. 12) and school as the incubators of these imperial masculinities exhibit the same violence and aggression. One of the mechanisms of this institutional violence is "organised bullying" (Epstein, 1998, p. 56) perpetrated by both students and teachers. Andrew's account at the beginning of this section reflects this, so does Justin's:

Claire: You also mentioned that when you got to England your confidence grew at school. What was it about the schools in South Africa that didn't allow that?

Justin: **Bullying. Bullying**, really. I think it was **that whole macho stuff**. The headmaster we had when I was at school and obviously I'm only speaking from my experience, I can't speak for any other place, but he was just a bloody sadist! Whipping people with a whistle, with the whistle end, if they wouldn't get down with their heads into the scrum. (Justin, Int. 1, 4/8/2004)

What Justin does for us is make the direct connection of bullying as a masculine act when he links it to “that whole macho stuff”. The type of masculine is evident in the following passage:

Claire: Okay. Were there other experiences like this?

Justin: For some reason, **I wasn't as bullied but seeing my older brother being bullied, was just, that was worse!** I remember he made a clay ashtray for my mom and he comes home and he was showing it to me and a couple of the 'old boys' got hold of it and were throwing it to each other and I just remember thinking... **that's my older brother, he's like my hero.** And they were going like this and then they went, Oops! and smashed it. **And I just... oh, God, that feeling, man and it just was horrendous.** (Justin, Int.1, 4/8/2004)

It is a dominant and abusive masculinity. The act of bullying is one of domination through not only physical means but through humiliation. It is for this reason that the experience of his brother being bullied is worse than his own. His brother is his hero, he is the boy he looks up to. Bullying undermines that relationship, it humiliates and renders his brother powerless.

There can be no doubt that the systems that Andrew and Justin have endured are brutal and damaging. What is significant here is the way in which they now engage with that brutality. It is worth revisiting Andrew's account:

And there was a hell of a big seniority system in place which knocked you around if you stepped out of line. **I'm not saying it was a good thing, but it was a good thing; I don't think that any beatings are necessarily a good thing, but to have that system in place where you earn and learn respect for people.** (Andrew, Int.1, 16/9/2004)

He is ambivalent, he oscillates between saying it wasn't a “good thing” to saying that it was and that although beatings are not necessarily good, they are there for a reason, in this case “you earn and learn respect”. It is where you go to learn your “life skills” and where you go to become a man:

And you know what, I reckon if I had the choice now, I'd probably send my son to a boys only school because even if I just look at university and how **the guys that went to boys only schools, they became men** and the guys that went to co-ed schools, not that they didn't but just it wasn't as if **you'd gone off somewhere and learnt your life skills**, you'd remained in society. (Andrew, Int.1, 16/9/2004)

The payoffs are great, so much so that he would send his own son, to a boy's only school. But although Andrew seems to collude with this harsh system, Hardiman and Jackson (1997) alert us to the complexity of the “agent” positionality. Andrew's experience also talks to the dehumanisation that agents are subject to in that they are “trapped by the system of social oppression that benefits them, and are confined to the roles and prescribed behaviour for their group” (ibid, p. 20). It is the costs of this brutal system that Justin engages in and confronts. His very articulation of the negative effects that it had on him -“my confidence would have been severely

knocked”- and his negative and emotive language “sadist”, “horrendous”, suggests that he does not in anyway see it as “a good thing”. In doing so he actively serves to challenge it.

4.14. Collusion and Resistance

Andrew’s apparent collusion can also be seen as a form of “psychological colonisation” where “once the oppressive structures are in place, oppression becomes normalised and succeeding generations of agents learn to accept their inheritance of domination and privilege as the natural order – the way things are” (Hardiman and Jackson, 1997, p.20). In talking about the fact that he never made black friends at school:

And I don’t think that I was ever put into a situation where that relationship could blossom and flourish like that but **I’ve got absolutely no problem with it. I don’t even know... The world’s a horrible place.** (Andrew, Int.1, 16/9/2004)

He accepts this – “I’ve got no problem with it” – and sees it as a function of the way the world is, even if it is “a horrible place”. This reaction is in stark contrast to David who although acknowledges the material advantages that his position comes with, feels “robbed” by the cost that was incurred:

So I had ja all those advantages were just, out of what I could do in sense of I could go to school, I could go to this, I could go to that. **But it robbed me from experiences of what real life is about.** The gains are all very material though. (David, Int.1, 23/7/2004)

In this extract, although David acknowledges the costs of Apartheid to himself “it robbed me from experiences”, and thereby challenges the logic of hegemonies of both whiteness and masculinity, he also serves to rearticulate it by undermining the nature of that privilege. He identifies it as being, in contrast to “real life”, “very material”. What this implies is that those who were denied this privilege have a more “real” life and that his gains are purely material. It undermines the real nature of those material privileges and the psychological gains of being white. It is these very psychological gains that he addresses later on:

Claire: Could you tell me a bit more about what it felt like to be white during Apartheid, for you?

David: **It felt good, it felt safe, it felt very safe.** I felt privileged, **I must be good, I must be, there must be something about us as whites,** I mean we really do things right and you know we’ve made it, just look at how we have all these servants, and they don’t have money and **we have money and we have houses and they don’t have so, it must be because we’re more clever** and, ja we’re just more clever than they are we know how to so business, they don’t, we know how to make money, they don’t we know how to save money, they don’t. Never really thinking that we’re not competing on equal terms, so it felt good, **it felt it was good for the self esteem,** on a conscious level maybe not necessarily on an unconscious level or a subconscious level, on a conscious level it was very, it felt good.

Claire: And on an unconscious level?

David: Jeepers no **it felt wrong, it felt, it felt confused**. (David, Int.2, 2/9/2004)

David engages the logic of racism - "because we're more clever"- head on, and he acknowledges both the benefits both psychological "it felt good for the self esteem" and material - "we have money and we have houses and they don't". But he also acknowledges the costs which he describes as "unconscious" - "no it felt wrong, it felt, it felt confused".

What these extracts illustrate is the very conflictual nature of the positioning to hegemonic narratives both between and within respondents. Different men position themselves in very different ways to the "master narrative" (Steyn, 2001) of white masculinity, David feels "robbed" and "confused" because of it, Andrew has "absolutely no problem with it". Furthermore, the same man both challenges and subtly colludes. It is this tension between collusion, and its benefits and costs, and resistance and its benefits and costs, which characterises the experience of systematic privilege.

4.15. "I am the last resort"

Although masculinity, whiteness and class systematically serve to construct each other, the discussions around privilege, as related to masculinity or whiteness, occur around different points of tension. In the talk around masculinity the tension exists primarily around privilege and responsibility.

Among respondents, the overriding feeling associated with being a man, is that of responsibility. Bryan illustrates a sense of mounting responsibility as he grows older, but which "hasn't reached it's peak" yet. This peak is related to "having a family and stuff like that":

I think you just get a, **you've just got sort of an overriding sense of responsibility** or a lot more of an overriding sense of responsibility than you had before and obviously that hasn't reached it's peak now, that's gonna carry on going, **it's gonna get a whole lot more when it starts like, like when the time comes to have a family and stuff like that**. (Bryan, Int.2, 12/8/2004)

And this "peak" is not necessarily an easy one to negotiate. For David and Carl, who have families, it is associated with pressure, pressure which is related to providing for partner and children:

I feel as a man **I feel fear** in a sense that, not that I have to provide but I feel fear **that I'm the last resort that if something's gonna happen I've got to defend the cave** and I don't know if I can do that. I might run away, I might hide behind a rock. (David, Int. 2, 2/9/2004)

Claire: What does it feel like to be a man?

Carl: Sometimes **it feels lonely**, sometimes it feels very lonely. **There are all these expectations that I've got to provide**, I've got to do this, I've got to do that, all the male social things and **to a degree it's social behaviour that has brought it on and to a degree it's personal choice** via social

behaviour and acceptable norms put me here. And **although I do it with pleasure it still is sometimes just fucking overwhelming** that I've got to provide the money, so I've got to go to work. (Carl, Int.2, 11/8/2004)

What is evident here is not only the fact that what it feels like to be a man is engaged with in terms of responsibility, but that that responsibility is extremely anxiety provoking - "I feel fear" and "it still is fucking overwhelming". Furthermore, that responsibility is directly related to providing - "I've got to provide money" and "I feel fear that I'm the last resort". Which alludes to the source of the anxiety - it is not so much the providing but the fact that you are the principle provider, "the last resort" which is why "it feels lonely" and so very "overwhelming". Carl's repetition of the word "lonely" only serves to emphasise the depth of his sense of aloneness in this role.

This enactment of masculinity through provision for children taps directly in the discourse of domestic provision (Wilmott and Griffin, 1997). The "successful man" (ibid, p. 108) provides for his family. In a study conducted with black mine workers in South Africa, Rabe (2004) explores how fatherhood is similarly constructed by this, a group of working class black men. In response to the question "How will you describe a good father?" the overwhelming response was that a good father works and looks after his family. This "looking after" was mostly expressed in terms of providing financial support. For men who represent themselves in this way, "paid employment is likely to provide an essential prop to their masculinity" (Wilmott and Griffin, 1997, p. 109). In late capitalism where providing for one's family is largely a function of paid employment (Epstein, 1998), men who are marginalised in terms of their capacity to produce, are invalidated, as men by this hegemony: disabled men, working class men and in South Africa where the working class has been racialised, black men. Although employed, the men in Rabe's (2004) study have less capacity to enact this "working man" version of masculinity than the men in my study. Although there are very few studies exploring unemployment as a masculinity issue (Haywood and Mac an Ghail, 2003), and none in South Africa (personal communication, J. Grossman, 21/02/05), one can only assume that unemployed men have even less capacity to enact this hegemony. Narratives of masculinity based around work and provision for family, serve to push these men even further to the margins of this hegemony. According to Epstein "the hegemonic ideal of masculinity may be the white, middle class, [employed]¹², heterosexual, [able bodied]¹³, family man, living with his wife and children" (p. 53) and illustrates Segal's (1990) point that "fatherhood can increase a man's sense of his own failure and vulnerability, when he knows he cannot adequately protect or provide for his wife and children" (p.29). It is at this point that my experience becomes significant because it is a vulnerability and failure that I as a woman of my age, race and class cannot fully appreciate. I am not my "last resort", my father is. I as a twenty-eight-year-old white woman have been able to pursue an academic interest, and traditionally not financially viable one at that, purely for my own development and enrichment. I also know that through out this academic year, my partner has with, very little complaint supported me financially and that one of his greatest fears is that he loses his job and will no longer be able to support us. I know too that this drives him to neglect his health and

¹² My addition

¹³ My addition

his happiness. But I also know that I am not every woman and that this luxury is largely a function of my age, class and race.

There is an important element missing from this discussion. Although these pressures are vast, the core feature that provokes anxiety, is that they are a man's burden alone. This is, however, a function of gendered social arrangements; these pressures are socially constructed. Carl alludes to this, "all the male *social* things". The root of this construct of man as provider is also alluded to by David - "defend the cave" and "hide behind a rock". The use of the "caveman" metaphor taps into discourse of natural evolution and leads us down the slippery path to essentialism, the function of which is to fix in place the socially constructed (Segal, 1990). This points us to the other missing element of the discussion thus far, that the "fixity" of gender, stemming from naturalistic discourse, has throughout history been used to justify the oppression of women. Therefore, as with the discussion around nannies we must very securely locate these experiences in the reality of gendered relations. This is a reality characterised by more and more female-headed-households where women are the sole breadwinners. Furthermore, most of these households, even when located within the same class, are for reasons linked to income differentials for women in general and the difficulties of being sole caregiver and breadwinner, poorer (Statistics South Africa, 2003 and 2004)¹⁴. Although providing for a family is a very real burden for the interviewees quoted above, it is not theirs alone, and they as middle class white men in fact stand in a better position to do so, than other demographics.

4.16. "This is no longer my brother, he is his son's father"

Fatherhood, as conceived above, within the discourse of provision (Wilmott and Griffin, 1997) is a prominent feature of hegemonic masculinities (Segal, 1990). Furthermore being a father is "evidence" of the most important aspect of hegemonic masculinities, heterosexuality. It is this hegemony that the discussions around fatherhood pander to, and which results in the pressure that these men feel. Although he does not have children, for Andrew, fatherhood is a defining element of masculinity:

And I think a man as well, I mean a **man comes with children**. I can tell you when **I identified my brother as a man and not my brother** -seeing my brother with his baby boy around his feet about four, five years ago, was the first time that I realised **this is no longer my brother, he is his son's father**. (Andrew, Int. 1, 16/9/2004)

The fact that this man is no longer defined by his relationship with his brother but rather his children, speaks to the weight that fatherhood carries in defining manhood. Carl, however, questions the way in which the birth of

¹⁴ The General Household Surveys conducted by Statistics South Africa in 2002 and 2003 suggest that female-headed households across all races have consistently less income over all income and monthly expenditure categories. In 2002 of the all households with Wage/Salary Incomes 72% were headed by men, whereas only 28% were headed by women (Statistics South Africa, 2003, p.65). This is also true for 2003, where 71% were headed by men and 29% by women (Statistics South Africa, 2004, p. 70). Furthermore, in 2002, of all households in the lowest income bracket, those with monthly expenditures between R0-R399 per month, 55% were male headed and 45% female headed. In 2002, this was 52% male headed and 48% female headed. This is opposed to households in the highest income bracket, those with monthly expenditures of R10 000 and above, where in 2002, 91% were male headed (9% female headed) (Statistics South Africa, 2003, p. 66) and in 2003, 86% were male headed (14% female headed) (Statistics South Africa, 2004, p. 71).

his children has contributed to his sense of being a man. He locates his children in the context of his life's journey:

I think to a degree, I think maybe children might have had an effect on that but also not directly just because they're children, but also how **they've helped and guided me on my journey**. (Carl, Int.2, 11/8/2004)

But the way in which becoming a father has contributed to his journey is by validating him as a man:

Okay, **I am a father now**, I have these guys **I've got to look after**, but **they are still just my friends but I still realise that number one is I do have to look after them**, physically at least if nothing else and I am doing it. And **I can look after other people** and so like being in contact with younger children, like teenagers, suddenly I clearly feel I'm out of that, you know (laughs). **So that's become more like I'm more a man than I'm just a boy**. (Carl, Int.2, 11/8/2004)

He makes the direct association between his having children and becoming "more a man". The connection between fatherhood and being "more a man" is that "I can look after people". It is the responsibility of fatherhood, the fact that his most important role is to take care of them - "number one is I do have to look after them" - that denotes masculinity. What this suggests is that the reason fatherhood is so central in the definition of masculinity for these men, is because it represents that "peak" of responsibility that Bryan spoke of earlier, and allows for the ultimate enactment thereof.

But this hegemony does not go entirely unchecked. The very uttering of difficulty with the role serves to undermine it. This is powerfully illustrated by David who had very recently become a father for the first time. He describes how he has gone into a default of "protecting" and "fixing", a default that he is having difficulty with:

I've gone into a default of protecting, of fixing which is a terrible place because it's running around between being the butler being the handyman, being the worker out there, being the, **trying to be everything**, which I can't be. (David, Int.2, 2/9/2004)

The reason for this difficulty is not only because he feels his role is overwhelming - "trying to be everything, which I can't be" - but also that it is a role that does not allow him to "mother" his daughter and it would be "far nicer cradling" her:

At this stage it's just far nicer cradling Emma than going to do the shopping or things like that. **So that's difficult and I also know that Emma needs she doesn't really need me to mother her**, it's great and it's not that I'll never it's not that I'm not gonna cradle her not gonna walk around with her and rub her back **but she needs my wife to be strong and to be there for her more than I think she**

needs me too. But I sneak in the times with her and that means less sleep and means, somewhere another piece of my life loses out. (David, Int.2, 2/9/2004)

David definitely envisions a much more intimate relationship with his daughter, than we saw in the earlier section of the men's experiences with their own fathers. This is active rearticulation of what is masculine. "Intimate father-son/daughter relationships as a visible mode of masculinity appear to be deployed by younger men as a means of distancing themselves from an older male generations order which translated into distant fathering" (Haywood and Mac an Ghail, 2003, p. 52). According to Haywood and Mac an Ghail (2003) this is a function of the pluralisation of masculinities and the resulting work of the "forging of a private masculinity [as opposed to public]¹⁵ around fathering" (ibid.) and serves to undermine the hegemonic notions of the "distant breadwinner" (ibid, p. 47). However, this mode of resistance is not equally open to all. Rabe (2004) points out that even within the group of mineworkers she interviewed more "involved" and "distant" fatherhoods could be identified. In practise however, more "involved" versions rely on the father being present and in the context of the mines where many men are migrant workers, this is largely not possible.

Returning to David, however, even from within his privileged classed position, resistance is not unequivocal. For David, the most important person in his daughter's life right now is her mother whom she needs more than she needs her father - "she needs my wife to be strong and to be there for her more than I think she needs me too". The result of this is a sadness which is captured in the image of him sneaking into her room at night, just to be with this little girl in whose life he feels peripheral. The interesting thing about this apparently unbridgeable divide between his and his wife's roles, however, is that they are largely a function of social expectation. The very use of the word to "mother" which he uses here to denote: "cradle her, "walk around with her" and "rub her back", speaks to the very gendered construction of these activities. But it is a construction that for David is more or less fixed:

People can trust it, people can depend on it, it will step in when somebody's going to get hurt, **it's a protector, that's what a man is for me.** A challenge for me with the baby coming is I'm very much, **I love the caring part as well and the nurturing part and it's important that a man must have that but that is not for me manhood, it's what a woman is better at,** not that a man shouldn't do caring . and shouldn't do nurturing, that's just a slight difference for me is where **a woman might 80% of that and a man 30%.** (David, Int.1, 23/7/2004)

It is this very same logic that causes him sadness and to feel excluded from his daughter's life, that has relegated women to the domestic sphere and been the cornerstone of gender oppression throughout history. His demarcation of the woman as "80%"nurturer as opposed to the man who might be "30%" nurturer and whose primary role is that of "protector" speaks to discourses of essentialism - "it's what a woman is better at"- by virtue of being a woman, whereas for him it's something he chooses and is an addition to his masculinity, rather than integral to it - "I love the caring part *as well*".

¹⁵ My addition

David's experience is complex in that it illustrates the difficulty experienced by some men of very powerful gendered expectations. There is a real sense of sadness around this role that he feels he must fulfil. His experience speaks very closely to Joseph Pleck's (cited in Segal, 1990) male sex role strain in which he posits that men experience difficulties in the "constraining, inconsistent, and unrealistic or dysfunctional nature of sex role expectations" (p. 68) and the social condemnation that results from their violation. However, as Segal (1990) points out this theory fails to explain the "passion or pain of rigid adherence to dominant gender stereotypes of some, resilient resistance to them on the part of others, or confused contradictory combinations of the two in yet others" (p. 69). The reason is that these roles are socially located in dynamics of power. Although David and Carl's appeals to these roles are not absolute, they still serve to perpetuate hegemonic gender relations. They do so through their appeal to the notion of women as nurturers, who belong in the domestic sphere, and men as providers and protectors, who must enter the public sphere (Segal, 1990; Haywood and Mac an Ghaill, 2003), perpetuating patriarchal order.

4.17. Babies

The biological foundation of the "roles" that men and women fulfil is a very powerful characteristic in the talk of differences between men and women. As illustrated above it serves to relegate women to the domestic sphere, thereby excluding them from "participation in economic, cultural and political activity" and is the "root of men's overall power over women" (Segal, 1990, p. 96). This demarcation of gendered spaces was encountered earlier in the discourse of provision (Haywood and Mac an Ghaill, 2003). However this arrangement is more powerfully entrenched, when respondents mobilise biological discourse around having babies.

Although this notion is present in varying degrees through all accounts except for one, the extracts reflect one interviewee's responses. His were chosen not as a reflection of all the men, but as the most extreme example of how this point can be mobilised in problematic ways and as the following extract illustrates, to devastating ideological effect. Referring in particular to the women that work for him as "frontliners":

They need a job where they can arrive at work, they can renegotiate hours **if they become pregnant, then there mustn't be any pressure placed on them as far as having to perform inside that job on a managerial level**, where they need to be there all the time and follow-up on the people who are taking calls and whatever. A job that would, if they left that work, still require them to put input in and... ja, so, **they're not there to further their careers**. So, I think, ja, **when it comes to being a woman, unfortunately or fortunately, but I would probably say fortunately, they get to have babies and they get to leave the workplace so therefore their career if they are career women then expect your careers to suffer in the face of having babies because it will have to.** (Andrew, Int.2, 8/10/2004)

The logic is simple: women have babies, they "get to leave the workplace" and "then expect your careers to suffer". Because "they become pregnant" they are unable to handle pressure and cannot perform at "managerial level". It makes perfect sense then that men dominate senior management the world over. What is conspicuous

in its absence is the role of men in this process of having babies. We need to ask ourselves how it is that women “become pregnant” and why it is that only one partner out of the two who are implicated, is systematically excluded, in the way that Andrew’s account suggests. Further to this, there is no talk about contraception, maternity leave, paternity leave, alternative work arrangements, single mothers who have no choice but to work etc. etc. etc. – in fact, any reference to the systematic way in which the paid labour market discriminates against women. Furthermore, there is an active attempt to construct this systematic exclusion as positive “fortunately, they get to have babies” and “they get to leave the workplace” – suggesting that leaving the workplace, one’s very means of survival, is a very favourable alternative. This is more explicitly articulated in the following extract:

The horrible thing about it is **you think about the home and you think that it seems more trivial to have the upper hand in the home than to have the upper hand in the business where the power is.** I think that’s a load of horse because **I’d probably say this is the most powerful place to have the upper hand because this is where you live and work is just where the power struggle is.** So this big fight of the feminist movement or whatever, to get women into the workplace and all that, I’m totally into it as far as I believe that **women should be allowed to excel in everything** but is it necessary... **has it made us any better off** or are we really that further on because now finally there are some women politicians that are moving and shaking. (Andrew, Int.2, 8/10/2004)

In the above he manages to convince himself that it is better to “have the upper hand” in the domestic sphere although he openly admits that power lies in that of paid employment. Furthermore, by “allowing” women into the workplace we are not particularly “better off”. The fact that “women should be *allowed* into the workplace” at all suggests is that the workplace is not the rightful domain of women, but of men, who retain the right to include and exclude. This all, in spite of the fact that he claims to be “totally into” women working.

Ultimately, for Andrew, the difference between himself and his partner is that for him, children although important, are but one dimension of his purpose - the other dimensions being owning a business and supporting his family. For his partner, however, having children is *the* role that she needs to fulfil and when she does “it will almost be like when she hits her groove”:

But there’s a time and Catherine knows that she wants to have babies and she wants to stop work or have a work that she can do from home and **it will almost be like when she hits her groove.** Where for me, I don’t have that in me because for me **hitting my groove is going to be when I’ve got babies and I own my business and I’m plugging away and I’m supporting a family.** So that’s my groove. (Andrew, Int.2, 8/10/2004)

Fundamental to these arguments is a relationship which consists of a man and a woman, i.e. heterosexual relationships. It would be difficult to justify this arrangement of paid and domestic labour in a homosexual relationship. Furthermore, they rely on the assumption that the family is in a position to only have one partner working i.e. middle-upper class. This conceptualisation of gender and its appropriate “roles” is not universal, it

is located squarely in a frame of reference which informs this particular hegemonic masculinity, shaped by middle class whiteness and heterosexuality.

Part 4 Grappling with Privilege

4.18. Masculinity and Privilege

The experience of privilege as a man is varied across the interviews. In most cases it is shrouded in the costs incurred by masculine enactment, but there are times where the tension that privilege invokes is directly articulated. Although he acknowledges and understands the power and privilege that being a man entitles him to, Adam does not feel it:

From my experience and I don't presume to speak for all men, the supposed privilege of **having access to positions of power, having easy access to jobs and privilege in whatever way you want, I don't experience it.** I understand that I have certain privileges more so than others; **I understand that it's more likely that a woman would be attacked if she walked down the road than if I walked the road.** I do understand those things and **I suppose to some extent those are privileges, but it's not a privileged position to have. My experience of it is not that I have a privileged position, no.** (Adam, Int.2, 26/8/2004)

This split between an intellectual understanding of privilege and emotional grasp thereof is a common feature of Steyn's (2001) narrative of whiteness *Under African skies (I just don't know what to do, being white)* and is clearly manifest here in Adam's experience of his gender privilege. This conflict highlights Williams' (cited in Sideris, 2004) point that change is "in practice a struggle at the roots of the mind" (p. 88) and manifests in a conflict of identity and coherent sense of self.

Frankenberg (1993) makes the useful distinction between viewing -isms as structural rather than as personal issues. Adam's intellectual understanding and acknowledgement - "I understand that it's more likely that a woman would be attacked if she walked down the road than if I walked the road"- is an illustration of his intellectual grasp of that structural gender privilege. But never having *felt* privileged he doesn't feel that this relevant to him, creating a schism in his intellectual and emotional experience. This might have something to do with the way in which he conceptualises privilege as "having access to positions of power, having easy access to jobs and privilege in whatever way you want". Privilege is, however, not about having "easy access" "in whatever way you want", it's about having *easier* access than others. He does illustrate this by his example of being less likely to be attacked, but he also negates it - "it's not a privileged position to have". By denying that the right to bodily security is in our gendered society, a function of privilege, is problematic to all women, who

face the threat of male violence on a daily basis. The fact that he does not feel privileged cannot negate the fact that he is.

But that does not deny the fact that he also inhabits a marginal positionality as a gay man. Never having felt that he had any access to “masculinity”, he may feel that he never had access to the privilege that that masculinity afforded. He is at once in marginal and dominant positionality and these dimensions play out in different contexts. He feels relatively powerful to:

Men who are younger than me; men who are physically smaller than me; men who are somewhat more gentle, I suppose would be the right word to use, I feel more power over if that’s the right word. Ja, I feel like I’m the person in power and I enjoy that and sometimes - I wouldn’t say I abuse it - but I use it to my advantage. (Adam Int. 2, 26/8/2004)

But disempowered to men who exhibit more hegemonic qualities:

Men who are taller than me, men who are older than me, definitely straight men, sporty men, men who are hyper-masculine, twenty-two, twenty-three year old sporty post-grad students with some attitude and a sense of style - those men I feel disempowered by, if that makes any sense? **There’s a sense of less power and to some extent it’s not quite the same with women.** (Adam Int. 2, 26/8/2004)

It is not a power dynamic which he can transpose onto women. And when he considers his positionality vis a vis women he is very aware that “simply the fact that I am a man gives me power over women” even if they are in positions of power:

I’m more comfortable and I feel more empowered when I’m with a woman I regard as a competition. **She can be the MD [managing director] of a company and I would be much less anxious if I had to meet with her professionally. So definitely, simply the fact that I am a man gives me power over women.** And dare I say it, to some extent still **the fact that I’m white gives me power over people who are not white.** (Adam Int. 2, 26/8/2004)

He is also aware that his whiteness works in similar ways to his masculinity, in that it “gives me power over people who are not white”. His is a complex positionality which also occupies different sides of different binary oppositions (Ware, 1992). These oppositions serve not only to create tensions between himself and others, but within himself as well. His sensitive unpacking of his positionality, through his experience of relationships, in the last three extracts, stands in contrast to his more intellectualised engagement with and denial of privilege which in many ways serve to contradict each other. A complex process indeed.

4.19. Whiteness and Privilege

In the same way that masculine privilege is experienced in tension with its costs, so white privilege is also experienced in a conflicted binary. The axis around which this conflict oscillates, is that of whiteness as threatened and at the same time confronting the privilege that it affords. This tension occurs to varying degrees within and across accounts and manifests in different contexts, like university:

There have been other times since then where **I have definitely thought about being white the first being Uniberg, my first year in res where being one of forty white guys in a predominantly black res, the biggest res in South Africa, where you were very much the minority and there was definite tension within the residence, there was a lot of hatred.** (Mark, Int.1, 23/7/2004)

Threat is experienced in terms of being a numerical minority -“being one of forty white guys in a predominantly black res” and “you were very much the minority”- which is punctuated by “hatred” and “tension”. Unfortunately it is not clear what the source of this tension is. This threat speaks to one of the core characteristics of South African whiteness as defined by Steyn (2001), that as a numerical minority it has always been “constellated around discourses of resistance against a constant threat” (p. 25). What this account does is invoke “The fear of being overrun, the fear of domination” (ibid.), a feature of the colonial master narrative. This sense of threat is carried into other contexts, like paid employment:

From my side **I’m still white which is harder in the workplace** because I know if I fuck up I would have to work so hard to get another job. (Carl, Int.2, 11/8/2004)

Partly simply **because of the fact that I’m a white man I don’t have access** to it. So ja, there’s a lot of **inaccessibility** and there’s a lot of having to **cope with what you’re given** and there’s a lot of if you don’t then... there’s a lot of **insecurity** about the secure future - in a nutshell. **I don’t know that this time next year I will have a job.** (Adam, Int.2, 26/8/2004)

The threat is that of “insecurity” about the future – “I don’t know that this time next year I will have a job”-, “inaccessibility” (although it is not clear what is not accessible) and not being allowed to “fuck up” because if you do, getting another job is very hard. The difficulty of getting jobs is echoed by Mark who, at the time of the interview, was seeking employment in the corporate sector:

Finding a job this year has been incredibly hard, going into areas where my skills are thought of as, I’ve been trying to change careers, and career path and going into a firm with, maybe being overqualified for some of the jobs that I’m looking at doing, but thinking Well because I’m overqualified maybe I can get my foot in the door, the guys will see that I’ve got potential to get somewhere **but the jobs that I could possibly fit into are BEE [Black Economic Empowerment] jobs only, or affirmative action posts.** (Mark, Int. 1, 23/7/2004)

The reason for his finding a job being hard is that they are “BEE jobs only, or affirmative action posts”. These fears and difficulties are real. I know this not only from these accounts but in that my partner, who is white and employed in the corporate sector, experiences similar anxiety and pushes himself to perform way beyond the requirements of the job. But as with all the discussions thus far we need to locate these experiences within broader socio-economic realities. All these men (now) have well paying jobs. Many young black men and women their age do not. Furthermore, many black professionals report experiences of discrimination in the workplace through mechanisms such as corporate culture and informal communication networks. These result in manifestations of racism like lack of support and mentoring, the glass ceiling and other obstacles that are not experienced by white professionals (Luhabe, 2002).

Talk around the disadvantage and resultant threat to employment opportunities can be located in two of Steyn’s (2001) narratives of whiteness, *This shouldn’t happen to a white* and *Don’t think white it’s alright*. Both appeal to a normative whiteness which is informed by the master colonial narrative. The whiteness constructed here is unmistakably upper-middle class and the threat, with regards to work, manifest in relation to these areas of employment that can sustain that social position.

This dynamic is evident for those who are self-employed as well. Andrew co-owns his own business:

I spoke to my brother about this and he read this book on, I think it’s called Tears for my Country and it’s about the policies in place in South Africa and how this guy reckons the policies in place here are much harsher than the policies that were in place in 1980 in Zimbabwe against the white man. And I was also wondering like you kind of get the feeling that we’re approaching a Sunset Clause or that’s it’s eventually all going to stabilise and everyone’s just going to get on. And then you think to yourself maybe you’re just kidding yourself because it seems that all these things that keep on coming into place, like **Capital Gains Tax, all these different policies that the Government’s putting in place, almost seem to be hitting the white minority and supporting the black majority.** (Andrew, Int. 2, 8/10/2004)

This account speaks directly to Steyn’s (2001) *This shouldn’t happen to a white* which is “a story of whiteness besieged, insulted, victimised” (p. 67). This account seems to come off the pages of the same book. It is interesting to note that the measures Andrew mentions, like Capital Gains Tax, are measures put in place to target wealthier people. The fact that Andrew equates wealthy with being white, speaks once again, to the classed nature of his whiteness, and the reality of South Africa’s racialised socio-economic inequity. He does not interpret it in this way, however, but sees it as direct targeting of whites by a hostile black government. This speaks very much to the normative logic of the narrative in that white people are expected to be rich and if they are not, things are not right. This logic, however, relies on a whiteness which is ideal, superior. This “superiority” is clearly illustrated in the following extract. Talking about black business people in general:

So is he going to elevate his status to the point that he is now equal? And even if he does I’m talking about a specific black person, I’m not talking about and all black people, this black person that

we're talking about, if he does now, **the cultural differences that he has is that going to present a problem to intermingling amongst all of us I think it would?** (Andrew, Int. 1, 16/9/2004)

The fact that this black person must "elevate his status" to show that he can be "equal" assumes that he is less than. Furthermore, his "cultural differences" are constructed a "problem to intermingling amongst all of us". Andrew does not engage the possibility that *he* (Andrew) might have to elevate *his* status or that *his* culture might be the problem. His is the superior and the unspoken norm.

It is this norm that Justin acknowledges head on. Although, he admits that if he were in the corporate environment he might feel threatened, as a businessman he feels very strongly that his whiteness and his Englishness place him at a massive advantage over other South Africans:

I think people who talk about BEE as Apartheid in reverse, I've got no time for! I think if you can't make it as... to create something or make something happen or be an entrepreneur or start a business as a white person in this country then you might as well... I know it's nasty, but you really might as well just fuck off. That's my nasty opinion because **I think that the system still favours white** even though... I'm not even in a corporate environment so I'm very clear this is my judgement and if I was looking for a job, I'm naturally entrepreneurial and if I go in the middle of the Gobi Desert, I'll set up a business or I'll do something and not everyone's like that so I need to remember that but that's my experience. **So I think that the fact that I speak to someone with a nice, clipped English accent, clearly a white person, is going to stand me in very good stead. So I'm aware that I'm very lucky, I'm still very privileged.** (Justin, Int. 2, 15/9/2004)

By actively naming his whiteness - "the system still favours white" - and Englishness - "a nice, clipped English accent" - as the points around which his success flows, he locates this success very firmly in the social and by naming the nature of this hegemony, he actively undermines its project to render itself as "natural". Unlike the preceding accounts he acknowledges his privilege. Although in this context this privilege is fairly uncomplicated, other contexts illuminate how threat and privilege work in a more complex tension.

Ja, **I feel scared in my own backyard** sometimes. I've met a lot of people in Langa and come across **mostly beautiful people and I became friends with them** and I extended myself beyond what the initial purpose was of just getting there, landing up in Langa or wherever. Become friends with them and help them to get to doctors and help them. But then there's always this one thing that... **one night I'll visit then someone will just on purpose be rude to me and then I'm in his world and no-one is going to take my side there and feeling a bit like threatened by that.** (Carl, Int. 2, 11/8/2004)

Carl admits to feeling "scared". He associates this fear with people who he has met in Langa¹⁶, whom we can fairly safely assume to be predominantly black. His fear, however, is located in his sense that, by virtue of his whiteness, he is displaced and does not belong - "I'm in his world". Interestingly, this is the same sense of

¹⁶ Langa is a predominantly black and poorer suburb of Cape Town

displacement reported by black students of being in a white world (Erasmus with De Wet, 2003). It is a fear and threat that he juxtaposes with mostly positive experiences of people - "mostly beautiful people"- whom he has befriended through a common interest¹⁷. He links his sense of fear directly to being white:

I feel threatened as a white because I feel like I am a target. (Carl, Int. 2, 11/8/2004)

His narrative strongly echoes elements of the besieged whiteness of *It shouldn't happen to a white* (Steyn, 2001). At the same time, however, he realises how his fear is not always rational and definitely motivated by race:

... I stop in Sea Point¹⁸ and I stop and I'm looking for directions and as I stop, five seconds later **there're three black guys round my car and I completely freak out and I just drive off**, you know, just leave me alone. **But they were probably totally innocent**, it just happened to be a rainy night and it was dark by five o' clock and **they were still just selling their stuff on the road** or something. It feels to me like that. Sometimes I'm scared. (Carl, Int. 2, 11/8/2004)

He makes a connection between his sense of threat and the fact that the "guys" are black. On reflection, however, he realises that they are probably just "just selling their stuff on the road" and "totally innocent" and that his fear is located firmly in their blackness. He also realises that black people are victims of crime as well and is grappling with the racial dynamic he has attached to the threat he feels:

I'm not sure how some blacks feel in the townships and if they also feel like targets and it just seems like a few bad people that make life like that for everyone, including me and other people **or if it's just intentionally on me as a white male.** (Carl, Int. 2, 11/8/2004)

Not only does he name the racialised nature of his fear but he undermines it by locating it in a broader context of crime, where the urban poor and in South Africa that largely means black people, are more threatened by crime than any other demographic. This problematisation of his whiteness and the racialised nature of his fears, are a page out of the book *Under African skies* (Steyn, 2001) and serve to create space for more constructive ways of engaging with race. By engaging with the racial nature of his fear Carl can start to question it and challenge the colonial narrative.

¹⁷ The nature of this interest was not stated during the interview.

¹⁸ A suburb of Cape Town

Part 5
Other Voices and the Road to Transformation

It is at this point that we have to ask ourselves why some people seem to grapple more with their race and gender than others. Although we cannot claim to draw lines of causality we can certainly start to reflect on the life experiences that lead to moments of awareness and examine how these moments might contribute to more or less critical masculinities and whitenesses.

The presence of black voices in one's experience of one's whiteness is something that can redefine it and can highlight the reality of privilege as a lived experience (Steyn, 2001). Carl's story of his first awareness of being white is noticeable in that it occurs in the very loud presence of "others" and for that reason, is permeated by the experience of not being the "norm", an inverted power position. He tells the story of going to a nightclub with a coloured friend:

Just like being confronted with the reality, **Look you're a white boy. You're not going to get a girl to dance with here** and you can't dance, to start off with, you don't have the rhythm. But not really so much that but just like being **shocked out of naivety. This is not your world.** You don't assume you understand anything of this just because you're friends with Jonathan and you've come here tonight. **You don't know anything about this world.** (Carl, Int.2, 11/8/2004)

He characterises his state before the incident as naïve, the experience having brought a new dimension to his understanding - "shocked out of naiveté" - of his whiteness - "Look you're a white boy" - and that his sense of agency and belonging is not automatically secured - "This is not your world". The consequence of this experience is a realisation of *his* difference and a disruption of his assumption of normativity, a function of privilege:

I didn't do much with it until a bit later when I realised **it was so, so arrogant of me to even say or create any form of impression that I know anything about that person's world without having been fully conscious in that world.** It's an insult actually. So I've two choices here: either I must admit that I don't know and have total compassion when I see that person for him to portray his world to me or I've got to go in there, I've got to go in there and put my way in there and if I'm found unwelcome then **I've got to ask myself and go and do the process,** but just understanding that they are different worlds and **I can't just make assumptions.** (Carl, Int.2, 11/8/2004)

This involves looking very closely at himself and his "assumptions" and doing the work, "the process" required. Not doing so is arrogance. This is in stark contrast to the earlier narratives around school and university, which located the "race work" (Erasmus with De Wet, 2003) with the black children and students.

His experience of race is also gendered. His not belonging is marked by not being able to get a girl to dance with him. Heterosexual performance is once again central in the successful enactment of these racialised masculinities, which each perpetuate hegemony through the notion that black women are black men's "domain" and white women are white men's "domain". In this context, the fact that Carl is white, and the women are black, prevents him from successfully enacting that hegemony. Ambivalent stereotypes (Glick and Fiske, 2001) of white men not being able to dance and black people having more rhythm, feature again. These stereotypes operate on the same manner as those discussed earlier and illustrate how pervasive they are - even in a sensitive and insightful narrative such as this.

Carl's transformative incident, one which marked naiveté to awareness, is echoed by David. In a reversed dynamic he realises the nature of his privilege by witnessing the discrimination experienced by his coloured peers. His witness of the reality of "others'" lives has a similar effect, the experience of the privilege of his race. He describes an incident with his cricket team in primary school, when they all went to the Spur¹⁹ and the coloured boys were not allowed access. He reflects on the experience:

The first time I realised I'm white and that I'm privileged was round about twelve years, eleven, twelve. I played cricket and I was part of a cricket team in Smalltown and we were half coloured and half white and we went out to the evening as a team to go and we went we walked straight into Spur and **I was very naïve**, lived in Smalltown, and I was captain was Ok we're gonna go out tonight we're gonna for a Spur burger, it was way back those days and I said Let's go as a team to the Spur and we walked into the Spur and the manager kicked out the seven. **I was first confused, I never saw that coming so that tells me that I wasn't really that aware of the different colours** because I would never have taken them into that situation and they were kinda wary No we're part of a team they'll let you in and we got kicked out, well they got kicked out, we all left but **that was the first time I realised that Gee I'm white, I'm different regarding how people would handle us.** (David, Int.1, 23/7/2004)

Like Carl, this incident marks a transition from naiveté to awareness of race, and in this case, race privilege. His reference to the fact that he was "confused" speaks to a problematisation of race around the fact that "I'm different regarding how people would handle us".

These incidents of race awareness are very different to the earlier accounts of evasion and threat. The most remarkable difference is that in these accounts race is made visible and as a result, privilege is acknowledged. The other remarkable difference is the presence of black voices in the narratives. In the school narratives, for example, black people seem to be more like extras, whereas in these accounts they are much more prominent, so much so that in Carl's narrative they even have dialogue. Justin's interaction with his wife (who is black) is a good example of how the presence of the others' voices facilitates reflection which problematises whiteness. He tells the story of a black man who swindled him out of some money:

¹⁹ A popular South African steakhouse franchise

So the thing for me is still just noticing how hard I find it in that situation to be straight, because he came around again on Sunday and I was like Veronica was listening and I was like, **Hi, nice to see you, knowing exactly, it wasn't particularly nice to see him because he fucked me over last time** or he tried to fuck me over last time, lovely old man and stuff, but sorry chum, this just ain't going to work, there're 6.6 billion people on this planet and **I'm really sorry but I ain't your meal ticket today, you know that... kind of quite hard and quite... but feeling I'd been taken advantage of.** So Nice to see you! but not feeling it and then eventually saying, No, look I'm sorry, no, no, no, no, no! And then he went and **Veronica was like (a sigh), she said, If it had been me, I'd have opened the door slightly and said, Yes? No thank you. Right, fine, goodbye.** And that would be more authentic and real for me but I just noticed how difficult I find it sometimes to do that. **Is that white guilt, is it guilt, is it... but I'm a nice guy, you know!** (Justin, Int.2, 15/9/2004)

The presence of Veronica's voice - "If it had been me"- helps Justin to juxtapose his reaction to this black man, which is very much conflicted - "Hi nice to see you" versus "it wasn't particularly nice to see him"- with his wife's. The fact that she is black problematises this conflict even further and highlights the role of race in the interaction for him - "Is that white guilt, is it guilt, is it... but I'm a nice guy, you know!" According to Clark (1999) a white person engaging in antiracism should always feel "conflicted, full of contradictions and never as though I have 'arrived'" (p. 92). Justin is in constant battle with his racism:

But I'm just so aware of how I've been brought up as a racist and how those old habits take a lifetime of breaking down. **I have to confront my racism every single day.** I was driving just now and there was this really slow car in the middle lane and this woman was driving like this and it was a black woman and just in my head was all this tirade of real racist shit and **I'm a grown man and I'm responsible for that and what's important is that I'm able to own it rather than it own me.** But it's quite scary it is quite scary. (Justin, Int. 2, 15/9/2004)

Owning one's racism, taking responsibility for it and confronting it daily are the greatest challenges to the colonial narrative. Justin's, like all the stories in this section, fall *Under African skies* (Steyn, 2001), a place where there exists the potential for "exciting new ways of being" (p. 146) and where the narrator is committed to their own "potential for growth" (p. 147). More importantly, it is a place where whiteness is "blended, contradictory and complex" and thus "hyphenated", no longer has the "power to abuse" (ibid.).

Furthermore, it is a whiteness which can mobilise, that can "stand up to white people", be accountable for its past - "be aware of it, be very aware of it" and work towards transformation. It is a whiteness aware of, but not paralysed by shame and guilt and a whiteness that can therefore find a place *Under African Skies*:

It's my role to stand up to white people and say, Don't be ashamed of being white. Stop that bullshit! That time is gone. Ja, **we did fucking bad things, make no mistake,** but being ashamed of it is not going to change it. **Be aware of it,** be very aware of it, actually. **Don't just stand here,** I'm ashamed I'm white, it's not going to go anywhere. (Carl, Int. 2, 11/8/2004)

CHAPTER 5

Closing Remarks

It is very difficult to reach any conclusions about the nature of the masculinities and whitenesses that these men inhabit. In fact the fragmentation of these positionalities poses more complex questions instead of providing simple answers. We cannot draw “universal truths” from these men’s stories. Nor was this the aim of this study. Instead this study set out to explore the complexity of these identities, and explore the ways in which these men at once perpetuate and challenge dominant ways of being a man and white in South Africa today. Each story is unique but there are strands and characteristics that hold these stories together in their positionality. It is these strands that I will reflect on here.

These identities are fraught with tension: a tension between holding in place historically sanctioned ways of being, which hold in place male and white privilege, and ways of being white and a man that interrogate and disrupt that privilege. This tension occurs both between and within participants, and varying degrees of each become more salient at different times. These tensions render these identities both resilient and fragile - resilient in their collective appeals to hegemony, and fragile in their myriads of ways of challenging it. It seems, however, that in some, this challenge in itself becomes more resilient, as some men engage counter hegemonic discourse more frequently.

The analysis confirms an important characteristic of gender; it is about “doing” not being. To render it as being, serves to obscure the nature of that “doing”. As the literature suggests, “doing woman” is the most fundamental way of not “doing man” and sisters emerge as the primary female “other” against which “doing” man is measured. “Doing homosexuality” is the next most fundamental way of not “doing man” and the policing of heterosexuality features as an important activity in these men’s experience of masculinity. Most notably it is other men, that are the primary policers. Despite the fact that this policing renders homosexuality marginal, the analysis shows that there are possibilities to disrupt and claim this identity as legitimately masculine. In doing so the very foundation of hegemonic masculinity, heterosexuality, is rendered fragile.

The analysis also shows that there are both benefits and costs incurred in hegemonic ways of “doing” masculinity and whiteness. It further shows that the men in this study exercise varying levels of engagement with these benefits and costs. Some evade the benefits and collude with the costs, while some acknowledge the benefits as well as the costs. Whatever the individual reaction, the brutality of some of these hegemonic forms of masculinity and whiteness and their impact on the lives of these respondents, cannot be denied. Nor, however, can the benefits.

In addition to the above, these masculinities are laden with the burden that comes with the role of “doing hegemonic man” “successfully”, particularly in relation to providing for a partner and family. But the analysis shows how these masculinities are wrought in an inextricable context of class and race, each serving to reinforce the other. Much of the burden of “doing hegemonic man” is a function of “doing man” of a particular class.

Much of the burden of “doing” whiteness is a function of that whiteness, being of a particular class. Furthermore, the nature of these burdens must be placed in the context of the burdens of other positionalities, who through historical legacy, have an even greater weight to carry. This illustrates the significance of the intersection of race, class and gender.

The analysis also reveals that fathers seem to be the most significant “others” in the development of these young masculinities. Most notably these fathers emerge as the policers of hegemonic masculinities in their sons, who must aspire to a standard informed by class and heterosexuality. Fatherhood in turn, serves as a marker of that hegemony, located most significantly within a discourse of domestic provision. For example, the analysis explores how having children contributes to some men’s understanding of themselves as men, as opposed to boys. The way in which children contribute to this is that they provide the context to enact the hegemonic masculine role of provider.

Significantly, however, the analysis suggests that fatherhood also provides possibilities to challenge “distant breadwinner” models of male parenting implied in discourses of domestic provision. The forging of close relationships with children contributes to the creation of a space for the masculine, in the traditionally feminine private sphere, and serves as a form of resistance to the hegemony of the public masculine, for some men.

Despite this challenge to hegemony, however, the analysis uncovers a worrying appeal to discourses of nature in the reflection on male and female “roles” in the raising of children. Overall, partners and women in general are still constructed as the primary caregivers, and men the providers, thus perpetuating a historically oppressive gender dynamic.

In addition to the “others” that emerge primarily in the discussions around masculinities, there are those “others” who emerge most powerfully in the discussions on whitenesses. In line with much theory around white children’s relationships with black domestic workers, these women seem to be the most dominant “others” in the development of these young whitenesses. These are whitenesses which are, in this context, inevitably gendered and classed. As the analysis shows, these are also whitenesses which emerge in a deeply personal context. The location of these very personal relationships within a broader social frame of gender, class and racial exploitation, makes them extremely complex, both emotionally and politically.

Further to this, all whitenesses are not created equal. The analysis powerfully illustrates that, Afrikaans- and English- speaking men have, as the literature suggests, different experiences of whiteness and masculinity. It is, however, difference located within a particular power dynamic, in which Afrikaansness is seen as less. In the project of disaggregating South African whiteness this is an important consideration.

Significantly, the analysis confirms that there are different ways of “doing white” and of “doing man”. There is evidence of alternative ways of “doing” emerging. Some men are proactively confronting their racism and sexism and it is their voices that we need to nurture and embolden so that they may become the dominant ways of “doing”.

In addition to all of the above, the analysis shows how different men are at different stages of a journey between evasion and acknowledgement of privilege. Although we cannot generalise about all men in this way, certainly in this study, the men from the men's group and the men from my social circle seem to demonstrate a different language to grapple with these issues. Overall, there seems to be a greater sense of retreat into dominant discourse among the men of my social group than among those from the men's group who have, in large, begun to problematise this discourse. This is not to say that all the men in the men's group do not draw on hegemonic discursive resources and that the men in my social group do not engage in serious questioning of these resources. We do not know whether there is a relationship between this different language and membership of the men's group. This would require further research. It is, however, also interesting to note that it is in the narratives of the men from the men's group that the voices of the "other" are most prominent - partners, friends, lovers. This is only an observation. It seems, however, that these voices and the weight that they carry, in some way, facilitate a shift towards critical engagement with hegemonic ways of doing.

Finally, I am different for meeting these men, having these conversations and writing this paper. It has provided me with a place to grapple with my own whiteness, English-speakingness and my positionality as a woman. I have through these men's stories heard those of others, as well as my own, and I am richer for it.

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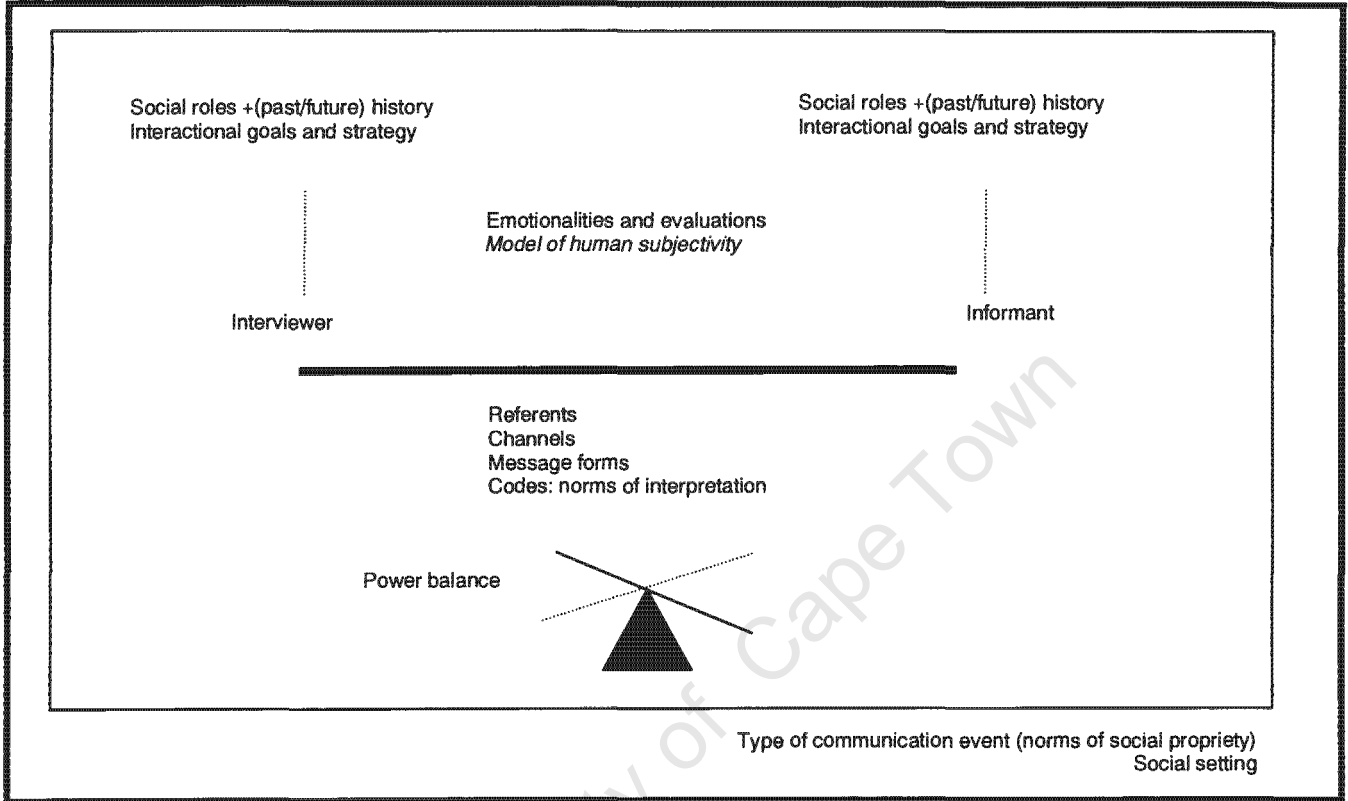
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APPENDIX 1

Briggs-Wengraf Model of Components of the Interview Situation (Wengraf, 2001, p.43)



APPENDIX 2 - CALL FOR PARTICIPATION FOR SOCIAL CIRCLE

Participants needed – Masculinity in South Africa: Interviews

Hi my name is Claire. Some of you may know me other's not. For those that don't, I'm a friend of Jean and Warren's and I'm doing a Masters in Diversity Studies at UCT.

My particular interest and dissertation topic is masculinity, in particular white masculinity in South Africa. I would very much appreciate the participation of five young, white men, mid 20's to mid 30's, like yourselves to inform my work.

I started reading in the area of feminism and masculinity a few years ago. The more I read the more I felt that masculine identity, esp. white masculine identity, is very much underrepresented and very often misrepresented in gender studies, as well as a just generally. This realization was not purely academic. More and more my personal experience, the men in my life, my father, my brother, my partner, my friends did not fit the mould of "all purpose bad guy". The more I actually paid attention to what they said and did the more I realized that being a man, as with being a woman, is much more complex than is often allowed for.

The purpose of my dissertation then is to explore what it means to you, to be a man, and more than that, a white man in South Africa. What does it mean to be a father, a brother, a son, a friend, a partner, a surfer, a musician, a home owner etc. etc. etc. and the hundreds of other things that men are? How you are the same, how are you different, what makes you unique, what makes you part of a group? How have your experiences made you who you are?

This study is not meant to be another expose' of how racist and sexist South African men are but rather an honest space to explore the complexity of our identities and importantly, alternatives to the stereotype - who we really are as opposed to what we're made out to be. I would ask you to share just a bit of that with me.

Participation would involve:

- 2 x one hour interviews (focusing very much on life experience and Strictly Confidential)
- keeping a journal between interviews (optional)

If you are interested or have any questions please contact me on 083 399 7301 or klehkelly2004@yahoo.co.uk.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Claire

APPENDIX 3 - CALL FOR PARTICIPATION FOR MEN'S GROUP

Dear Men's Group

Participants needed – Masculinity in South Africa: Interviews

My name is Claire Kelly and I am doing a Masters in Diversity Studies at UCT. My particular interest and dissertation topic is masculinity, in particular white masculinity in South Africa. I would very much appreciate the participation of five young, white, employed men, mid 20's to mid 30's, to inform my work.

I was referred to the Men's Group by Zimitri Erasmus. She also lent me video of the work that the project does. I was very moved by the work that I saw. Encouragingly, sentiments expressed on the video echo the rationale behind my study.

I started reading in the area of feminism and masculinity a few years ago. The more and more I read the more I felt that masculine identity is very much underrepresented and very often misrepresented in gender studies as well as just generally. This realization was not purely academic though. More and more my personal experience, the men in my life, my father, my brother, my partner, my friends did not fit the mould of "all purpose oppressor". The more I actually paid attention to what they said and did the more I realized that being a man, as with being a woman, is much more complex than is often allowed for.

The purpose of my dissertation then is to explore what it means to you, to be a man, and more than that, a white man in South Africa. What does it mean to be a father, a brother, a son, a friend, a partner, a surfer, a musician, a home owner etc. etc. etc. and the hundreds of other things that men are? How you are the same, how are you different, what makes you unique, what makes you part of a group? How have your experiences made you who you are? This study is not meant to be another expose' of how racist and sexist South African men are but rather a space to explore the complexity of identity and importantly, alternatives to the stereotype. The men in the Men's Group have already entered into this space, I would ask for the privilege of sharing part of it with you.

Participation would involve:

- 2 x one hour interviews (focusing very much on life experience and Strictly Confidential)
- keeping a journal between interviews (optional)

If you are interested or have any questions please contact me on 083 399 7301 or klehkelly2004@yahoo.co.uk.

Kindest regards,

Claire Kelly

APPENDIX 4 - INTERVIEW AGREEMENT**Interview Agreement**

I, _____ (name), agree that I am participating willingly and voluntarily in an interview with Claire Kelly (the researcher) on this day _____ (date) at _____ (place).

I understand that these interviews form part of a dissertation for a Masters in Diversity Studies at the University of Cape Town in 2004.

I understand that I will participate in two one-hour interviews and that I may keep a journal between interviews. I understand that keeping the journal is optional.

I understand that the researcher may use the information from these interviews and the journal.

I understand that my name will remain anonymous.

I understand that the interview will be recorded so that the researcher may more accurately reflect my views in the report.

I understand that I may discontinue my participation at any stage of the research.

I understand and agree to the above terms and conditions.

Signature (participant) _____

Date: _____

Signature (researcher) _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 5 - INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview One

1. Thinking back on your life history, what was the most significant time for you in forming who you are now?
2. In what ways was this time formative?
3. Do you remember any other such significant times?
4. In what ways was formative?
5. Looking back at your life history, when did you first become aware of being a boy?
6. What happened to bring about this awareness in you?
7. [Could you tell me about other times when you were aware of being a boy? Could you tell me a bit more about these times?]
8. What difference did it make being a boy rather than a girl?
9. When was the first time you became aware of being a man?
10. What marked this transition from boyhood to manhood for you? Could you tell me a bit more about... .?
11. Looking back on your life history when did you first become aware of being white?
12. What happened to bring about this awareness in you? *Probe with Could you tell me a bit more about....?*
13. [Could you tell me about other times when you were aware of being white? Could you tell me a bit more about these times?]
14. What difference did it make being white rather than black?

Interview Two

Last time you told me about... [being a boy]

1. Could you tell me a bit more about what it felt like for you to be a boy?

Last time you told me about... [being a man]

2. Could you tell me me a bit more about what it feels like for you to me a man?
3. What does it mean to you to be a man in South Africa today?
4. What difference does it make being a man rather than a woman?
5. Is being a man in South Africa today different to being a man during Apartheid?

Last time you told me about... [being white]

6. Could you tell me a bit more about what it felt like for you to be white during apartheid?
7. How would you define yourself today?

If white:

8. Could you tell me a bit more about what it feels like for you to be white in South Africa today?
9. What difference does it make being white rather than black?

If not white:

10. What is it, from your experience, that makes you not define yourself as white?

Subject probes – Interview one and two

- You mentioned [...]. Could you tell me a bit more about [... ...]

- ⇒ Sport

- ⇒ School

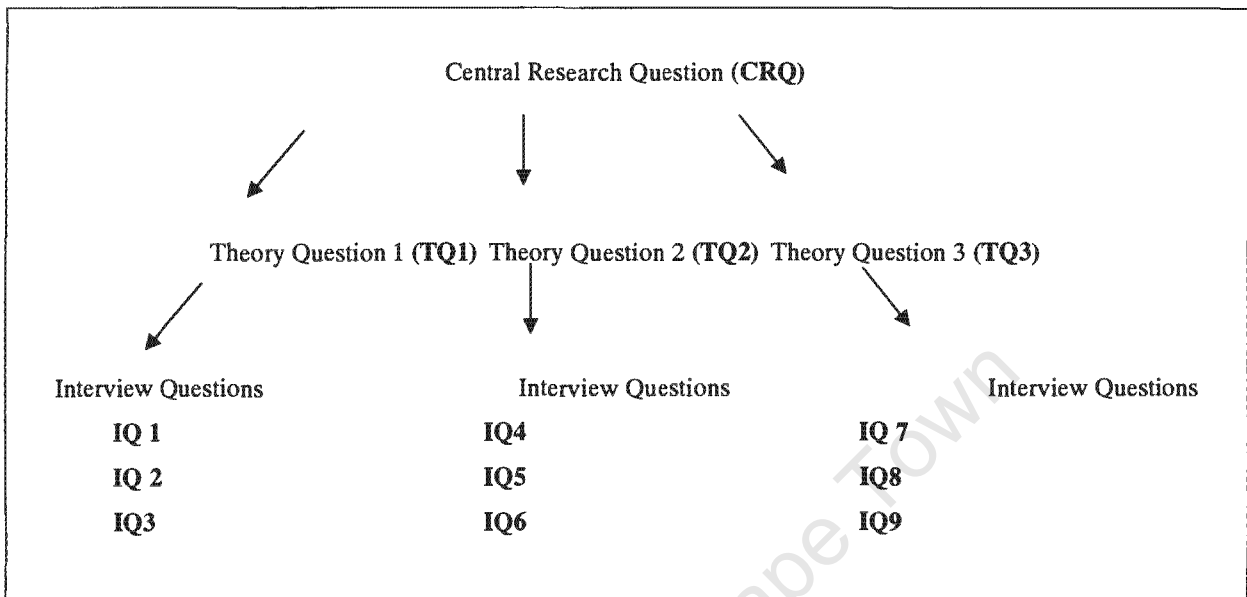
- ⇒ Relationships: with friends, with family, with partner, with other

- ⇒ Work

- ⇒ Sex

APPENDIX 6

Adaptation of CRQ⇒TQ⇒IQ/II: Pyramid Model (Wengraf, 2001, p.63)



APPENDIX 7 - CODES

Round one – Question codes

BAB	Int 1	Q5 and Q6
BAM	Int 1	Q9 and Q10
BW	Int 1	Q11 - Q13
DEFSELF	Int 2	Q7
DIFFBG	Int 1	Q8
DIFFBWNOW	Int 2	Q8
DIFFBWPAST	Int 1	Q14
DIFFMAN-NOWAPT	Int 2	Q5
DIFFMW	Int 2	Q4
FEELBOY	Int 2	Q1
FEELMAN	Int 2	Q2
FEELWHITEAPT	Int 2	Q6
FEELWHITENOW	Int 2	Q8
MEANMAN	Int 2	Q3
MST	Int 1	Q1-4
NOTWHITE	Int 2	Q10
RFLECT		

Round two – Theoretical codes

SEX
SPORT
WORK
SCHOOL
CHILDREN
FATHER
MOTHER
BROTHER
SISTER
FRIENDS

Round 3 – Emerging codes

TRAVEL
UNI
MAID
PERSWORK

APPENDIX 8 – PROFILES (AT TIME OF INTERVIEW)**Adam**

33 years old
South African
Afrikaans speaking
Grew up in small town in Free State
University educated
Employed, in NGO sector
Has a long term partner, not married
1 sister, older
1 brother, younger
No children

Andrew

29 years old
Zimbabwean
Has South Africa ID document but does not identify as South African but as British subject in living South Africa
English speaking
Grew up in Zimbabwe
University educated in South Africa
Self employed, in medical sector
Married
1 sister, older
1 brother, older
No children

Bryan

29 years old
South African
English speaking
Grew up in Johannesburg
University educated
Seeking employment, in corporate sector
No partner
1 sister, older
No children

Carl

29 years old
South African
Afrikaans speaking
Grew up in small town in Western Cape
University educated
Employed, in corporate sector
Married
1 brother
2 children

David

37 years old
South African born, but identifies as being international, of the world
Afrikaans speaking
Grew up in small town in Western Cape
University educated
Self employed, in entrepreneurial consultancy

Married
3 younger sisters
1 child

Justin

37 years old
British, adopted South African
English speaking
Grew up in England but young childhood in South Africa
Self employed, in entrepreneurial consultancy
Married
2 brothers, 1 older, 1 younger
No children

Mark

27 years old
South African
English speaking
Grew up in Johannesburg
University educated
Seeking employment, in corporate sector
No partner
1 sister, older
No children

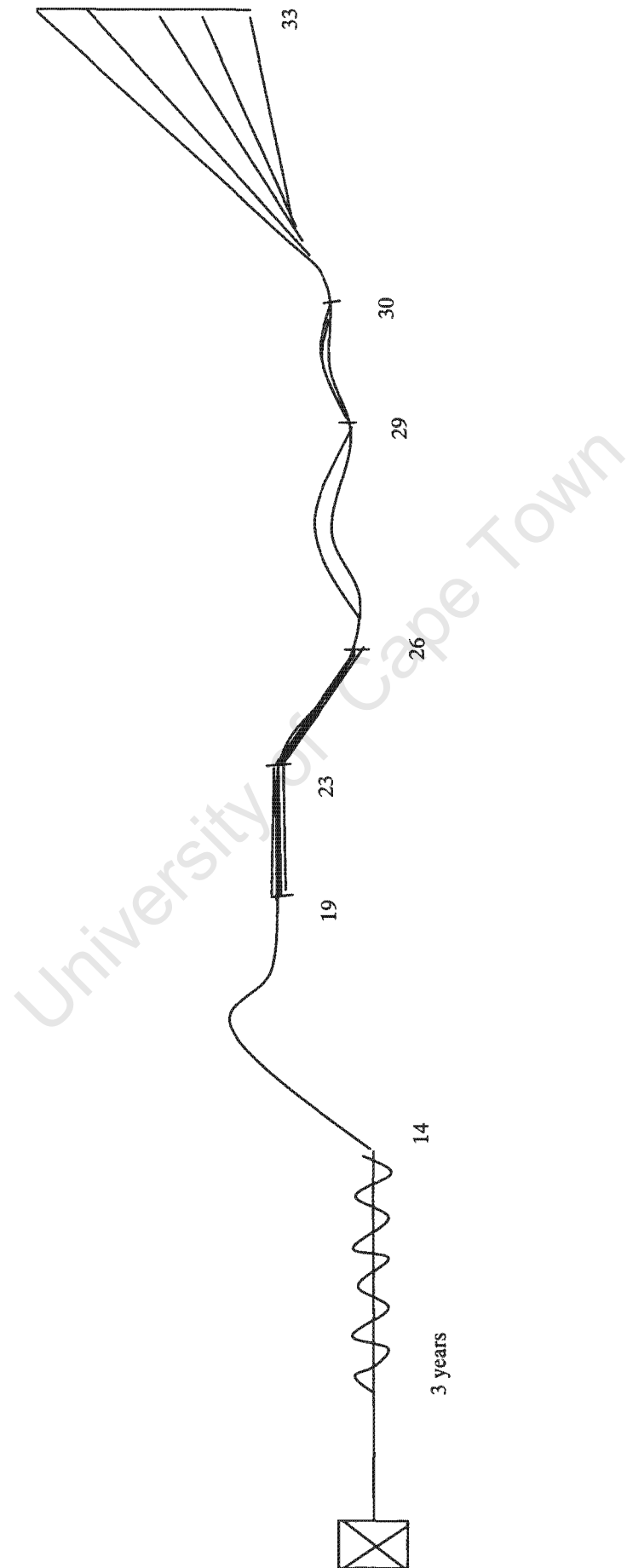
University of Cape Town

APPENDIX 9 -LIFELINES

University of Cape Town

APPENDIX 9.1

Adam - Lifeline

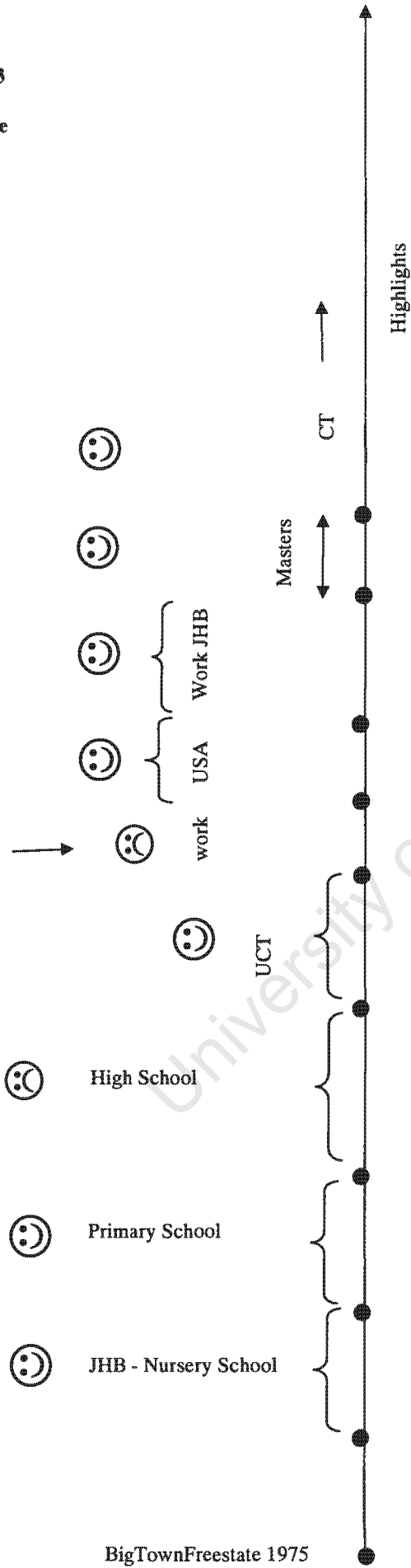


0	3	5	11	13	18	19	21	24	25	29
	Pre Primary	Primary	Boarding	High School	gap year	University1	University2	CT Company Name	Business Owner	

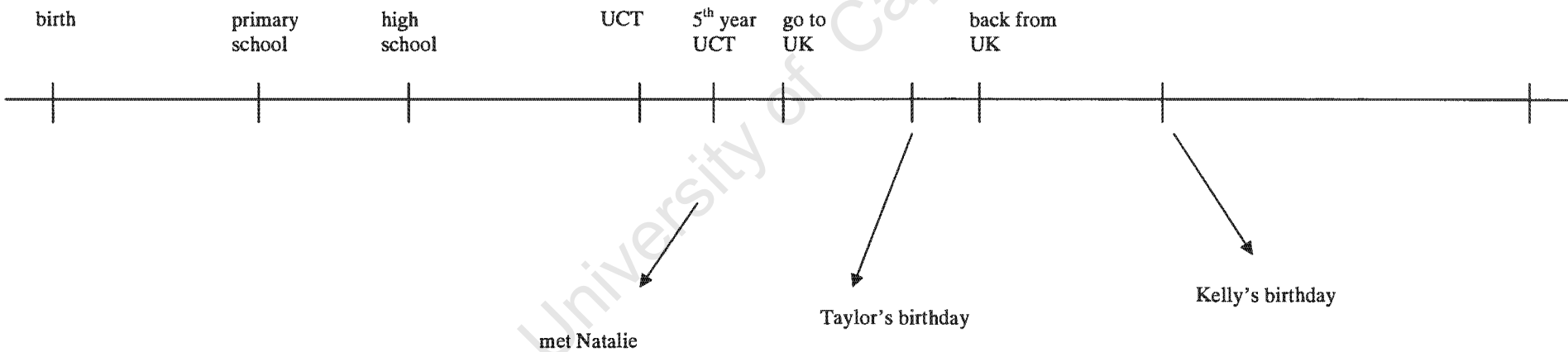
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APPENDIX 9.3

Bryan - Lifeline

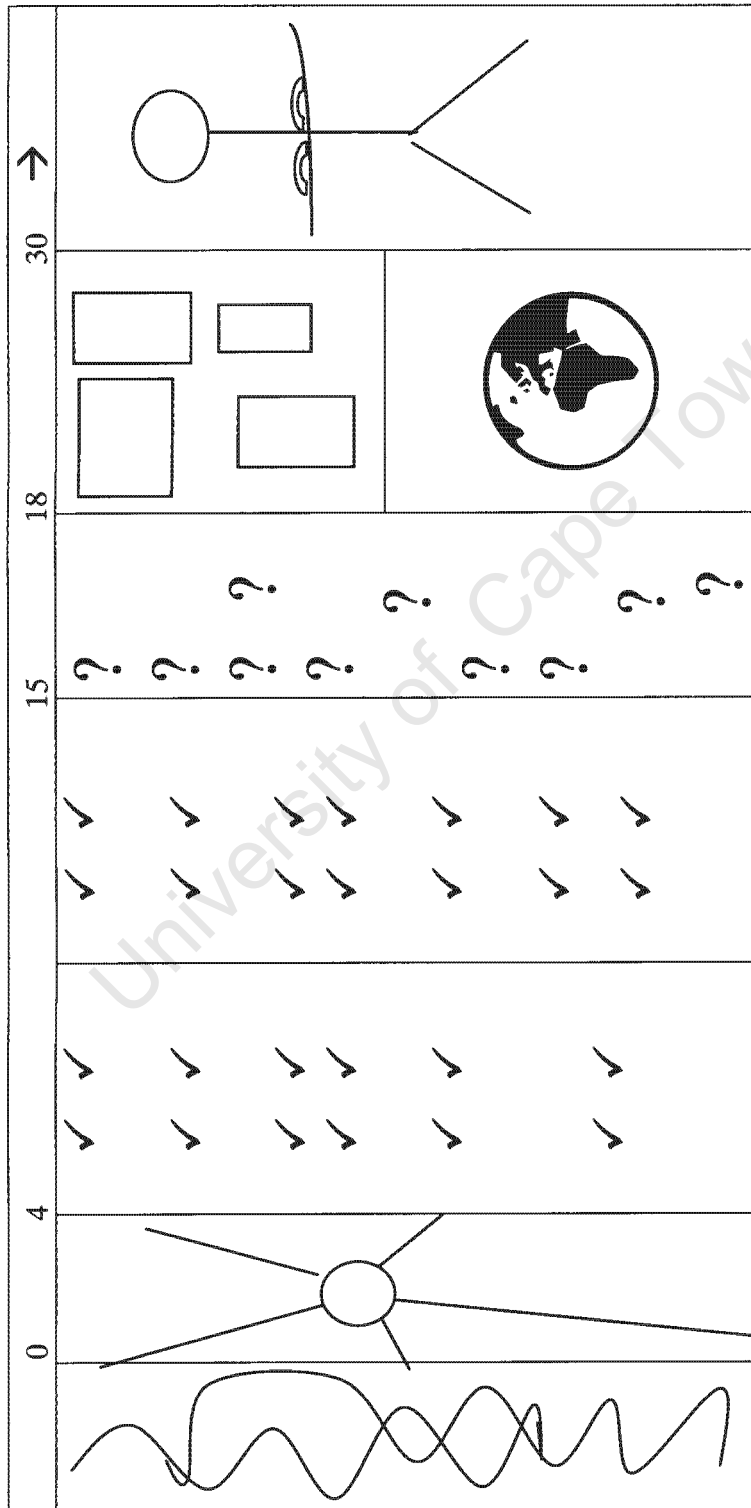


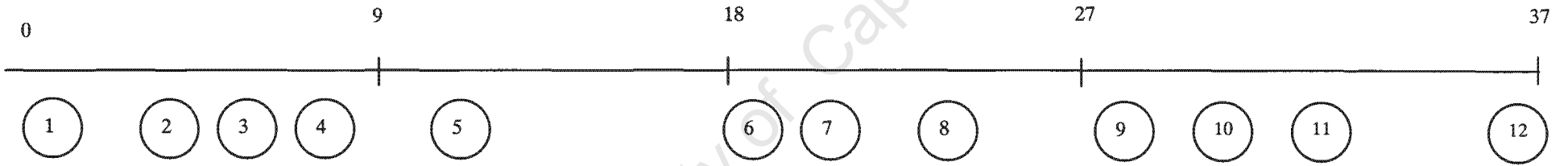
University of Cape Town



APPENDIX 9.5

David - Lifeline

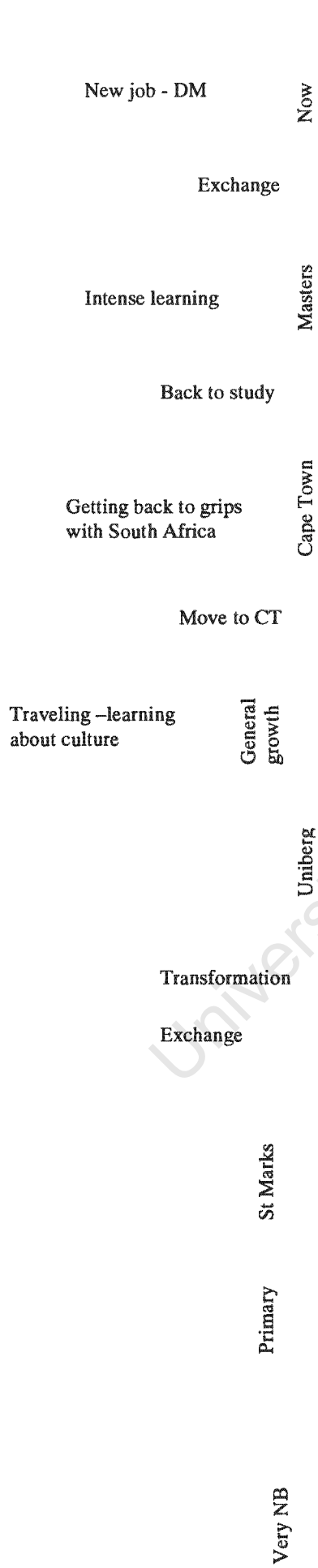




1. Bishops Cor
2. Mum - Homework
3. Knife
4. "I will kill you"
5. "I must be gay"
6. Jamu & Kashmir
7. Amy
8. Cycle
9. L. Forum
10. SA return
11. Phisa
12. Marry

APPENDIX 9.7

Mark - Lifeline



Decision Making

Year of birth

University of Cape Town