

**A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF SUBJECTIVE MALE  
IDENTITIES AMONG SOUTH AFRICAN ADOLESCENTS  
IN RURAL AND URBAN SETTINGS  
USING A PHOTO-NARRATIVE METHOD**

**DAVID ROY BLACKBEARD**

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## ABSTRACT

Masculinity is a relevant and important research priority in South Africa, where problematic constructions of adolescent masculinity are linked with a range of health issues and psychosocial risks. The theoretical basis for this qualitative research study was social constructionism informed by dialogical theory and psychoanalytic accounts of masculinity, including Kristeva's theory of abjection. The overall aim was to explore the lived experience of adolescent boys in order to understand how boys are subjectively positioned in relation to hegemonic standards for 'acceptable' masculinity in social contexts. Following ethical guidelines, boys were purposively sampled for the study from two school settings, a 'multicultural' urban single-sex school and a 'monoracial' rural co-educational secondary. A mixed method approach was used – a photo-narrative visual research method, focus groups and semi-structured interviews within a constructionist paradigm. Visual and verbal data was analysed by means of an integrated quantitative content analysis and qualitative narrative analysis.

Findings suggested that hegemonic standards were experienced in different ways by boys in terms of subjective positioning and microcultural context. Peer-groups were identified as having major importance for adolescent boys as a means of validating masculine norms, with sport functioning as an important masculinity marker. A central finding was that peer group norms created the conditions for inclusion and exclusion, which in turn lead to the construction of 'acceptable identities'. Performative 'doing' and symbolic 'having' were identified as two important ways of constructing masculinity – ways that were not always in accord. Another important finding was that boys battled to create even a rough congruence between masculinity norms and an authentic sense of self. There was a convergence around hegemonic norms of toughness, emphasised heterosexuality and displayed risk-taking across contexts; however, these norms were understood in different ways. Non-relational and objectified sex talk was a strong focus of hegemonic masculinity for most boys in the study. Toughness was understood as alternatively verbal, performative or physical, and these differences were linked to racial and cultural differences. Similarly, there were racial and cultural differences in how expressions of

masculinity were 'commodified'. Hybridised identities emerged from the multicultural context of School A but not in the monoracial context of School B. Based on the findings that boys occupied several positions simultaneously and experienced contradiction among various identity positions, it was suggested that Connell's masculinity framework provided only a limited macrosociological perspective that neglected the ambiguities of masculine subjectivity.

The study identified a range of means by which boys negotiated distances for alternative masculinities outside of hegemonic standards. The collective pressure of meeting an illusory and unattainable standard of masculine acceptability was identified as a source of conflict and anxiety for most of the boys in this study. This anxiety was managed in various ways including finding alternative constructions of masculinity in sub-cultural contexts, religious experience and in traditional cultural practices. These findings have implications for programmes and policies that address issues of masculinity in relation to the challenges and risks facing adolescent boys in South Africa.

## DECLARATIONS

Unless specifically stated to the contrary in the text, this dissertation is the original work of the undersigned.



David Blackbeard

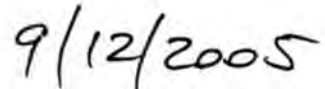
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I hereby declare that this dissertation has been submitted for examination with my approval.



Prof. Graham Lindegger

Supervisor



Date



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## INTRODUCTION

The condition of the lives of adolescent boys has been a growing area of concern internationally. Issues include bullying, racial vilification, homophobia, sexual harassment, a decline in the educational attainments of boys, substance abuse and group violence (Caldwell, Kohn-Wood, Schmeelk-Cone, Chavous & Zimmerman, 2004; Frank, Kehler, Lovell & Davison, 2003; Kehily, 2001; Kenway & Fitzclarence, 1997; Young & Sweeting, 2004; Zimmerman & Bingenheimer, 2002). In Britain, researchers have identified a changing pattern of mental health needs among male adolescents with significant increases occurring in suicidal behaviours, depression, conduct disorders and criminal offences (Head, 1999; McQueen & Henwood, 2002). Researchers in Canada have identified problematic constructions of masculinity which link with peer-group sexism, racist practices, violence and declining academic performances (Coulter, 2003; Frank et al., 2003). Researchers in the developing world identify a number of gendered vulnerabilities which disadvantage the health of adolescent boys. These include a high risk for completed suicide, migrant labour and its associated health risks, imperatives to enter the labour force, the anti-social behaviour of disaffected and unemployed youth and greater exposure to risky working conditions (Cleaver, 2002). In South Africa, it has been suggested that adolescent masculinities are under-researched despite the serious psychosocial and health risks associated with problematic masculinities (Morrell, 2001a). The current research suggests that adolescent masculinity in South Africa is in a valid state of crisis. Concerns include sexual harassment and cultures of violence in township schools; risk behaviour and risk perceptions linked with HIV transmission; coercive and unsafe sexual practices; substance abuse; sexual violence and the economic exploitation of young women from the townships and rigid and restrictive notions of acceptable masculinity in the 'formerly white' Model C schools; (Attwell, 2002; Lindegger & Durrheim, 2003; Morrell, 2001a, Morrell, 2001b; Wood & Jewkes, 2001).

Studies done in the USA also suggest a relationship between adolescent masculinity and violence, with studies finding that between 30-40% of adolescent boys admit to having committed acts of violence by age 17 (USDHHS, 2001, cited in Caldwell et al., 2004).

US research also suggests that about 50% of all reported cases of child sexual abuse and 25% of all rapes are perpetrated by adolescent males (Messerschmidt, 2000). Not all studies consider the gendered nature of such violent acts, and may thus neglect the link between social constructions of masculinity and adolescent sexual violence (Messerschmidt, 2000). A relevant finding from Australia is that violent offenders in that country are overwhelmingly young males under the age of 30, with young, single and unemployed men at greatest risk for becoming victims of violence (Australian Institute for Criminology, 1990, cited in Kenway & Fitzclarence, 1997).

Researchers in South Africa have identified violent behaviours and cultures of violence in schools and communities as key areas of concern (Morrell, 2001a; Wood & Jewkes, 2001). Explanations of adolescent male violence vary, with some commentators focusing on the biological aspects of heightened sexual interest during adolescence, inter-male competition, and selection pressures that lead to risk-taking (Archer, 2004; Kenway & Fitzclarence, 1997). Critics consider the view that males are somehow 'naturally' aggressive to be a simplified 'essentialising' of masculinity that ignores powerful social and cultural processes (Wood & Jewkes, 2001). Alternative explanations point to the less-obvious ways in which violence is condoned, modelled or embedded in school peer-group cultures, and in the disciplinary structures and power relations of schools (Kenway & Fitzclarence, 1997; Morrell, 2001a).

Phoenix (2004a) suggests that processes of identity and learning are intertwined. Social relations of control and conflict are practised within the possibilities offered by school and in peer-group cultures (Phoenix, 2004a). Accepted meanings of masculinity are expressed in canonical narratives mutually produced within the school's power relations and by the agentic subject himself. These narratives are centrally involved in the production of violent or otherwise problematic identities which move into contexts beyond the school (Phoenix, 2004a).

Gender violence involves physical, sexual, verbal or emotional abuses of power and through a continuum of individual, group and social structural levels (Connell, 2003;



Kenway & Fitzclarence, 1997; Messerschmidt, 2000). Explanations of male youth violence in the South African context focus on the cultures of violence that emerged under colonialism and apartheid, manifested institutionally, in racialised identities and in oppositional masculinities derived from the liberation struggle (Morrell, 2001a, Wood & Jewkes, 2001). Violent practices are rooted in the histories of South African schools, cultures and communities, with a need identified for a more nuanced picture of adolescent male violence that uncovers the complex ways in which people 'live' their gender and race at the local level (Morrell, 2001a, Wood & Jewkes, 2001).

In addition to gender violence in schools, masculinity researchers have noted that there is a high prevalence of homophobic attitudes and same-sex harassment within adolescent peer-group cultures (Epstein, 1997; Kehily, 2001; Nayak & Kehily, 1996; Redman, 1996; Redman, 2000). Studies suggest that the high school is a context for obvious and less-obvious homophobic behaviours which are closely involved with an exaggerated display of compulsory heterosexuality. Homophobia may be specifically linked with masculinities of physicality, toughness and prowess, and has a paradoxical link with misogyny (Epstein, 1997; Frosh, Phoenix & Pattman, 2002; Kehily, 2001). Recent studies also link homophobia with processes of heterosexual 'acceptability' in peer-group cultures (Kehily, 2001). Pascoe (2005) suggests that homophobic epithets are 'abject positions' – that is, they exist outside of acceptable masculinity while at the same time policing the boundaries of acceptability. Abjection is a psychoanalytic construct introduced by Kristeva (1982, cited in Hook, 2004) and is concerned with the anxiety of separating the boundaries of the ego from potentially threatening qualities or entities; it is a construct which has also been usefully applied to the analysis of racism at the level of personal subjectivity. While studies identify and explain homophobic practices and the marginalisation that accompanies compulsory or emphasised heterosexuality, there has been less exploration of what psychosocial and health risks these practices present for adolescents.

Masculinity research in schools is necessary for an informed educational praxis that includes life skills and gender awareness in the curriculum. Such research also has

relevance beyond educational contexts for those who work with adolescents in other sectors such as health and social welfare. Masculinity research in schools may also assist in identifying resilience-enhancing processes that may reduce risk, protect against risk factors or enhance protective factors, particularly among adolescents in South Africa who are at risk of contracting HIV (Zimmerman & Bingenheimer, 2002).

Current estimates suggest that although South Africa holds less than one percent of the world's population, it has 10% of the world's HIV-positive population, with the majority of these people falling in the age range of 15 and 35 (le Grange 2004). HIV poses the most serious threat to health and psychosocial well-being among South African youth today, with the erosion of family structures, myths about sexuality and a lack of positive options contributing significantly to the threat (le Grange, 2004). Focused research on adolescent masculinity is also important where educational and community interventions have begun to critically address the 'silence' on masculinity by mobilising men and boys around gender issues (Lindegger & Durrheim, 2003; Ruxton, 2004a; Thorpe, 2002).

Research with youth from township schools has suggested a pattern of gendered power relations which endorses sexual violence, risk-taking and is centred on a discourse of the male sex-drive (de Keijzer, 2004). This discourse condones multiple sexual partners or unsafe sex as a means for 'proving' manhood; sanctions contractual sex and is completely male-centred (Khoza, 2002; le Grange, 2004; Thorpe, 2002). Targeted AIDS Interventions (TAI) is an organisation which involves young men (aged 12 to 25) in HIV issues through discussion and counselling (le Grange 2004). In a baseline survey of 102 young men in KwaZulu-Natal, TAI found that the three areas of need were (a) accurate information about puberty, sex and HIV; (b) discussing perceptions of masculinity and promoting gender awareness; (c) personalising risks of HIV infection (le Grange, 2004). The Men As Partners (MAP) is a programme for adult men which uses participatory workshops to challenge gender-based attitudes, values and behaviours (Mehta, Peacock & Bernal, 2004). MAP's concerns include positive male involvement in sexual and reproductive health, promoting gender equity and challenging male attitudes which compromise the health and safety of themselves and that of women and children (Mehta



et al. 2004). These interventions illustrate the relevance of masculinity research for changing gender-based practices, behaviours, values and attitudes, particularly in relation to the monitoring and evaluation of intervention programmes. Examples of such programmes include TAI's Inkunzi Project, a peer-education initiative based in rural schools in KwaZulu-Natal, or the Shosholozza AIDS project, a peer-education outreach that involved young men from soccer clubs (le Grange, 2004).

Thorpe (2002) suggests that any intervention to change adolescent masculinity should begin with boys' own experiences, and should allow a space for the voices of boys to be heard and validated. The relevance of focusing on participants' authentic concerns and orientations is well-supported in the research literature (Coulter, 2003; Frank et al., 2003; le Grange, 2004; Lindegger & Durrheim, 2003; Speer, 2001a). Voice-centred research into masculinity is necessary to engage with the subjective realities that are as important to the construction of gender as macrosocial processes. Following the direction of other studies which have been interested in the subjectivity of gender, this study was less concerned with gender enactment and production through institutions than with the discursive accomplishment or 'microgenesis' of identities at the level of the interacting agentic subject (Korobov & Bamberg, 2004; Wetherell & Edley, 1999). These microgenetic processes may include talk-in-interaction, unconscious processes and the narrative intricacies of human experience. In British research, combining social constructionism with cultural psychoanalysis has become a recent trend (Frosh, Phoenix & Pattman, 2003; Redman, 2001; Wetherell & Edley, 1999) however, a similar integration is generally lacking in masculinity research done in South Africa. Not only, therefore, is masculinity in South Africa under-researched but it may also be inadequately theorised (Morrell, 2001a). A 'macrosocial' social constructionism derived from Connell (1995) has formed the mainstay of South African masculinity research possibly because his perspective emphasises the structural bases of identities in social institutions. In South Africa's context of social and economic change, this emphasis may have merit, however, Connell's theory may be limited when it comes to the nuances of subjectivity. Male subjectivity may be a focus of increasing interest in a context of multiculturalism and

diversity that adds a complexity that needs more than the modernist social theory that underpins Connell's analysis.

In summary, further research on adolescent masculinity is of relevance and importance in South Africa today. Masculinity research in many countries has identified a range of risks that are linked with adolescent masculinity.<sup>4</sup> These risks include gender violence, aggression, bullying, homophobia, sexual harassment, depression, substance abuse challenges, declining academic performance, unsafe sexual practices, HIV infection and restrictive notions of acceptability. The institutional cultures of schools and the informal peer-group cultures within schools are important contexts for the construction of adolescent masculinities. Researchers have identified violence and homophobia as behaviours that may be linked with problematic masculinities that are constructed within school cultures. Researching adolescent masculinity in South Africa has direct relevance in educational, social and health-care contexts for addressing the risks faced by adolescents, in particular, the behaviours and attitudes that put adolescents at risk of contracting HIV. Such research has particular relevance for projects and initiatives that seek to mobilize change in the gendered attitudes and behaviours of boys and men, such as TAI and MAP. South African research has drawn heavily on Connell's analysis of gender, which focuses on the structural bases of gender relations with less emphasis on gender subjectivity. In the increasing complexity of a multicultural society, it may be more useful to integrate the social construction of gender with the unconscious and narrative processes of identity at the level of individual subjectivity.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **MASCULINITY IN CRISIS**

#### **1.1. Understanding contemporary masculinity**

The available research and analysis that may be placed under the banner of 'masculinity studies' reflects a growing interest among academics over the past two decades in studying who men are and what they do (Ruxton, 2004b). Masculinity studies draws on a diverse range of discursive, feminist, psychoanalytic, social psychological and post-structuralist analyses of gender (Robinson, 2003). Influenced by these approaches, a range of specific studies of men have emerged in health, education and criminology (Ruxton, 2004b). An area of ongoing debate has been that of locating the field in relation to feminism and feminist scholarship (Connell, 2003; Morrell, 1998a; Ruxton, 2004b). A notable schism has been between a critical discursive social psychology of men that draws on post-modern feminism and uses qualitative approaches and a liberalist social psychology which focuses on sex roles, personality traits and empirical measures of masculinity and femininity (Flood, 2001). The sex role literature is criticised for ignoring gender power and for its heterosexist and homogenous presentation of masculinity (Flood, 2001). Critics also consider empirical attempts to quantify masculinity as reductive and reifying (Flood, 2001). The discursive approach tends towards a decentring of the individual in favour of a plural self that is constructed through dialogue, language and narrative (Korobov & Bamberg, 2004; Kvale, 1996). The discursive subject is understood as situated and accomplished through language and interactive practices, in a continual and contextual process of world- and person-making (Korobov & Bamberg, 2004; Kvale, 1996). This is in contrast with the rationalist assumption that the subject has a unitary kind of being that is distinct from inter-relatedness (Korobov & Bamberg, 2004; Kvale, 1996).

During the 1990s accounts of 'masculinity in crisis' became widespread both within the academy and in popular culture. Some of these accounts were based on the notion that shifting production and labour practices, and the influence of second-wave feminism, had

created a climate of insecurity for men (Benwell, 2003). Second-wave feminist ideas may have foregrounded and positively reframed femininity and women, with a parallel decentring and 'visibilising' of men's experience (McQueen & Henwood, 2002). Such a crisis may have signified a destabilising of patriarchy with the possibility of transforming and reconstructing gender relations. A more critical stance on the crisis of masculinity is the that subject-in-crisis rhetoric continues to have the symbolic power that reinforces existing gender relations such that a discourse of 'wounded masculinity' may support patriarchal gender relations though a narrative of loss (Robinson 2000, cited in Benwell, 2003). The extreme version of this discourse may be seen in the 'mythopoetic' men's movement, with its rallying call for a return to an essential 'deep masculinity' (Adams & Savran, 2002). The prevailing claim in many of the popular bestsellers produced by the mythopoetic men's movement was that overprotective mothers, uninvolved fathers and anti-boy practices had prevented boys from accessing 'real' masculinity. Critics suggest that such views are essentialist and neglect the social practices which co-construct masculinities (Frank et al., 2003).

By the 1990s masculinity had turned to social constructionism to account for gender and definitions of masculinity as dynamic and performative became popular. Masculinity was no longer understood as an ontological given, but as enacted and meaningful (Swain, 2003). This view countered sociobiological claims about gender and the static dichotomies of gender difference research (Edley, 2001). These accounts highlighted the way in which identities co-construct experience and meaning in the world (McQueen & Henwood, 2002). Understanding masculinity as an identity rather than a biological given opened debate around masculinity in relation to the other identity spheres that are enacted and embodied in society, such as race, ethnicity and sexual preference.

By the 1990s a comprehensive framework for analysing masculinity had been developed, largely in the work of Australian sociologist Robert Connell (Ruxton, 2004b). In 1985, Connell, Carrigan and Lee (1987) had introduced the term 'hegemonic masculinity' based upon Gramsci's concept of hegemony as a state of ideology that normalises or naturalises social practice (Edley, 2001). The term was later defined as a 'configuration

of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women' (1995, p. 77). Although the term has been criticised for its structuralist approach to identities, it was part of a significant critique of the destructive expressions of men's power around the world (Ruxton, 2004b).

Connell's theory was based on the idea of a hierarchical gender order in which gendered positions were actively negotiated. Masculinities were considered multiple, with four 'positions' available to men in the order of gender relations – hegemonic, complicitous, subordinate and marginal masculinities (Connell, 1995). Complicitous, subordinate and marginal masculinities were all defined by their relation to hegemonic masculinity. Connell's initial study was a ground-breaking project which departed from conventional survey research methods in favour of a qualitative analysis of life-histories. The study produced a semantic analysis of power and powerlessness in schools at the intersections of gender and social class (Morrell, 1998b). A further development was pluralising of the word 'masculinity', which acknowledged a diversity of possible meanings of masculinity and individual positions in relation to hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1995). Connell's framework was most useful for the analysis of masculinity at the macrosocial level and provided a less complete picture of how individual subjectivities were accomplished or why individuals might occupy more than one position in relation to hegemonic standards.

## **1.2. Challenges to the 'new sociology of men'**

Through his 'new sociology of men', Connell provided a comprehensive theory of masculinities and a persuasive case against biological or social role theories of gender. Critics however question the usefulness of his framework beyond the larger social context of gender relations and its apparent unrelatedness to other currents in feminism (Mac an Ghail, 1994; Pascoe, 2005; Wetherell & Edley, 1999). Connell's notion of a 'hegemonic masculinity' may be conceptually ambiguous (Speer, 2001a) and may obscure the possibility that any form of named 'masculinity' is a social ideology (Beynon, 2002). Connell's view that masculinities exist in a multiplicity has gained



widespread acceptance and the detailed analysis of diverse configurations of masculinity in social institutions has become a prevailing trend within masculinity research over the last 15 years (Pascoe, 2005; Wetherell & Edley, 1999). At the same time, critics note that Connell's emphasis on gender that is unrelated to sexuality glosses over the possibility that sexuality may be a constitutive element of the social order, powerfully imbricated upon gender and other identity constructions (Pascoe, 2005). Queer theory provides an alternative framework which focuses on the imagined binaries and boundaries that permeate social structures; this leads towards an integrated analysis of sexuality, gender, race and other identities (Pascoe, 2005). For queer theorist, Judith Butler, gendered persons are constructed through processes of citation and repudiation of a 'constitutive outside' which is located paradoxically outside socially defined gendered acceptability yet defines the boundaries of acceptability in its constant evocation within the social order (Pascoe, 2005). This is a process of Kristevan 'abjection', a process which is intrinsically about maintaining discursive boundaries, is accomplished through interaction and permeates across all levels of sexuality, gender, race and other imagined identities (Hook, 2004; Pascoe, 2005).

In addressing the micro-context of masculine subjectivity beyond Connell's sociology, several researchers, most notably in Britain, have turned to psychoanalysis to provide a fine-grained perspective. Wetherell and Edley (1999) for example, introduce the notions of 'psycho-discursive practices' and 'imaginary positions' to account for individual positioning within discourse. The 'psycho-discursive practices' are processes of fantasy, projection, identification and discursive accomplishment that occur within individuals and groups. In a study of racism in post-apartheid South Africa, Hook (2004) makes a similar argument vis-à-vis racism. While discursive or social constructionist approaches to racism effectively apprehend the institutional, historical representational and textual forms of racism, they may be limited at the level of explaining the insidious, below-the-surface structures of racism, its affective and embodied components, and the racist's often intense psychic investment in his or her own racial subjectivity (Hook, 2004). As an approach that is complementary with discursive and social constructionist explanations, Kristeva's psychoanalytic notion of abjection is used as a basis for a theory

of racism that accounts for the unconscious, affective, embodied and visceral character of racist subjectivity (Hook, 2004).

The idea that gender has the quality of unconscious fantasy is a new feature of recent studies of adolescent masculinity. In a study of adolescent homophobia, Nayak and Kehily (1996) take up Judith Butler's (1990) definition of gender as 'a fantasy instituted and inscribed on the surface of bodies', a definition which points to unconscious processes of embodiment in the construction of gender (p. 212). In her analysis of sexualities and schools, Epstein (1997) argues that masculinities are co-constructed with the fantasy of compulsory heterosexuality that permeates school cultures. Kehily (2001) similarly applies a definition of 'bodily fantasies' in her analysis of masculine embodiment, again drawing on this triadic notion of embodiment, fantasy and inscription as the three unconscious processes that construct gender subjectivity.

A comprehensive synthesis of social constructionist and psychoanalytic theory may be found in the work of Stephen Frosh, whose recent study of adolescent masculinities draws on Lacan's cultural psychoanalysis, feminist psychoanalysis, most notably the work of Julia Kristeva and object relations theory (Frosh, 2002; Frosh et al., 2003). Frosh (2002) suggests that psychoanalysis leads away from any ideas of men actively 'choosing' identity positions in the 'sure-footed and imperious' way that some social constructionist arguments suggest (p. 35). The psychoanalytic notion of 'the body' replaces the narrow neo-Liberal view of masculinity as a rational choice or voluntarist positioning, as a site for the eruption of the irrational and the unwilled (Frosh, 2002; Phoenix, 2004a). While Frosh's approach does point to the less palpable and covert processes of gender subjectivity, he does not abandon social constructionism as a vigilant critique of biological, de-politicised or essentialist accounts of gender. Some narrow psychoanalytic accounts of gender have tended to focus only on the object relations that produce masculinity in early childhood, thus exclusively focusing on the ostensibly apolitical internal world of the individual. An example of this is an article by Diamond (2004) who makes a valid though reductionistic case that male identities are crucially shaped by the boy's dis-identification from 'primary femininity' at the Oedipal stage.

This argument is reductionistic as it decontextualises the individual and is thus 'a discourse sanitised of the social dynamics of power' (Hook, 2004, p. 673).

Recent studies have introduced the concept of dialogicity in resolving the problem of the subject in discourse. Redman (2001) suggests that much social constructionist research on masculinities has focused on the textual, institutional and representational production of gendered subject positions. This is a 'culturalist' reading of Foucault which may be replaced by a 'relational' reading of Foucault, entailing a close analysis of interpersonal processes (Redman, 2001). Redman's relational approach also draws on the dialogical conception of language found in the work of Bakhtin (1981), Volosinov (1973) and others of the Leningrad circle, thus shifting focus from the cultural genesis of identities to the intricate processes of naming and narrating multiple subject positions at the individual level (p. 189). The concepts of multiple subject positions and dialogicity have opened up new areas of exploration in a number of recent studies of adolescent masculinity (Epstein & Johnson, 1998; Epstein, O'Flynn & Telford, 2001; Kehily, 2001; McQueen & Henwood, 2002; Redman, 2000; Redman, 2001). Redman's (2001) interview study with British adolescents integrates dialogical theory and cultural psychoanalysis in explaining homophobia as a process that is simultaneously social and unconscious. The unconscious and the social are seen as mutually constitutive and dialogically interdependent, a view shared by Pascoe (2005), who argues that homophobia creates an image of 'penetrated masculinity' that regulates the boundaries of acceptable masculinity through powerful and unconscious 'border anxiety'. Such comprehensive accounts explain how adolescent boys are positioned, often in contradictory ways, within the repertoire of masculinities made available through the lived texture of experience (Epstein et al., 2001; Redman, 2001).

Examples of recent research in the area of homophobia will be used to highlight the relevance of these theoretical developments. Redman (2000) develops the psychoanalytic explanation of homophobia as a process of the splitting and projection of unacceptable same-sex desire to encompass social processes within the 'presumption of heterosexuality' that infuse school cultures and broader social structures (p. 488).



Redman contends that homophobia is a mutually constitutive social and unconscious process, involving both the dialogical opposition of 'acceptable' heterosexualised identities against othered identities, and an unconscious phobic response based on repressed desires (Epstein et al., 2001). Kehily and Nayak (1997) suggest that homophobia among boys operates as a gendered dynamic that has more to do with limiting the repertoire of acceptable gender performances than perceived sexual orientation, a conclusion that is shared by Pascoe (2005) whose findings suggest that aggressive homophobic epithets have multiple meanings that regulate boundaries of acceptable identities along lines that are gendered, sexualised and racially marked. Taken as a whole, these studies suggest that for individuals there exist trajectories of gendered performances. As explained above, these 'trajectories' or narratives are involved in a process of abjection or paradoxical othering which are simultaneously social and unconscious.

Redman's account of homophobia (2000) questions why a 'phobic' response which one would expect to involve fear or avoidance is more often characterised by rage. Redman explains this emotional response as a 'narcissistic rage' emanating from the threat of self-negation. Redman suggests that gayness threatens the heterosexual male's affirmation as the possessor of the symbolic 'phallus', a position of fantasised self-sufficiency and power, leaving him open to re-engulfment by the 'archaic' mother (Epstein et al., 2001). The identification of the 'phallus' with self-sufficient power is culturally and linguistically embedded in Western culture, argues Redman, and is thus as much a social as an unconscious 'construction', threatened by the radical loss of power that gayness may represent. In the language of queer theory, gayness may also operate as a 'constitutive outside', simultaneously iterated and repudiated, a founding repudiation of what is 'inside' the subject against what is a 'threatening', 'failed' or 'unrecognizable' identity (Pascoe, 2005). Psychoanalytic explanations that are influenced by feminism or queer theory may be similarly applied to other identity categories and their formation, such as racial and racist subjectivity and misogyny (Hook, 2004; Pascoe, 2005). For example, Frosh (2002) identifies 'otherness' as the product of irrational, projective processes that are linked to early experiences of aggression, envious impulses and

anxieties of dissolution or, in other words, the Kleinian paranoid position. Frosh calls this process an ‘anti-thought process’ whereby threatening ambivalence from a turbulent social context is controlled through projected antagonism (2002).

The above discussion of homophobia points to the dynamic and developing nature of contemporary masculinity studies and the value of theoretical synthesis that adds to social constructionism’s vigilant critique of essential masculinity. Recent theoretical integrations have drawn on feminist and Lacanian psychoanalysis, dialogical theory and queer theory in addressing the limitations of social constructionist or discursive accounts of masculinity. Of crucial importance to the main discussion is the naming of a ‘field’ of study implied by the term ‘masculinity studies’. Drawing on the dialogical conception of language already discussed, it may be argued that the act of naming implies a power position which can confer or withhold recognition (Redman, 2001). Thus, the ‘masculinity studies’ implies a position of gendered subjectivity or a making conscious and visible the neglected subject of gender studies (Rutherford, 2003). There is also a growing awareness that understanding adolescent masculinity has direct relevance for those working with adolescent boys and their challenges in education, health and other social settings (Head, 1999; McQueen & Henwood, 2002; Rabinowitz & Cochran, 2002). It is further noted from the perspective of queer theory, that the social and unconscious processes underlying gender subjectivity may have common ground with other processes which bring about named categories and binaries, such as racialised or sexualised identities.

### **1.3. The global crisis in masculinity**

The global ‘crisis in masculinity’ has been widely discussed in the masculinity studies literature and in popular culture. The idea of an ‘apocalyptic’ crisis of masculinity at the start of the new millennium may be interpreted as a ‘subject-in-crisis’ discourse that appears both within the academy and in the media (Benwell, 2003). One view on the crisis is that it is an identity crisis for men whose position of entitlement or gendered status as men has been threatened by changes in post-industrial economies and

competition with women in the workplace (Horrocks, 1994). For some, the crisis involves a loss of confidence and self justification by men as the social and economic position of women has improved (Benwell, 2003). An alternative crisis account focuses on the challenges men encounter in their complicity with the oppression and subjugation of women. At the subjective level, men may be experiencing powerlessness and depersonalisation in the face of this complicity with the oppression of women (Horrocks, 1994). Frosh (2002) suggests that the crisis signals a change in men's perception of themselves based on the 'destabilising' influences of feminist, psychoanalytic and systems theory. The vision created is no longer of men as a confident, permanent force in the world but rather of fragile subjectivity, uncertain about the meaning of the identity labelled as 'masculine' (Frosh, 2002). Others contend that the current crisis is just one episode in a history of contestation over the social 'prescriptions' and cultural images of what it means to be a 'real man' (Edley & Wetherell, 1997; Morrell, 2001a). The symbolic power of a crisis discourse to support a range of narratives, including a 'victim narrative' or 'backlash to feminism narrative' has also been noted (Benwell, 2003). Benwell's analyses of men's lifestyle magazines support this argument. He suggests that while these magazines appear to respond to feminism at one level they preserve male privilege at another with a pseudo-responsive acknowledgement of feminist discourses that strategically evades definition.

#### **1.4. Young masculinity in crisis**

What has been labelled a 'discourse of panic' over the state of boys in relation to schooling includes issues such as violence, homophobia, academic 'underachievement', bullying and harassment at schools (Epstein, 1999; Frank et al., 2003, Frosh et al., 2002). Other concerns include increasing rates of suicide, parasuicide, depressive and conduct disorders among adolescent males and the high rates of male adolescent sexual violence (Head, 1999; McQueen & Henwood, 2002; Messerschmidt, 2000). Risk-taking behaviours, delay in help-seeking and poor health adherence are other identified issues with implications for reproductive health, HIV transmission and motor vehicle accidents. These behaviours have been linked to discourses of masculine toughness, self-sufficiency

and superiority (Robertson, 2003). Declining educational performance of boys at schools has received growing public attention in many countries (Epstein, 1999; Frosh et al., 2002; Head, 1999), although this has been less so the case in South Africa (Morrell, 2001b). This may be due to differences in social context or to the more pressing local concerns of male adolescent violence, risks of HIV infection, and the psychosocial consequences for those infected or affected by HIV (Munroe, 2003; Julien, 2003; Sideris & Posel, 2003). The evidence of boys' underachievement at schools may be selective and misleading, particularly when decontextualised from racial and cultural identities and without a critical regard for what constitutes 'underachievement' (Epstein, 1999; Frosh et al., 2002). Further research is needed to explore the extent to which racial integration in South African schools relates to masculinity and academic achievement. A study of 400 black and white South African school learners from two newly integrated secondary schools suggested that there were no significant differences between the groups in academic motivation and learning strategies, with both groups having high ratings on work ethics and interests in school tasks (Watkins, McInerney, Akande & Lee, 2003). This study did not, however, explore the differences across gender or other identity categories.

Frank et al (2003) note that while the crisis of boys' underachievement receives frequent coverage in the media, this is often with little challenge to prevailing notions of masculinity. Instead, solutions are offered such as making teaching methods more 'boy-friendly' or claiming that absent fathers and overprotective mothers are responsible for low literacy, violence and risk-taking behaviour (Frank et al., 2003). Some studies suggest that it is peer-group cultures within co-educational schools that promote compulsory heterosexuality which may be linked with masculinities that are incompatible with specific forms of academic achievement (Frank et al., 2003). This is an important consideration to bear in mind in the South African schools, where education for the privileged white minority has generally occurred in achievement-orientated, single-sex schools (Morrell, 2001a). Redman's (2001) interview study of older adolescents suggests that the subjective orientations of boys towards achievement are re-negotiated in the transition from mainstream secondary schools to sixth-form colleges. At the sixth-form

college, with a school culture that is more laissez-faire, masculinities appear that are more individualised, flexible and orientated towards academic achievement than the working class 'laddish' pupil cultures of the state secondary schools (Redman, 2001). These changing orientations towards academic achievement are paralleled by changing narratives towards heterosexual relationships. In the earlier years at the secondary schools, relationships with girls are linked to a performance of 'heterosexualised masculine competence', whereas at the sixth-form college, young men destined for the middle class invest in narratives of serious romance and move away from a strong homosocial identification (Redman, 2001). This study highlights how school cultures, developmental tasks and economic factors may contribute to the reconfiguration of masculinities during the changes of adolescence.

While feminism and economic changes have opened new cultural discourses for young women, these same changes position young men in contradictory positions of identity conflict, suggests Frosh (2002). Studies suggest that these gendered vulnerabilities are also encountered by young men in developing world contexts (Cleaver, 2002). Here the expectation of the male as a provider may persist even when economic changes make it difficult for men to define themselves in these terms, and alternative meanings of masculinity are unavailable (Cleaver, 2002). While needing to 'purchase' masculinity from the available cultural narratives of male hegemony, young men are also constrained by social forces which iteratively enforce a narrow code for the hegemonic ideal (Frosh, 2002). This leads to fragile identity positions which have to be constantly defended and negotiated (Frosh, 2002). Frosh also suggests that for the adolescents he has studied, identity positions come at the high price of repressed emotionality and 'softness' and are built on the exclusion of otherness. This tendency towards exclusion as a basis for an acceptable identity as a male is in tension with a social reality where such exclusion is contradicted by the multiple identity meanings of post-modernity. Using transcript exemplars from their extended research on early adolescent boys and girls carried out in London, Frosh et al (2003) identify a variety of practices within schools through which gender performances are scrutinised and regulated against core heterosexualised notions of appropriate masculinity. These practices include blatant tactics such as homophobia



and harassment with less conscious strategies which construct 'non-hegemonic' masculinities as transgressively 'feminine'. These tactics serves the dual purpose of marginalising boys who transgress too obviously and confirming the received boundaries for those who visibly conform to the hegemonic norm (Frosh et al., 2003).

An important implication of these hypotheses is that normative and socially accepted practices around the meanings of masculinity are problematic, to the point of crisis, and may be linked to bullying, harassment or other forms of victimisation. A recent large scale survey study of 15 year old boys and girls in Scotland provides some support for these conclusions. The researchers found that 'masculinity', as measured on a gender diagnostic inventory, was significantly correlated with bullying behaviour (Young & Sweeting, 2004). It was also found that 'femininity' traits, associated with 'gender atypical' boys and 'highly gender-typed girls', was highly correlated with victimisation, loneliness and psychological distress (Young & Sweeting, 2004).

Current research also suggests that there are new pressures for young men based on the stresses of the post-modern, post-industrial culture in which consumption is more important than production (Alexander, 2003). In modern industrial societies, hegemonic bourgeois identities were based on production. The 'principal breadwinner' was the working man with his work ethic and family responsibilities, whereas consumption was defined as a feminine realm with women being the 'principal shoppers' (Osgerby, 2003). While recent studies suggests a greater involvement of men, as 'hidden' consumers, in the development of commodity culture than this split would suggest, the gendering of consumer culture is generally acknowledged (Osgerby, 2003). Some suggest that shifts in the popular culture of postmodern consumer economies have meant new configurations of masculinity based on images of consumption. Thus, unlike his father's generation, the young man's search for a masculine identity today may not be about production and what job he will do, but about the images of consumer masculinity – whether he is wearing the 'right' labels or using the appropriate grooming products (Alexander, 2003). Although the dominant articulations of masculinity in economies of production stressed work identities, a male personality based on leisure-orientated

cultural codes was always a contender for the top spot, suggests Osgerby (2003). As new economies have developed, men have become immersed in cultural codes that permit commercial leisure and hedonistic consumption with a correspondent shift towards identities of consumption over identities of production. Redman (2001) shows how clothing is a sign and signifier of identity for young men in Britain, be it in subscribing to a code of branded 'gear' for the secondary school 'lad', whose dress code is rigidly 'policed' by the peer group, or in expressing 'student' individuality in the street fashion of young men at sixth-form colleges.

### **1.5. South African masculinities in crisis**

The preceding discussion has largely drawn on research from the developed world and may be applicable only in a limited way to South African adolescents. This is due to the relative dearth of research on masculinity in developing countries (Clever, 2002).

Kimmel (2001) argues that in South Africa the hegemonic ideal was created against a screen of 'others' and otherness which involved a devaluation and problematisation of the masculinity of the oppressed. Against the backdrop of colonialism and its universal characteristics, such as a tendency for colonisers to attribute violent and uncontrolled 'hypermasculinities' or alternatively attributing an emasculated effeminacy to the colonised, the construction of masculinities in South Africa was also the product of its history, its struggles and its local circumstances (Kimmel, 2001).

Morrell (2001c) argues that South Africa's present crisis in masculinity has been most recently shaped by the historically interventionist nature of the racist state and subsequent to democratisation, by the new state's capacity to alter or reverse the servile labouring positions or positions of unemployment which the majority of men in South Africa experienced in the past. Morrell (2001c) proposes that South African men in a crisis have accommodated to social change through one of three positions – reactive, accommodating and responsive. These positions are dynamic and may be contradictory, for example, Hemson (2001) suggests that young township men combine a progressive, communitarian masculinity with a reactive, explosively violent masculinity derived from

the freedom struggle. Recent media reports present a discourse of crisis in South African masculinity which is identified largely with progressive views that recognise the changes and challenges in the developing world. These reports suggest that the crisis is rooted in the tension between cultural beliefs that males should dominate, the social change towards equality with women and in a dislocation of what it means to be a 'real man' in South Africa today (Julien, 2003; Munroe, 2003; Sideris & Posel, 2003).

- ✓ Recent studies suggest that dominant South African masculinities are characterised by power over women, the use of violent resistance; compulsory heteronormativity; hegemonic norms such as the male sex drive discourse, conquest and risk-taking, and the masculine body-ideal (le Grange, 2004; Lindegger & Durrheim, 2003; Morrell, 1998a). These findings are confirmed by media commentary on the compulsion to prove masculinity and dominance through having multiple sexual partners and engaging in coercive or unsafe sexual practices (Julien, 2003; Sideris & Posel, 2003). The social and economic changes in South Africa which have followed its political and economic transformation have created new sites of contestation for masculinities. Rural contexts have become sites of contestation for dominance for racialised masculinities, and in the face of grinding poverty, unemployment and fear of violence, alternative constructions of masculinity have appeared in the urban areas (Lindegger & Durrheim, 2003; le Grange, 2004).

A key challenge for South African men is the role of men in the transmission of HIV, a disease which continues to severely damage this country (Julien, 2003; le Grange, 2004). Recent figures indicate that although South Africa holds less than one percent of the world's population, it has 10 % of the world's HIV positive population with the majority of the 600 persons who die daily from HIV-related illnesses being between the ages of 15 and 35 (le Grange, 2004). Researchers suggest that it is codes of masculinity based on risk-taking, lack of help-seeking and discourses of male virility that regulate the spread of HIV infection (le Grange, 2004; Lindegger & Durrheim, 2003).

- ✗ Studies show that preventative campaigns which focus on education only without addressing constructions of gender are unlikely to change sexual behaviours (le Grange,



2004; Slonim-Nevo, Ozawa & Auslander, 1991, Strebel & Lindegger, 1998). On this basis, researching constructions of adolescent masculinity in relation to the HIV risk behaviours and HIV-related psychosocial sequelae should be a serious and urgent research priority (Lindegger & Durrheim, 2003; Morrell, 2001c). Macphail (1998) notes that while South African youth have access to a good deal of information on HIV transmission there is a scarcity of knowledge on how sexuality is constructed by adolescents and what this implies for high risk behaviours or behaviour change.

The crisis in masculinity in South Africa is also centred squarely on the high prevalence of male-perpetrated violence against women and children. The high rates of acts of sexual and other forms of violence by adolescent males should also be noted (Messerschmidt, 2000). South Africa is considered to have one of the highest rates in the world of a country not at war for women abuse (Epstein, 1998; Wood & Jewkes, 1997). South Africa has one of the highest incidences of reported rape in the world, with over a million rape cases reported in a year (Morrell, 2001c). There is a high level of tolerance of rape, coercive or economically exploitative sex in many communities in South Africa and attitudes which blame the victim rather than the perpetrator (Morrell, 2001b). For example, interviews with pregnant adolescents from townships in KwaZulu-Natal has suggested that these young women experience violence from their partners if they refuse sex, request the use of condoms, use oral contraception or express concerns about HIV risks (Varga & Makubalo, 1996, cited in MacPhail, 1998). South Africa has one of the highest rates of violent death in the world and has one of the highest rates of firearm ownership (Morrell 2001a). Commenting on the pervasive trend of male-perpetrated violence in South Africa, Lorentzen (1998) suggests that men are positioned in 'cultures of violence' which construct male action without subjectivity, thus excusing men from taking responsibility for their actions (p. 89).

It is clear from the above discussion that in South Africa, masculinity, including adolescent masculinity, is in a valid state of crisis. This conclusion carries with it an imperative for focused and appropriate research on the constructions of masculinity in South African contexts. Commenting on the links between continued low condom use

among South African youth in relation to gender power imbalances, Macphail (1998) argues convincingly that the unique social norms and values affecting adolescents require localised research around gender constructions and subjectivities. There is also scope for further work on the process whereby young women internalise male notions of romantic love that includes coercive sex and violence as 'expressions' of love (MacPhail, 1998). She also argues that the pathways of resistance for young men and women to socially-scripted male domination requires further study given that neither young men or women interpret their identities in a consciously homogenous way (MacPhail, 1998).

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THEORETICAL POSITION**

#### **2.1. Paradigms**

The focus of this chapter is on developing lines of discussion and difference between the main approaches with the purpose of arriving at a tenable theoretical basis for this research. The approaches are not discussed chronologically, as these approaches have developed concurrently and each still have their proponents. Benwell (2003) contends that there are two dominant paradigms for theorising masculinity, 'masculinity as power project' and 'masculinity as identity project' (p. 8). He suggests that power is implicated in definitions of masculinity as a relational category, that is defined in a complementary or oppositional relationship to femininity, with an identity labelled as 'masculine' being the product of a discursive or ideological process. He proposes that while it seems to favour biological or essentialist accounts that rely on dichotomous categories of gender the identity paradigm can also be used in discourses of gender 'authenticity' that may be found in the men's movement end of masculinity studies or parallel women's publications. It is suggested that although these paradigms are somewhat helpful as a broad approach to the theoretical maelstrom, they offer a simple dichotomy that does not allow for the integrated approaches offered in recent work on masculinities. The discussion of theoretical approach will lead to the stated position of this research at the conclusion of this chapter.

#### **2.2. Sex differences and sociobiology**

Much empirical research has produced a 'catalogue' of gender differences which assumes an absolute and universal dichotomy between males and females (Lott, 1997). Claims of sexual dimorphism in capacities, interests and behaviours are supported in studies of visuospatial, mathematical and verbal abilities or perceptual preferences (Lott, 1997; Archer, 2004). However, the findings of such studies are frequently equivocal as they are

largely correlational and confounded by selection biases (Lott, 1997). The central assumption of this research has been the conflation of sex and gender – the conventional notion of two dichotomous universal gender entities that stand apart from language and cultural context (Edley & Wetherell, 1995). An innovative study by Kessler and Mckenna (1985 cited in Kimmel, 2000) presented adult subjects with two gender-ambiguous visual images which mixed biological sexual characteristics and cultural codes related to gender. The ‘acquired’ characteristics of gender presentation through cultural codes such as hair-length were given greater credence by subjects in defining gender than primary differences of sexual anatomy (Kimmel, 2000).

Supporters of sex difference research maintain that much of the social constructionist work has ignored the empirical evidence for biologically ‘hard-wired’ gender differences in addition to culturally and historically universal patterns of masculinity (Archer, 2004). One fairly compelling example is a recent study of vervet monkeys who at an early age exhibit a marked preference for play objects which match the stereotyped play objects associated with their gender for human children (Alexander & Hines, 2002, cited in Archer, 2004). This study does seem to support the notion of ‘hard-wired’ perceptual differences that stand apart from culture. Another recent study presented newborn babies with a face or mobile (equally matched along other dimensions) and recorded the infants’ eye movements (Connellan, Baron-Cohen, Wheelwright, Bakhti & Ahluwalia, 2000 cited in Archer, 2004). The male babies looked at the mobiles for significantly longer than they did the faces, whereas females exhibited a marked preference for the faces (Archer, 2004). While this is persuasive evidence for a biological substrate of perceptual biases across genders, it fails to account for what across the lifespan, is the massive influence of culture upon this substrate in the development of gender identities and behaviour.

It has been suggested that sex difference research is somewhat uninformed by the theoretical distinction between sex and gender, that is the primary sexual characteristics of maleness and femaleness, the biological ‘givens’, which may be less dichotomous than assumed, and the acquired social and cultural categories of gender constructed by practices within the gender order (Buchbinder, 1998). Simply opposing nature versus

nurture arguments as an equally opposed debate neglects the distinction between sex and gender and creates false dichotomies. Fausto-Sterling (2002) argues that sexual dichotomy has been reinforced by medical science whereas research into the physiological bases of sexuality suggests complex anatomical and physiological variations within the conventional categories of male and female. There is also much empirical research to support the idea of within-gender variations as well as similarities across genders, evidence which the hard-line sex difference proponents seem to ignore (Connell, 2002)

The sociobiological approach makes use of evolutionary analyses, ethnographic records and physical anthropology in its account of masculinity (Archer, 2004). Masculine risk-taking and sexual aggression may be understood in terms of biological selection pressures on males in competition for females (Archer, 2004). This superficial argument removes men from cultural processes and construes them as victims of the inherent incompatibility between an inherently promiscuous male sex-drive and women's search for partners with the maximum genetic efficiency. If culture is indeed, as Winnicott argued, the 'third space' between the interior and exterior worlds, the 'place in which we live', neglecting its role in gender is absolutely untenable (Applegate, 1990, p. 88).

Dunphy (2000) notes that although there are those who favour either nature or nurture explanations of gender, a third and widely accepted position is that the biological being and the social environment are part of a web of interaction that produce gender. Fausto-Sterling (2002) suggests that it is most useful to look for the pathways through which the biological differences have been co-determined by the social environment and in historical and evolutionary context. Connell (2002) also notes the definitional contradictions in gender research which ignore the patterns of difference within genders, finding which reveal a far greater range of difference within genders than between them. Most importantly however, is the need for a more adequate explanation of the interactive social, cultural and unconscious processes in the embodiment and enactment of masculinity.



### **2.3. Sex roles and gender schema theory**

Kimmel (2000) suggests that the idea of social roles gained popularity primarily as a result of the attempts to discredit biological arguments and substitute these arguments with a focus on social processes. Sex-role theory originates with Talcott Parsons and functionalist sociology, and posits universal and culturally-specific 'blueprints' for gender behaviour (Kimmel, 2000). The argument that the 'masculine personality' was an acquired role linked the subject with society and countered biological arguments (Carrigan et al., 1987). Parsons argued that although gender roles are unitary entities 'inhabited' by the subject, there exist options or socially-scripted choice points within a sex role, a point which subsequent role theories tended to neglect in favour of unitary notions from social learning theory. These unitary notions included sex roles, stereotypes, role-models, sex-typed behaviours and role expectations. Also based on social learning theory were flawed attempts at continuum measurements of gender such as the Terman and Miles M/F test (Edley & Wetherell, 1995). A gender continuum carries with it the problematic implication that individuals may be described as having 'too much' or 'too little' masculinity. This creates a discourse of surfeit and deficit which implies that masculinity and femininity are mutually exclusive and polarised personality traits (Haywood & Mac an Ghail, 2003).

Margaret Mead suggested that the content of roles and 'gender personalities' were culturally relative (Edley and Wetherell, 1995). Also a better explanation than later social learning role theories, this view still relied on a unitary notion of gender as a project about identity, and may have neglected the dynamics of power or individual differences in these 'gender personalities'. A contradiction within sex role theory is that while rejecting biological essentialism, it has largely remained attached to singular and normative definitions of gender within a macrosociological framework (Kimmel, 2000)

Gender schema theory may be considered an elaboration of role theory that places gender identity within the context of developmental change. Gender schema theory holds that the child's early gender-typed behaviour and the development of gender constancy arise from

a process whereby the child categorises self and others according to male or female cognitive schemas (Archer, 2004). Gender schema theory may be considered a 'mentalist' approach to roles which reconciled role theory with the 'first wave' cognitive psychology (Durrheim, 1997; Kimmel 2000). Archer (2004) notes that new research with infants suggests that sex-typed toy preferences, gendered eye contact and sex-typical language development may pre-date the development of schemas related to gendered social behaviour, with the implication of a pre-cognitive biological substrate for gender behaviour.

For Edley and Wetherell (1995), despite its macrosocial determinism, role theory usefully foregrounded social and cultural factors in accounting for gendered behaviour and development, and countered biological arguments. In a limited way it provided a *liberalist gender politics and highlighted the difficulties or 'role-strain' encountered by men in living by culturally mediated scripts of masculinity* (Edley & Wetherell, 1995). The argument around expectations, role conflict and cultural roles did allow for limited change in gender relations (Connell, 1995). A significant limitation of role theory was that although it recognised power and relationality in the 'scripting' of sex-roles, it failed to theorise these aspects adequately in its portrayal of static individuals inhabiting socially scripted unitary roles determined by the macrocontext (Edley & Wetherell, 1995; Kimmel, 2000). This neglected the role of gendered institutions within which individuals enact gendered subject positions and the possibility that an individual may move between contradictory roles or have unconscious conflicts with regard to the social prescription for gender.

#### **2.4. The social construction of masculinity**

Social constructionism is an account of meaning which has a strong connection with hermeneutics, structuralism, poststructuralism and, in particular Wittgenstein's critique of empirical psychology (Durrheim, 1997). Broadly, social constructionism assumes a sceptical position regarding universal meta-narratives, drawing particularly on the critiques of Derrida and Foucault (Durrheim, 1997; Kvale, 1996). Wittgenstein rejected

the objectivist extrapolation of meaning from the dual categories of cognitive processes and behavioural acts, replacing this with meaning established through social interaction and performance (Durrheim, 1997; Kvale, 1996). Thus, as an expression of postmodern thought, social constructionism collapses the modern dichotomy of the object of knowledge situated in the world as distinct from subjective images, replacing this with a new realism of intertextuality and interrelatedness (Bennewith, 2003; Kvale, 1996).

The critical psychology of men which has emerged over the last two decades draws heavily upon social constructionist views that identities are social, cultural and interactive processes that are more about 'doing' in the world rather than essential 'being' (Kimmel, 2000; Korobov & Bamberg, 2004). In keeping with epistemological assumptions which refute objective facts and unitary metanarratives, social constructionist accounts are concerned with the fluid and perspectival meanings of masculinity based on the indexical quality of language and performance (Bennewith, 2003; Durrheim, 1997). While there is no definitive social constructionism of masculinity, there is the tendency for social constructionist accounts to fall into one of two camps. The first camp emphasises the linguistic processes and the 'discursive dexterity' of conversational speakers in negotiating identity meanings (Haywood & Mac an Ghail, 2003; Korobov & Bamberg, 2004). Discursive psychology falls within this approach and is concerned with the rhetorical and argumentative organisation of discourse, with attention to the inconsistencies, contradictions and conversational resources which are used to manage 'interactive trouble' (Korobov & Bamberg, 2004). The second camp is a performative account which focuses on masculinity as an enacted identity by the 'agentive subject' (Haywood & Mac an Ghail, 2003; Korobov & Bamberg, 2004). Here, the concern is with the subject positions as accomplished in dialectical relation to the world. Through action in the world, positions are actively explored and negotiated for the purpose of self and world construction in the wider context of legitimisation and power (Korobov & Bamberg, 2004; Coyle & Walton, 2004). There have been calls for an integrated social constructionism that brings together attention to the interactive 'microgenesis' of identities with a perspective that favours the relational nature of identities in social institutions (Coyle & Walton, 2004).



Connell's broadly social constructionist account combines a critical analysis of capitalism with a deconstruction of patriarchy, premised on the view that gender occurs as a core quality of production through the benefits men accrue through the subjugation of women (Connell, 1987). Thus, economic power is intrinsic to gender relations, and it is shored up in practices of hegemonic masculinity, which serve to create the cultural capital to sustain patriarchy. Hegemonic masculinity is foremost the practice of masculinity which is considered 'acceptable' and the ideal, against which other forms of masculinity are measured, a cultural or social narrative of exemplary masculinity (Donaldson, 1993). Morrell (2001c) argues that the notion of hegemonic masculinity has proved particularly useful as disaggregation of the idea of modernist feminism that collectively all men hold the same power over women. Hegemonic masculinity is constructed against rival versions of masculinity indicating, counter to the idea of collective power, that power is exercised differentially among men and within specific configurations of the gender order.

## **2.5. Foucault and discourse analysis**

Foucault understood power as having a determining role in identity and introduced the term 'discourse' as the means by which power works through the production of subjects (Buchbinder, 1998; Gill, 2003). One reading of Foucault has suggested that discourses are domains that contain multiple meanings in institutional macrocontexts, a so-called 'culturalist' reading, whereas an alternative 'relational' reading has located discourses both in the interaction of the macrocontexts and microcontexts of places, times and individuals (Titscher, Meyer, Wodak & Vetter, 2000; Redman, 2001). Discourses are centred on units of meaning or epistemes that permit or prevent perceptions of the world and determine what can be spoken about, who can speak, and the time and place in which opinions may be expressed (Buchbinder 1998). Discourses may contain multiple ambiguous meanings with the effect that a discourse may contain sites of both power and resistance. These contradictions within discourses influence ways of thinking, knowing and acting in the world (Buchbinder, 1998). Masculinity is thus constituted by language-encoded constellation of discourses through which culture enables and allows subjects to

think (Buchbinder, 1998). The subject is thus a site for the intersection of many discourses, some of which may exist in contradictory relation to one another. In this way, Foucault accounts for the self as an interiorised social reality that is mutually constructed by an exteriorised social reality.

## **2.6. Critical debates in social constructionism**

Commentators on the interview research by Korobov and Bamberg (2004) have questioned whether applying terms such as 'hegemonic masculinity' or 'maturity' to the data reflects the concerns of the researcher rather than the participant, in that these terms are imposed upon the data (Speer, 2001b; Coyle & Walton, 2004). The rejoinder to this criticism is that fine-grained conversation analysis fails to account for the two-sided dialogic relationship between discourse and the speaking subject which is assumed by a social constructionism that foregrounds performance over speaking resources (Edley, 2001). The sufficiency of the data in itself, devoid of context or researcher interpretation, remains an area of debate in social constructionism.

It is suggested that social constructionism underestimates the unconscious aspects of human behaviour and thus fails to provide an entirely plausible account for the experience and constitution of gender at the deeper levels of consciousness (Horrocks, 1994). Frosh (1994) suggests that the concept of hegemonic masculinity does not adequately account for the possibility of subjectivities being experienced consciously, unconsciously and irrationally, and in opposition to imagined femininities.

Psychoanalysis provides explanations of identity that focus both on the significations and the contradictions in inner experience and the formative role of early relationships (Frosh, 1994). By attending to hidden and irrational processes, psychoanalysis provides a credible theory for the interpenetration of inner and outer being in a way that makes sense of the co-construction of reality by the subject and the social (Frosh, 1994).

While social constructionism contributes significantly in its portrayal of the way in which social processes set in place a range of identity positions within available cultural



discourses it sheds less light on how the individual arrives at their specific 'choice' among these identity positions or why the same individual may present with an identity position in one context and not another. For example, adolescent boys may present with more 'hegemonic' talk in focus group talk than they do in individual interviews (Frosh et al., 2002; Korobov & Bamberg, 2004). It is thus not sufficient to identify the individual as enacting or embodying a single identity position that is hegemonic, complicitous, subordinate or marginalised, given that at the level of personal subjectivity and in social interaction, individuals may draw on a variety of contradictory or ambiguous identity positions. For example, Kehily (2001) notes how the valorized and emphasised heterosexuality of peer group interactions was used by boys at secondary school to control and regulate ambivalent body-reflexive experiences at the individual level. Kehily suggests that this is not simply the embodiment of a unitary identity position within gender relations but a complex interweaving of social and subjective processes in the production of 'acceptable' masculinities. Similar support may be found in Edley and Wetherell's (1997) interview study with adolescent boys at a British independent school, which found little evidence for 'stable or consistent selves' within the participants' concerns. Instead, there existed a somewhat untidy process of 'instantiation' in which identities were accomplished in the textured rhetoric of the boys' conversational dialogues.

## **2.7. Psychoanalytic explanations**

Freud argued that gender identity is shaped by the tensions of innate drives, the sanctioning of society, visual recognition of anatomical difference and Oedipal identification with the same-sex parent at the phallic stage (Frosh, 1994). Feminist critics including Julia Kristeva and others have suggested that Freud's claims were misogynistic, presupposed heteronormativity and privileged male experience as normative (Hird, 2003). Feminist critique has also suggested that Freud privileged the phallic body in his account of the female's deduction of inferiority from visual comparison (Frosh, 1994). This carries the implication that the feminine is an acquired identity based on deficit, a failed form of masculinity (Edley & Wetherell, 1995). Hird (2003) however claims that a

feminist re-reading of Freud yields two distinct explanations of gender identity. The first is the more orthodox view that the pre-social body forms the basis for a 'healthy' resolution of the Oedipal complex in the direction of the 'sexual aim' of reproduction, the view that has been criticised for its phallogentric and heterosexist assumptions (Hird, 2003). The second explanation is based on Freud's later views that there exists a pre-Oedipal state of 'polymorphous perversity' where object choices are based on undifferentiated desire and predisposition towards bisexuality (Hird, 2003). This interpretation also allows for regressive or ambivalent identifications with same or opposite sex parents at the Oedipal stage, a position which emphasises an enduring ambivalence in what are always fragile gender identifications and heterogeneity of sexual desire (Hird, 2003; Frosh, 1994). What should not be overlooked is how radical Freud's sexual politics were for his time and that his theories were evolving hypotheses rather than fixed conclusions (Edley & Wetherell, 1995; Frosh, 1994).

Freud's theories of subject formation, gender and sexuality were radically revised in the work of Jacques Lacan who made the ambiguous claim that the social or cultural is both regulatory and constitutive of subjectivity (Frosh et al., 2003). Through language and self-recognition the meanings of subjects and objects are produced in an order of linguistic signs and representations (Kimmel, 2000). Gender is thus not only meaningful but is also the very structure of meaning itself. Lacan emphasises the paternal prohibitive (the non), attached to the name of the father, the 'nom', as a significant moment which creates a cultural subject by demanding a symbolic break in the illusions of narcissistic oneness with the mother, creating the 'Symbolic' (Frosh, 2002). At the 'mirroring' stage, a moment of mistaken self-identification in which the mother presents the child with her own vision, an illusion of wholeness that confines and protects the child in the realm of the 'Literal' (Frosh et al., 2003). The mirroring stage suggests a process whereby the ego is externally structured and identity becomes what is mirrored to it in social interaction (Frosh et al., 2003). This process, argues Frosh et al (2003), offers leverage on the question of how enculturation operates at the level of personal subjectivity and in early relationships. A limitation of the Lacanian system may be its emphasis on the subject as carried along by the cultural and linguistic processes

embedded in family life (Frosh et al., 2003). What it may contribute to a psychology of masculinity is a theory for the contradiction, anxiety, 'objectification' of women and representations of impossible 'hegemonic' or 'phallic' ideals (Adams & Savran, 2002).

The other major school of Freudian revisionism, Kleinian psychoanalysis and its elaboration in the work of Bion, describe subjectivity in terms of the intense mutual entanglement of mother and infant – a web of bodily sensation, phantasy, projective and introjective processes (Frosh, 2002). Critics notes that Kleinian 'mother-psychology' privileges mothering in an early primal scene involving only the exclusive maternal dyad, depicting the mother as the sole means by which the infant of either sex becomes an integrated subject (Frosh, 2002). Unlike the Lacanian 'father-psychology', Kleinian thought locates images of regulation not within the paternal limits in the relational triad, but within the mother as a means of containment (Frosh, 2002).

Object relations theory offers a grounded alternative to classic psychoanalytic drive theory and its revisionists by depicting subjectivity as the infant's alignment with the loved other and the sense of separateness received from the loved object (Frosh et al., 2003). Chodorow's work on the psychoanalysis of gender bridges the gap between the primacy of early relationships as emphasised by the object relationists, and the later processes of dis-identification with the primary caregiver and re-identification (in girls) or identification (for boys) with the same-sex parent (Rabinowitz & Cochran, 2002). Chodorow posits a qualitative difference in the relationships mothers build with male and female children based on the gender difference or similarity between caregiver and child (Rabinowitz & Cochran, 2002). By 'othering' the gender of their male infant, mothers reinforce an intensified ambivalence towards intimacy and 'soft' feelings of oneness (Edley & Wetherell, 1995). Chodorow also suggests that cultural contexts which exclude men from parenting during the early phases of life tend to reproduce male domination by requiring the disavowal of women to achieve a gender identity (Attwell, 2002). Chodorow explains masculinity as a negative identity which is premised on the boy's disengagement from the primary caregiver during the Oedipal stage. For boys, this process of renouncing the feminine involves intense loss, denial and grieving (Kimmel,



2000). For the male child, identification with the same-sex parent is combined with a devastating sense of abandonment, whereas, for girls, identity is established through re-identification and fusing with the primary caregiver (Kimmel, 2000). The boy is forced to relinquish and repress deeply held early identifications with the mother and must make a considerable effort to prove the successful accomplishing of this task (Kimmel, 2000).

Pollack suggests that the boy's repressed experience of abandonment amounts to a normative disjuncture in empathic holding (Rabinowitz & Cochran, 2002). This makes boys more vulnerable than girls to developing narcissistic compensatory self-structures because of the firming of ego boundaries and ambivalence related to dependency that the loss trauma creates (Rabinowitz & Cochran, 2002). For Benjamin (1995, cited in Frosh, 2002), it is not so much the loss of his mother that poses an emotional risk for the boy, as much as the challenge of finding an embodied father who is 'really there' for the boy in any form other than a symbolic prohibition. Benjamin suggests that 'over-inclusive' identification with either one of the parents leads to polarised gender development.

The value of these explanations is that they describe how cultural expectations are played out in the experience of early dependence, and how men and boys experience and suppress early grief and loss in a way that makes sense of male autonomy, the denigration of women and unconscious fears of intimacy (Rabinowitz & Cochran, 2002). The limitation is that psychoanalytic approaches may underestimate the cultural differences in child-rearing practices and gender expectations that contribute significantly to the environment of early childhood. Applegate (1990) argues that the traditional dyadic narrative of mother and child, and the Oedipal drama reflect a cultural pattern of family relations and infant caregiving. Super and Harkness (1994) suggest that development occurs in a culturally mediated developmental niche which includes the culturally relative physical and social settings and differentially organised customs and practices of child rearing. Studies show numerous examples of non-Western cultures in which children have access to multiple caregivers who may act as protective barriers to the patterns of triangulation which occur the Western nuclear family (Applegate, 1990). Roland (1996) suggests that a valid psychoanalytic paradigm should account for unique cultural

configurations in terms of their early relationships and holding environments. Critics of psychoanalysis have also noted a general neglect of diversity factors such as class, racial and ethnic diversities (Edley & Wetherell, 1995). Psychoanalytic formulations which equate heteronormativity with wellness or assume a single 'true' explanation for masculinity or assume that there is one preferable or healthy masculinity may also be problematic in that they do not allow for a diversity of possibilities for integration (Edley & Wetherell, 1995).

## **2.8. Dialogical theory**

The dialogical psychology of Hermans and his associates will be introduced here and discussed as a relevant approach to gender subjectivity. Narrative psychology may be seen to represent a major paradigm shift which reconceptualises the self and the subjectivity of knowledge. Lapsley (1996) argues that narrative psychology breaks with the mentalist perspective of the self as unitary, disembodied and outside language and replaces this with a notion of the self as relational and social. The self is constituted through multiple dialogues and retains a sense of coherence through the emplotments that unfold through time (Lapsley, 1996).

Literary philosopher, Mikhail Bakhtin proposes that living language is a two-sided, dialogical act between self and other (Day & Tappan, 1996). Authorship, he claims is a function of self and other with the self-as-author, considered a relation of simultaneity (Day & Tappan, 1996). Dutch narrative psychologists, Hermans and Kempen, take up Bakhtin's idea of the narratorial voice in their innovative theory of the 'dialogical self'. This theory draws upon ideas from William James, Heidegger and Mead to argue that the self is both subject and object, that it is social and that it is co-constructed as meaning in time and space (Hermans, 1989). The self is defined as a dynamic composite of fluid and relatively autonomous 'I' positions in an imaginal landscape, a co-construction of 'polyphonic narratives' which make sense of the world (Hermans, Kempen & van Loon, 1992). This is derived from Bakhtin's concept of the 'polyphonic novel', for example the

work of Dostoevsky, where opposed and heterogenous worlds are simultaneously represented (Hermans & Kempen, 1993).

Hermans and Kempen (1993) suggest that the dialogical self is characterised by the relative positionality of narrative voices both spatially and temporally within the fluid and embodied multiple self. In the dialogic conception of the self, positions are maintained only in relation to other positions (Saville, 2001) with coherence maintained by contradictory strivings towards centrifugal plurality and centripetal wholeness (Hermans & Kempen, 1993). Relationships among various speaking 'positions' in the self move along a horizontal plane in terms of their spatialisation and temporality, and in a vertical power structure of dominant voices and subjugated voices or subpersonalities (Hermans & Kempen, 1993; Saville, 2001). The self-system is thus itself a mobile power structure that may be challenged by new narrative speaking positions located in pastness or futurity (Crites, 1986). Bakhtin argues that each word spoken by an individual has a 'ventriloquial double-voicedness', an idea taken up in dialogical theory as the simultaneously individual and social quality of narrative speaking positions (Hermans & Kempen, 1993).

Dialogical theory provides a helpful postmodernist approach for reconceptualising the self that departs from the rationalistic or individualistic character of psychological theories of the self and a Western view of personhood (Hermans et al., 1992).

Conceptualised as a creative and interactive process, the self is seen to imaginatively occupy a plurality of positions which permit mutually dialogical relations (Hermans et al., 1992). From the dialogical perspective, subject positions may be said to shift and reorganise over time such that a multiplicity of meanings that are flexible and context-dependent are assembled into a composite and coherent whole (Hermans, 1989; Hermans & Kempen, 1993). Identity narratives, such as a person's gender identity narratives, are considered an amalgam of involvement with community, consensually experienced, social or imaginal (Hermans & Kempen, 1993). This accounts well for the social constructionist notion of multiple subject positions within discourse as such positions are experienced by the individual subject. The idea that the self occupies a plurality of

positions in real and imaginal space has much in common with the psychoanalytic argument that gender is embodied through fantasy and unconscious processes,

## **2.9. An integrated approach**

Approaches which provide useful and integrated theoretical frameworks arise from the gaps and dilemmas posed by the theories which have been discussed in this chapter. Wetherell and Edley (1999) are critical of Connell's notion of hegemonic masculinity on two accounts, firstly because they fail to recognise the psychosocial and discursive practices through which boys appropriate and negotiate hegemonic standards, and secondly because of the assumption that boys either conform to these standards or are located outside of them in marginalised, complicitous or subordinate positions. Instead, they contend, masculine identities develop as activities of meaning-making in the lived texture of talk-in-interaction, and subject positions that have a highly occasioned and situated nature which often allows opposing views to converge in the individual's lived experiences (Wetherell & Edley, 1999). Meta-analysis of other research adds support to the view that there exist complex relationships between beliefs and actions in which boys both accept and destabilise hegemonic masculinities (Frank et al., 2003). Similarly, the findings of Frosh et al's study point to a discrepancy between hegemonic presentations of self in focus group contexts and non-hegemonic presentations in individual interviews (coupled with rationalisations for assuming a non-hegemonic stance). An integrated explanatory framework is thus required to account for gendered practices that are relational, contradictory and multifarious and which account fully for the role of unconscious and social processes in the construction of situated subjectivities.

The integrated stance of Frosh et al. (2003) provides a suitable platform for such an integration with the starting point being that the individual subject cannot be conceived outside of social process, instead, there is a domain of personal subjectivity which exists in relation to what is inscribed through social discourses. This position integrates social constructionism with perspectives from psychoanalysis to address the explanatory gap in discursive psychology around inconsistencies in individual positioning within discourse

(Frosh et al., 2003). This integration sheds more light on how a particular individual inhabits unique range of identity positions within the available discursive repertoire (Frosh et al., 2002). It is suggested from this position that addressing the gaps, silences or other absences in conversational texts is a useful vehicle for conceptualising the unconscious processes and limits of conscious expression in the inscription of identities (Frosh et al., 2002).

Redman (2000) offers a very similar and complementary integration that proposes that a feminist-informed psychoanalysis which is read through a social constructionist approach affords a differentiated and nuanced description of mutually constitutive unconscious and social dynamics. From this perspective, suggests Redman, there exist multiple layers of investment in subject positions that include a simultaneously social and self-constructed 'imaginative sense' of interior and exterior worlds (p. 496). Elsewhere it is suggested that masculinities are forms of lived identity that are organised around the social and unconscious contradictions and the imperative to configure gender identity in a coherent way around these tensions (Redman, 1996).

The dialogical psychology of Hermans and associates provides a useful framework for theorising the self from a postmodern perspective and lends itself well in an eclectic integration with social constructionism and psychoanalysis to the exploration of masculinities as sites of dominant and emergent speaking positions. The embodied multiple self provides a basis for theorising the microgenesis of identities through the paradoxical relationship between social processes and the speaking subject (Wetherell & Edley, 1999). The voice-centred emphasis of dialogical theory also allows for the processes of intersubjectivity, instantiation and discursive accomplishment from a heterogenous narrative perspective.

## **2.10. Approach of this research**

The general orienting perspective of this study is the idea that masculinity is a project about power and identity, is fluid, contextual, multiple, constructed and sustained through



social and unconscious processes, is organised around narratives of the self in the world, fantasies and hegemonic standards, and exists in a dialogical relation to dominant, discordant and emergent speaking positions. In addition to this, it is acknowledged that while there may exist a biological substrate for some pre-cultural gender differences based upon tenuous assumptions of gender dichotomy, these are of little direct relevance to this research given the evidence for masculinity as a performative and relational identity. Masculinities are thus understood as overwhelmingly the product and producers of mutually interactive social and unconscious processes within the order of gender relations.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **ADOLESCENT MASCULINITIES**

#### **3.1. Approach**

This chapter focuses on adolescent masculinity and its contexts from a developmental perspective. In order to provide a background for this study, the relationship of adolescent masculinity with schools, sport, racialisation and consumerism are discussed in terms of recent research.

#### **3.2. Adolescence and identity**

A common conception of adolescence in developmental psychology is that it is a time of turmoil, a period of confusion, changing bodies, 'raging hormones', intense interest in the opposite sex and sexual experimentation (Epstein & Johnson, 1998; Head, 1999). Adolescence is also considered an optimal time for the formation of an 'identity' – a sense of self, incorporating one's history and what else is necessary for psychological health in adulthood (Sprinthall & Collins, 1988). The traditional view of adolescence in developmental theory will be discussed and critiqued from the perspective of discursive psychology.

Traditionally, adolescence is considered from a theory of development based on the idea of ages and stages (Epstein & Johnson, 1998). Three factors are commonly included in the developmental 'phase' of adolescence. First, the biological changes following puberty increase the possibility of sexual activity, which may create fears, anxieties and a sense of changes beyond one's control (Head, 1999). Second, adolescents are positioned as being at 'the age between' and may experience conflicting expectations especially now that the family as a primary transmitter of social values is undergoing major changes. The increasing prevalence of isolated nuclear family structures, single parent and dual earning families have made it more difficult for adolescents to cope with the unsettled role

expectations of this developmental phase (Wilson, 1985). Third, the adolescent has to go through what has been called the second individuation (Blos, 1962, cited in Head, 1999). In the transition from the play age to the school age, the child has to accomplish a first individuation in order to have sufficient confidence to leave the immediate protection of the family and venture into the school and peer-group activities (Erikson, 1985; Head, 1999). While the first individuation is a period of 'hatching' from the mother's protective boundary, the second individuation of adolescence may be called a 'shedding' of family dependencies, detachment of self from parental ties and immersion in the peer-group (Blos, 1979, cited in Lerner, 1987). At a psychodynamic level, the individuation process of adolescence involves tolerating the distress of parental object loss and seeking more mature object relations (Manaster, 1977). In order to accrue impetus towards the second individuation, adolescents may polarise the world and experience others as idealised or devalued – this may take the form of cult heroes or sports celebrities (Lerner, 1987). Behaviours which may have been strictly forbidden in childhood become available to adolescents with a consequent need to modify the super-ego and establish an ego ideal, that is a sense of who s/he is and who s/he would like to be (Manaster, 1977).

Erik Erikson's well-known theory of ego identity elaborates upon these traditional views of adolescence. For Erikson (1985), the critical issue during adolescence was the crisis of personal identity, that is a stable definition of oneself and how one is perceived by others, a crisis that unresolved, leads to identity diffusion. Erikson argued that the resolution of this is made all the more difficult by the over-extended period of dependency which exists in western society (Sprinthall & Collins, 1988). Erikson suggested that adolescents may occupy one of four positions in relation to the identity crisis – *pre-crisis*, these adolescents may be in a protective environment or less mature; *identity foreclosure*, in order to avoid the effort and discomfort of thinking about life's options, some adolescents may rush to a prematurely 'resolved' identity status (this can also be a temporary haven for some); *psychosocial moratorium*, a period in which society allows the adolescent to explore options until ready to enter the adult world; *identity resolution*, where the adolescent attains a higher level capacity to trust others, oneself and be committed to a cause (Sprinthall & Collins, 1988). The psychosocial moratorium may be functional to

society as a 'bridge' to adult commitment but in dislocated societies may lead to a negative identities premised on nihilism and escapism (Baumrind, 1975).

With regard to the traditional stance on adolescence in developmental psychology, Epstein and Johnson (1998) call to question the several assumptions of this view from the perspective of discursive psychology. The apparent 'storm and stress' of adolescence, they suggest may not exist apart from the social practices and discourses which mark as significant a 'stage' in a person's development towards 'maturity', they argue. Furthermore, in western society and at the same time as the emergence of schools as state-sanctioned social institutions, the categories 'adolescent' followed by 'teenager' emerge along with theories that posit universal experiences of adolescent being (Epstein & Johnson, 1998). The spurious notions of 'ages and stages' may simply decontextualise experience from the discursive practices that are embedded in cultures, including the cultural sense of how experiences are embodied (Epstein & Johnson, 1998). From a discourse perspective, Erikson's theory may simply represent dominant discourses of adolescence within western culture, such as the truism that these years in a person's life are de facto a 'phase' of upheaval and separation (Epstein & Johnson, 1998). The expectation that the identity resolution is preferable over a prolonged identity moratorium may be ideological in that well-adjusted individuals with resolved 'identities' fit easily into the capitalist status quo whereas disaffected students, political activists and others with unresolved 'identities' do not. The same may be true of those whose choices in sexuality may lead away from the heteronormativity of the 'intimacy versus isolation' stage that Erikson suggests is the primary crisis of early adulthood.

Phoenix (2004b) notes that developmental researchers have begun to move away from the core narrative of development as a natural, unfolding process of sequential developmental 'tasks' towards the idea of culturally-embedded, teleological self-transformation. Published in a journal of developmental psychology, a discourse-analytic study by Korobov and Bamberg (2004) takes up this idea of culturally embedded discursive accomplishment during adolescence. The adolescents in this study constructed meanings of maturity in terms of a 'developmental imperative' to display their

'readiness' in the changing cultural milieu of the peer-group. Here, boys negotiated the challenge of 'displayed readiness' through clusters of 'problem behaviours' such as risk-taking, displayed toughness and emphasised heterosexuality (Korobov & Bamberg, 2004).

A particularly important aspect of discursive accomplishment is described as 'non-relational sexuality', a cluster of hegemonic norms. These hegemonic norms included perceiving sexuality as 'sport' or lust; an objectification of girls as sexual partners, and tendencies towards trophyism, voyeurism and emphasised heterosexuality (Korobov & Bamberg, 2004). Further to this was a marked tendency of boys to emphasise the physical attractiveness of girls in peer-group conversation, a tendency that for the purposes of later discussion shall be termed 'lookism'. Managing these hegemonic norms of sexuality in the peer group context becomes an important window towards accomplishing the developmental imperative and the findings suggest, form a significant area of conflict for adolescent boys as they need to manage an appearance of orientating openly towards emphasised heterosexuality while at the same time not appearing to be naïve, desperate or shallow (Korobov & Bamberg, 2004). These findings have been contested by Coyle and Walton (2004) who claim that they do not reflect a valid participant orientation. Findings of Frosh et al (2002) do however support the view that despite the apparent camaraderie of male peer groups, the need to constantly prove oneself as 'acceptably masculine' is experienced by many boys as anxiety-provoking and alienating. In a related way, Lasser and Thoringer (2003) propose the term 'visibility management' as the means by which sexual minority youth handle perceptions of sexual orientation in peer group contexts. This refers to a vigilance around appearing heterosexual in the peer group context while being able to come out in relationships where trust has been established.

Despite the resistance of empirical stalwarts such as Archer (2004), the appearance of social constructionism as a status nascendi of developmental psychology has been seen as a welcome and significant move (Coyle & Walton, 2004). Emerging areas of developmental psychology are turning more to linguistic processes (Phoenix, 2004b) and social constructionism is seen as having a radical potential to shed new light on old



problems in the field of human development (Coyle & Walton, 2004). For example, two useful conclusions from Korobov and Bamberg (2004) are first, that adolescence is a time in which males act on an imperative to reconstitute their identities in visibly heterosexual ways and second, that the improved linguistic skills or ‘discursive dexterity’ during adolescence allow persons to increase and vary their linguistic positioning strategies to manage self-presentations.

### **3.3. Adolescent masculinity in the school context**

In developed countries there has been a burgeoning of research into the construction of adolescent masculinities in school contexts, fuelled by concerns over boys’ apparent underachievement in schools (Frosh et al., 2002; Korobov & Bamberg, 2004; Mac an Ghail, 1994). In South Africa and other developing contexts there is a need for more research on adolescent masculinity, in particular in relation to schooling, violence and health-risk behaviour (le Grange, 2004; Morrell, 2001a). Researchers note that schools are more than places of formal learning – they are sociocultural spaces in which gendered subject positions are produced in relation to hegemonic standards (Haywood & Mac an Ghail, 2003; Mac an Ghail, 1994; Phoenix, 2004a). The main argument of several researchers is that schools are generally deeply heteronormative and that within school ‘microcultures’, relations of gendered domination and subordination are constructed (Mac an Ghail, 1994; Epstein, 1999; Korobov & Bamberg, 2004). These ‘microcultures’ include the material, social and discursive relationships among students, management and educators (Mac an Ghail, 1994). It is argued that as construction sites for masculinities, the microcultures of South African schools need to be understood within the broader political and historical context of education in this country.

In his extensive educational research at secondary schools in Britain, Mac an Ghail (1994) draws attention to what are called the ‘constitutive cultural elements’ that inform the dominant modes of adolescent masculinity in the school context. Mac an Ghail found that these elements were marked by ‘contextual contingency’, that is, they were presented differentially across the microcontexts of the school. These elements comprised

forms of a compulsory and contradictory heterosexuality; and practices of homophobia and misogyny that were marked by ambivalence (Mac an Ghaill, 1994).

South Africa's schools have been officially racially integrated for over ten years, the complete desegregation of schools has yet to occur, with many formerly 'white' schools remaining demographically unproportional, as indeed many formerly 'black', 'Indian' or 'coloured' schools (Morrell, 1998a). Continued difficulties of desegregation have included violent confrontation between white and black learners, or between black and Indian learners in various school contexts (Morrell, 1998a).

While corporal punishment was banned in South African schools from 1996, a legacy of rigid 'discipline' remains a feature of some of the more traditional schools (Morrell, 2001a). Many of KwaZulu-Natal's oldest schools were single-sex, boarding institutions based on the Rugby model of English public school (Morrell, 1998a). Originally situated in metropolitan areas, such schools served to brutalise and prepare young white men in a way that supported the violent interpersonal relations in the Natal Colony (Morrell, 1998a). While the colonial encounter is an intricate one, it is feasible to argue that the tough disciplinary regimens and peer cultures of these schools served to construct a white masculinity around norms of performative toughness, competitiveness, emphasised heterosexuality and exclusionary hierarchies along divisions of age, academic success and sporting competence (Epstein, 1997). In interviewing educators at formerly white schools, Attwell (2002) found that rugby was the sport most associated with an acceptable 'white' masculinity. In one such school a polarised tension was evident between the white rugby players and black soccer players, with the formal culture of the school according status to rugby coaches and their players (Attwell, 2002). Interviews with educators also suggested that the single-sex 'rugby schools' were considered by those outside of these contexts to provide a gold standard of acceptable masculinity (Attwell, 2002).

Schooling for most South African adolescents does not take place in private schools or the elite formerly white 'Model C' schools (which tend to be 'single-sex' institutions) but

in township and rural co-educational secondaries. Most schools are under-resourced, have inadequate facilities, have inadequate support for educators and the history of violence and deprivation that occurred under apartheid (Blackbeard, 1993; Morrell, 1998b). Violence in schools has been identified as a major problem with particular prevalence in township schools (Morrell, 2001a). A study of 10 Durban township secondary schools by the Independent Projects Trust found that 90% of schools experienced gang-related conflict and violence (Morrell, 1998b). While township schools are reportedly one of the most high risk places in the world for rates of HIV infection, silence around HIV issues is entrenched in peer group cultures which include male domination at a conscious and unconscious level, and emotional silence around disclosure and sex talk (Morrell, 2001b; Thorpe, 2002).

Relevant to the purposes of this research is the need to investigate the construction of behaviours around violence, risk-taking and sexuality in the microcultural contexts of schools (Mac an Ghail, 1994; MacPhail, 1998). Such enquiry should also attend to the means by which problematic standards of masculinity are resisted and contested by emergent alternatives for hegemonic practices in schools (MacPhail, 1998).

### **3.4. Adolescent masculinities and homophobia**

Several studies have focused on how school-based peer-group cultures produce sites for the enactment of specific forms of heterosexual masculinity (Nayak & Kehily, 1996; Redman, 1996; Epstein, 1997; Redman, 2000; Kehily, 2001). Studies suggest that the high school is positioned at the dynamic entry into early adulthood heterosexuality, and acts as an context for homophobic practices which serve to support a defended and displayed heterosexual masculinity (Epstein, 1997; Kehily, 2001). This emphasised heteromascularity is linked with non-relational sexuality and an embodied physicality, toughness and competence (Korobov & Bamberg, 2004; Nayak & Kehily 1996; Kehily, 2001; Frosh et al., 2002). Emphasised heteromascularity may be enacted in expansive and competitive ways with young men employing physical presence, tone of voice and verbal repartee to as a means to 'look big' (Nayak & Kehily, 1996). Homophobia may

also manifest as disruptive and jokey peer group behaviour around instances of 'softer' same-sex interactions (Frosh et al., 2002); anti-lesbian and gay talk in the peer group (Redman, 2000) and pseudo-hostile name-calling or homophobic harassment (Nayak & Kehily, 1996; Redman, 1996). These may be considered simultaneously social and unconscious processes to negotiate and regulate relations within peer group microcultures (Redman, 2001).

Applied within the context of queer theory, Julia Kristeva's concept of abjection sheds further light on these unconscious and social processes. Queer theory conceptualises sexual power as a constitutive element of social life, embedded at various levels of social life, including areas not ordinarily associated with sexuality (Pascoe, 2005). In addition to homophobic practices and misogyny, the concept of abjection has been applied to issues of racialisation, racism and other areas where the identities are created through the paradoxical invocation and repudiation of identities that are cast out of socially recognisable categories (Hook, 2004; Pascoe, 2005). As with race, argues queer theorist Judith Butler (1993, cited in Pascoe, 2005), gender is constituted by the iteration of 'abject identities' within acceptable subjectivity, and then its repudiation to a position of a 'constitutive outside'. The invocation of homophobia within a context of gender 'acceptability' serves to create and reaffirm what the acceptable subject position is against the threat of failed, unrecognisable otherness, the presence of which must be continually set outside the boundaries of acceptability (Pascoe, 2005).

Studies converge on the idea that homophobia operates at an unconscious and social level that define and produce hegemonic heterosexualities through imagined heterosexual futures, displays and projections of sexual fantasies within the peer-group and subordinating femininities and masculinities outside of the hegemonic standard (Renold, 2003; Redman, 2000; Frosh et al., 2002). Studies also suggest that, as a social and unconscious process, homophobia serves to police the boundaries of performative gender and maintain the 'heterosexual assumption' that supports dominant gender relations by privileging certain configurations of opposite-sex relationship and shaming alternative positions outside this assumption (Redman, 2000; Renold, 2003).

Following from this, it is suggested that homophobia occurs as a form of collective practice that sets in place emerging forms of sexual identity and practice. Unconscious processes are seen as mutually constitutive of discourse, social relations and lived identities in the social environment. These unconscious dynamics go beyond the explanation of avoidance and projection embedded in repressed early object-choices to encompass threats to the fantasy of autonomous phallic power (Redman, 2000). They also include the invocation and repudiation of abject identities in social interaction (Pascoe, 2005).

### **3.5. Adolescent masculinities and sport**

Connell (1995) has suggested that sport is fast becoming the 'leading definer of masculinity' in global western culture. Edwards (2003) argues that in consumer society where masculinities are driven by product labels, meanings of masculinity are 'fought over in the playing, spectating and consumption of sport' (p. 143). Sporting celebrities are used emblematically in popular culture to represent racial and class masculinities and emerging consumer identities (Ramsey, 2003; Wheaton, 2003). Increasing involvement of girls in traditionally boys-only sports has also challenged received notions of gender in sport (Kimmel, 2000).

In relation to adolescent masculinity, studies have suggested that sporting code identifications play an important role in constructing hegemonic and counter-hegemonic practices (Attwell, 2002; Frosh et al., 2002; Mac an Ghail, 1994). In Edley and Wetherell's (1997) interviews with middle adolescents at a single-sex school, rugby players were advantaged within the school's awards system and were seen to occupy positions of formal and informal power. The identities of the rugby players were also contested by some of the other boys who defined themselves from a negative identity position as being unlike the 'hard' rugby players. The Frosh et al (2002) interview study was with 245 early adolescent boys and 27 girls from a range of British schools. This study suggested that sport was linked with discourses of gender difference, and was seen as a means by which boys could be defined as tough and active. The girls in the study



identified sportiness and humour as attractive qualities in a boy with football as a key definer of acceptable masculinity for both boys and girls in a range of schools.

The important link between sport and adolescent masculinity is provided by the concept of non-relational sexuality, as an important psychosocial stage in male adolescence (Korobov & Bamberg, 2004). The meta-analysis of several studies of non-relational sexuality suggests that it includes an experience of sexuality as lust or sport, and is focused compulsively on voyeurism, hypersexuality and trophyism (Korobov & Bamberg, 2004). Speculatively, sport as participation and sexuality at this stage appear to converge on the idea of contestation, performative competency and visible markers of success. Sport as spectatorship may have an interesting link with the trophyism and voyeurism that marks the stage of non-relational sexuality, a theme which will be taken up further in this study.

For many young men in KwaZulu-Natal soccer is a passionate way of life, evidenced by high levels of participation in soccer clubs and spectatorship through public attendance at soccer matches and the watching of televised games as a regular feature of weekend life (le Grange, 2004). The Shosholoza AIDS project, a peer education initiative which targets adolescent boys aged 15 to 18, trained members of eight soccer clubs to act as peer educators around HIV information and prevention (le Grange, 2004). The evaluation of this project suggests that it was particularly effective in its partnership with soccer clubs in promoting a message of HIV prevention (le Grange, 2004). This was mainly because soccer provided a context for the project that appealed to adolescent boys because it was fun and 'cool' (Ruxton, 2004a). Research suggests that for black adolescent boys in particular, soccer may present a distraction from social stressors (Ratele, 2001); a substitute for the traditional activities of stick-fighting and herding (Moodie, 2001) and a basis for a hegemonic masculinity based on bodily skill and 'clever feet' (Morrell, 2001c). Through much of the developing world, soccer has become the sport of the formerly colonised and may be represented as a narrative of individual triumph over racism or poverty (Archetti, 1999; Ruxton, 2004a).

Research in the formerly white Model C schools suggests that sport also operates as 'microculture' for establishing hegemonic standards of 'acceptable masculinity' (Attwell, 2002; Bennewith, 2003). A recent case study analysis of boys-only boarding schools identifies a hegemonic standard organised around hierarchy, achievement, homophobic performances, a discourse of 'toughness' and homosociality all linked to competitive rugby (1998). In an interview study with educators, Attwell (2002) found that rugby was privileged as the hegemonic standard of white masculinity, with the 'black sport' of soccer relegated to a subordinate position within school hierarchies. Historical studies of rugby in KwaZulu-Natal have traced the racialisation of the game to the turn of the twentieth century when rugby was introduced as the 'sport of respectable whites' with soccer accorded a stigmatised status as the sport of 'the lower classes and blacks' (Morrell, 1996).

### **3.6. Racialisation and race subjectivities**

Racialisation may be defined as a process of signification 'whereby social significance is attached to human features providing a basis for social categorisation' (Foster, 1993, cited in Hook, 2004, p. 675). Thus, racialisation occurs much as with Connell's (1995) description of masculinity as a 'socially structured bodily fantasy' – as with the construction of gender, racialisation may be a process of cultural signification within dominant discourses (Epstein, 1999). Applying a critical perspective, it is also important to consider the tendency in masculinity studies either to treat race and gender as separate identity spheres or to subsume gender under the standard of race (Archer, 2001). The effect of this, argues Archer, is that questions of masculinity may be primarily addressed with reference to whiteness and issues involving black masculinities are situated with culture or race rather than gender.

Mac an Ghail's (1994) groundbreaking work on black masculinities in British schools raises questions of peer-group culture, contestation and macroeconomics in the interplay of race and gender. This study shows how immigrant youth actively construct a black masculinity in a survivalist peer-group culture based on the expectation of low-skilled

work and limited opportunities in adult life (Morrell, 1998a). 'Inversions' of dominant white masculinities develop behind the protective curtain of a peer-group microculture which acts as a source of power in a social order that disempowers on the basis of gender and race (Morrell, 1998a).

Hemson's study of Zulu-speaking lifesavers in Durban (2001) also highlights the role of peer-group microculture, an imagined future in the labour market and cultural identification in the development of a local young black masculinity. A striking feature of this study is the emergence of a unique configuration of identity practices from an array of discourses. The ukuzithemba (self-confidence) of the traditional Zulu warrior, the ukubekezela (patience) of the amaKholwa (Christian convert) and the violent township masculinity of the freedom struggle each contribute to the lifesavers' situated subjectivities (Hemson, 2001). From these options emerges a common masculine identity that creates possibilities for these young men to break away from the active hostility, limited work opportunities and high risks of township life. Earlier traditions of endurance and self-affirmation are used towards a redefined emergent masculinity which enables these young men to move beyond a disadvantaged context (Hemson, 2001). While these African lifesavers are faced with racism that undermines their professional identity, they find in the fusion of ukuzithemba and ukubekezela a means to endure this challenge (Hemson, 2001). This study shows that black masculinities are emerging as microlevel sequelae of macropolitical change and cultural transition, a conclusion shared by other studies of young black men in South Africa (Stevens & Lockhat, 1997; Selikow, Zulu, & Cedras, 2002; Moosa, Moonsamy & Fridjhon, 1997). These and other studies point towards contested and multiple meanings of masculinity located in the competing life worlds and legacies of black South Africans. In a context of emergence and social transformation, an essential identity labelled as the 'black man' becomes a contested and changing domain (Ratele, 1998).

The term 'racialisation' features significantly in the extensive study by Frosh et al. (2002). They define 'racialisation' as a process whereby images or discourses of racial identities become strongly intertwined and invested in the ways in which adolescent boys

experience and enact masculinities. How the boys define themselves in terms of 'blackness', 'Asianness' and 'whiteness' intersect with constructions of cultural diversity in generating situated masculine identities (Frosh et al., 2002). These researchers note that many of the boys in the study invest energy in attempting to appropriate, disavow or compete with racially positioned masculinities. Black adolescent males, for example, are constructed by others as more likely to embody the cool, tough and sporting characteristics of popular masculinity, with several white boys appropriating for themselves attributes associated with 'black masculinity' such as the iconic trappings of a 'cool pose' (Frosh et al., 2002). For other white boys, there is an explicit normalising of 'white style' against black boys. The black boys are 'racialised' as having a superior physicality and flashy fashion style whereas subjective 'whiteness' wears the label of unmarked 'normality' (Frosh et al., 2002). These researchers note the concerns for 'race', racism and ethnicity expressed by these young men as issues that are deeply emotional and infused with the pain of inclusion and exclusion (Frosh et al., 2002). These processes have much in common with the abject identities and 'border-anxiety' proposed by within Kristevan-influenced queer theory (Pascoe, 2005). Here, as with Hook's analysis of racism (2004), race is invoked and repudiated with all the visceral impetus of unconscious projection in order to regulate the boundaries of racial and gendered acceptability.

### **3.7. Commodified masculinities**

Recent studies of masculinity in the media have converged on the idea that male identities are increasingly based on consumption, a trend which has displaced previous constructions of masculinity that were based on images of production as work (Osgerby, 2003; Alexander, 2003; Tanaka, 2003). The new image of the male as a visible consumer has also displaced what have previously been areas reserved for women, style consciousness and consumer hedonism (Osgerby, 2003). In a culture of consumerism, gender identities are indexed through purchased sets of images, meanings and myths about gender that encourage men to think and 'do' gender in a specific way (Dunphy, 2000). Lifestyle magazines, for example, act as 'membership cards' for configurations of



meaning, and a stacked set of identificatory gear which serve to fetishise the identity position represented by the lifestyle masculinity (Wheaton, 2003). The enactments which gather around brand labelled clothing or leisure lifestyles act as a means by which identity positions may be practiced and shared.

In South Africa, identities have been transformed by changing material realities at the intersection of race, class and ethnicity from which have emerged new and unpredictable constructions masculinities (Epstein 1998; Morrell, 1998a) The emergence of a black middle class and a new social mobility has also meant a diversification of meanings around black masculinity with the idea of a unified black manhood, a rallying call during the liberation struggle, can no longer be deemed a single or essential category, with there being no one definitive experience of blackness (Ratele, 1998; Morrell, 1998a; Moosa, Moonsamy & Fridjhon, 1997). Studies of black youth during the late 1990s, found a changing pattern of dialect, dress codes and recreational activities associated with a move to greater individualism and identification with western consumer culture (Stevens & Lockhat, 1997; Selikow et al. 2002). These studies also suggest that hegemonic standards among township youth were constructed around visible consumption, particularly fashionable clothes, mobile phones and luxury cars (Selikow et al., 2002). This emphasis on visible consumption has been linked to a discourse of contestation and the financial contractuality in relationships. Thorpe's (2002) study in two township schools revealed similar notions of dominant masculinity among adolescent learners. The dominant discourse of masculinity among these learners included the idea of financial contractuality in relationships (Thorpe 2002).

Educational studies have suggested that engagement with the digital technologies including information technology and electronic entertainment follows gendered pathways (Rowan, Knobel, Bigum & Lankshear, 2002). Health research has linked consumption of the electronic entertainment industry with obesity and associated health risks (Rowan et al., 2002). Media and digital entertainment for adolescents has also become a site for gender discourses, with a heterogenous 'girl power' discourse being made available through games and films – a discourse which permits girls independence



and self-assertion – although with a demand for an impossible physical ideal (Rowan et al., 2002). Similarly, boys may be caught between competing media discourses and may be torn between images of being ‘nice boys’ or being ‘bad boys’ (Rowan et al., 2002).

### **3.8. Integration**

This chapter has critically discussed traditional approaches to adolescence from the perspective of discursive psychology. It is argued that a social constructionist approach to adolescent development is preferable to a conventional ‘ages and stages’ approach such as Erikson’s ego identity theory. The assumptions that adolescence is of necessity a ‘phase’ of turmoil or that it is a biologically determined ‘phase’ of development are questioned from a discursive perspective. The ideas of ahistorical, universal developmental ‘phases’ and ‘tasks’ is replaced with the view that cultural processes are dialectically involved in the transformation of self across the lifespan. Developmental imperatives are understood as teleological processes that are at once social and subjective. For adolescent boys, a key developmental imperative may be the anxiety-provoking need to prove oneself acceptably masculine in the peer-group microculture. This imperative may include non-relational sexuality, visible heterosexuality and a ‘displayed readiness’ or appearance of maturity. From a social constructionist perspective, adolescence is a time when males act on a developmental imperatives and have the improved linguistic skills or ‘discursive dexterity’ to vary linguistic positioning strategies.

As a background to this research, the relationship of adolescent masculinity with schools, sport, racialisation and consumerism were discussed in terms of recent studies. Schools are widely considered as sociocultural spaces in which masculinities are produced in relation to hegemonic norms. Microcultures within schools are its material, social and discursive relationships and include the student peer-group and interactions with educators, the school’s management and administration. Mac an Ghail (1994) introduces the concept of ‘constitutive cultural elements’ with reference to schools that are organised around compulsory heterosexuality, homophobia and misogyny. The South

African contexts of schooling are unique and diverse with relevant issues including desegregation, rigid 'disciplinary' codes, violence at a number of levels, the racialisation of school sport, a history of deprivation and high rates of HIV infection in a male-dominated peer microculture. Problematic standards of masculinity related to behaviours around violence, risk-taking and the male-sex drive discourse are areas that require further enquiry.

Homophobia was discussed as a multi-faceted and complex process of regulating gender acceptability within peer group microculture. It is a gendered process that regulates the boundaries although social interaction and unconsciously through the paradoxical invocation and repudiation of abject identities and the privileging of normative heterosexuality over alternative sexualities.

Sport was discussed as a leading definer and microculture for the construction of adolescent masculinity at material, social and representational levels. Studies suggest that sporting code identifications can play an important part in the construction of hegemonic or counter-hegemonic practices. As a hegemonic discourse, involvement with sport, as a participant, spectator or consumer, may reinforce hegemonic behaviours and attitudes such as non-relational sexuality, toughness and winner-loser contestation. As a counter-hegemonic discourse, sport may offer release from social stressors, a context for changing perceptions of masculinity and a substitute for traditional activities in a context of social change. An example of this is the Shosholoza AIDS project which involved soccer clubs in an effective peer education initiative for boys aged 15 to 18.

Racialisation is considered a process of cultural signification within dominant discourses and intersects with cultural and gendered identities. Studies have found that in school microcultures, racial significations intersect with masculinity to produce areas of strong investment or anxiety around 'acceptable' subject positions. Race may be invoked and repudiated in order to maintain, acquire or defend a subject position, and may receive powerful impetus from unconscious processes of projection, splitting or disavowal.

Changing material realities in South Africa and the global trend towards consumer culture has reshaped hegemonic standards of masculinity around consumption. Consumer identities are reinforced by the discourse of non-relational sexuality and the obsession with physical appearance that may occur with it. Media discourses put pressure on boys to achieve an impossible physical ideal or to maintain an appearance based on visible consumption.

## CHAPTER FOUR METHODOLOGY

### 4.1. Rationale for this research

It is clear from the review of literature that adolescent masculinity is a valid, relevant and important research priority, particularly in South Africa where adolescent masculinity has been linked with a range of risks including HIV transmission and gendered violence. Such research is important as problematic constructions of masculinity have been linked with areas of risk including academic underachievement, unsafe sexual practices, substance abuse and mental health challenges, sexual harassment, bullying and violence. Researching adolescent masculinity in schools has important implications for educational policy and praxis, mental health practice, social work practice, primary preventative health projects and other contexts where the health and well-being of adolescent boys is an important issue. To date, there has been not been sufficient local research of the type undertaken in developed countries of adolescent masculinity in its most immediate sociocultural context, the school, and in relation to hegemonic norms within school microcultures. The result is that there is a need to research the constructions of masculinity that are emerging in the changing contexts of South African schools as there has been insufficient investigation of the 'constitutive cultural elements' of local schools or the relationship of these elements with homophobia, racialisation and other practices. On this basis, it is argued that it is appropriate to conduct research in local school contexts and that uses a method to facilitates contextual 'lived experience' within microcultures and other sociocultural contexts.

The contexts of South African schools are fairly diverse, with settings including the elite private schools, the formerly white 'Model C' schools, mixed urban secondary schools, township secondary schools and rural secondary schools, and for this reason, it is argued that the population being studied should be drawn from at least two of these contexts. It was apparent that, with some exceptions, research on adolescent masculinity in schools



the population most dealt with has been in the age range of early adolescence (12 to 14 years). This has been particularly so in research from developed countries, perhaps because the academic 'underachievement' of boys is a pressing concern that appears to affect this age group the most. It is suggested that in South Africa, where pressing concerns are around HIV transmission and gendered violence, it may be more justifiable to research those in the middle years of adolescence (15 to 18), given that this age group is more often though not exclusively targeted in HIV and gender violence prevention campaigns. In general, both locally and internationally, less masculinity research has been done with the middle adolescence age group than with the early adolescents, indicating a research need in that direction.

A further justification for this research is the need for a developing theoretical base for local research which has been somewhat over-reliant on Connell's social analysis of gender to the neglect of the more intricate formulations from research done in other countries. It is proposed that while not abandoning all that Connell's formulation has to offer (for example, hegemonic masculinity) a better theoretical formulation would draw on 'culturalist' social constructionism with insights from psychoanalysis, queer theory and the dialogical theory of self. Such formulations may be found in some of the recent research on adolescent masculinities as discussed in the review of literature, and provide a basis for explaining 'microgenesis' of identities as a simultaneously social and unconscious processes within the gender order. This theory base would provide a refreshing look at masculinity that accounts more fully for the subjectivity of gender and not just the construction of gender subject positions. At the level of subjectivity, it may be an important question to identify the means by which some adolescent boys are able to distance themselves from problematic hegemonic standards, both in justifying theory but also as a practical question that might better inform projects that seek to foster counter-hegemonic practices. The theory emphasis on positionality, enactment and multi-voiced situatedness of masculinity is also a justification for a research method that facilitates valid and contextualised participant responses.



## **4.2. Aims of this research**

The overall aim of this study was to explore the constructions of masculinity of adolescent boys between the ages of 15 and 18 in relation to their lived experience in school microcultures and other social contexts. The main research problem was to understand how, in microcultural contexts, adolescent boys between the ages of 15 and 18 were positioned in dialogical relation to the hegemonic standards and interpret the challenges and means by which boys subjectively manage a distance from hegemonic norms. The major objectives of the study were (a) to identify constructions of hegemonic standards by adolescent boys; (b) to examine individual positioning towards these dominant norms of masculine performance; (c) to interpret challenges faced by boys in positioning themselves according to dominant norms; (d) to identify alternative or subordinate masculinities which are distanced from hegemonic norms and how these distances are managed; and (e) to explore the multivoiced performance of masculinity across school microcultures and other social contexts.

## **4.3. Research design**

The research problem centred on issues of subjectivity and meaning – how adolescent boys positioned themselves in relation to hegemonic norms; what the subjectively constructed hegemonic norms were; what the challenges of hegemonic standards were and how some boys might be able to manage their distance from these standards. A qualitative approach was the methodological approach for this research, based on the premise that a fairly open-ended exploration of subjectivity and meaning is appropriately matched with a methodology which affords an authentic understanding of people's experiences (Silverman, 2001).

Informed by a theoretical concern with the 'situatedness' of identities or multivocal speaking positions, the overall aim and research problem were centred on the need for contextual, 'lived' experience within the microcultures of schooling and in a broader sociocultural milieu. In answering this need, a visual research method called photo-

narrative was chosen which uses photographs produced by participants during everyday living in combination with semi-structured interviews and focus groups. This method will be discussed in greater detail further on but it should be noted that although framed with a qualitative methodology, the analysis of data incorporated both quantitative and qualitative methods applied both to visual texts, interview transcripts and extracts. Silverman (2001) argues that using mixed method approaches within a qualitative design can be practical and can enhance the reliability of a study. The use of exclusively qualitative methods leaves open the possibility that the researcher has used only selected fragments of data to support his or her argument, even when deviant cases are cited and explained (Silverman, 2001). Triangulating qualitative research with some quantification can enhance credibility and offer a means to survey the complete 'corpus' of data that may be lost in an intensive qualitative data analysis, argues Silverman (2001). Quantification as simple as tabulation or counting techniques may enhance the reliability of the study and richness of the research findings (Silverman, 2001). A combination of visual and interview data was considered most appropriate to the aims as the photographic data allowed access for researcher and participant into the microcultures and sociocultural context and the data from interviews that were anchored in the visual texts allowed access to the gendered subjectivity of the participants in the context of 'lived experience'.

In approaching the research problem, it was important to consider that in South Africa, the populations of adolescent boys and their contexts of schooling are very diverse, and that within the resources available for this study it would be impossible to attend to the full range of diversity in all contexts. Therefore, it was decided that focusing on two schools with a fair range of cultural, linguistic and contextual diversities would provide a window into validly addressing the research problem within the scope of the study and its resources. Lindegger (2003) has suggested that it is rural schools and the 'desegregated' former Model C schools that provide particular contexts for problematic masculinities, conclusions that are supported in recent research (Attwell, 2002; Bennewith, 2003). On this basis, a secondary school in a rural setting and a former Model C school were selected for this study, with the view that providing some comparison between participant responses from both contexts would better inform the analysis of responses within each

context. Although this limited the potential findings to the populations being studied, a research priority was for the study to be replicable in other populations of adolescent boys in other school contexts. It should also be noted that the findings from this study would be potentially generalisable or transferable to other similar contexts (Ulin, Robinson, Tolley & McNeill, 2002).

#### **4.4. Data collection methods**

##### **4.4.1. Visual research method**

The photo-narrative method combined the production of photographs by participants in the course of their day-to-day living with narrative responses within a semi-structured interview in which participants had the opportunity to comment on each of the photographs they had produced. The template for the method used was a recent study of children's experience of their school environments in South Africa (Karlsson, 2001). Photo-narrative has some similarity to another visual research method, participatory 'photo-voice', in that participants use or produce photographs from their everyday life, however, some aspects of the process and outcomes are different (Wang, Wu, Zhan & Carovino, 1998; Wang, 1999). The main aim of photo-narrative is to empower participants to become the creators and narrators of visual material that represents the lived texture of experience within sociocultural contexts. It is a process which allows participants to engage in the exploration of the research objectives and reflect meaningfully on situated experience within educational, familial and other sociocultural contexts (Karlsson, 2001).

In Karlsson's study school learners took photographs of their school environment as an exploration of the 'layering' of apartheid and post-apartheid discourses in the representational and physical space of the school. Karlsson argues that space is socially constructed and is re-inscribed by political-spatial relations. This idea of 'spatial subjectivity' is compatible with the dialogical notion of the relative 'spatial' positionality of speaking positions within the self (Hermans & Kempen, 1993). In Karlsson's study,

participants were given disposable cameras and asked to take photographs based on the caption, 'me and my school'. This was followed by a semi-structured, debriefing interview which functioned largely as an opportunity for the participants to talk about and caption the photographs. Emphasis was placed on 'telling a story' about the photographs, in order to reveal narratives that were situated in visual perspectivity. Findings suggested that perspectives were presented from 'insider' and outsider' perspectives. Also spaces and time frames were subjectively and socially constructed as 'frontstage' or 'backstage' (Karlsson, 2001).

Although this method is a relatively new one, critical commentary on the use of photographic material in social science research is worth considering. Duffield (1998) suggests the following points: (a) photography has an element of selectivity which makes any photograph a perspective of sorts; (b) because of the apparent immediacy of the photograph it may acquire a realism that has the power to misrepresent; (c) subjective meanings are created in producing or viewing photographs; (d) given the potential of photographs to misrepresent persons or contexts there is a need to make the purposes for which images are produced an important consideration. The implication of (a) for this study was that the photographic images produced should not be taken as objective entities, rather, should be considered as the participants' selected perspective. In terms of (b) and (c) it was considered important that the subjective meanings of the photographs could not be established without the verbal commentary provided by the participants during the interviews. In terms of (d), it was important that the ethical implications of using photographs was considered and made explicit to participants. For a more detailed discussion of photographs and subjectivity beyond the scope of this dissertation, see Sontag (1977) and Barthes (1984).

#### **4.4.2. Interview method**

Silverman (2001) suggests that from a constructionist position, as opposed to a positivistic or emotionalist approach, interview accounts are both 'representations of the world' and are a 'part of the world they describe' (p. 95). The focus of constructionist



interviewing is thus upon how interview participants are engaged in actively constructing meaning (Silverman, 2001). Interviewing in this research followed a constructionist paradigm. Thus, in keeping with the research problem this approach to interviewing was interested in the 'hows' and to a lesser extent the 'whats' of participant's accounts (Silverman 2001). An 'interviewee centred' style was adopted, where the interviewer facilitated development of participant concerns by encouraging reflection and illustrative biographical material (Frosh et al., 2003). The constructionist approaches to interviewing considered the reciprocal influences of interviewer and interviewee, and sought to minimise interviewer influences within a mutually collaborative process that encouraged reflective and extended responses (Fontana & Frey, 2003; Kvale, 1996; Mishler, 1986). The techniques of polyphonic interviewing and oralysis were a part of the constructionist approach used in this study (Fontana & Frey, 2003). Polyphonic interviewing is an approach which creates a facilitative environment in which divergent or multiple interviewee perspectives are expressed and foregrounds the contradictions and anomalies of unprompted participant responses (Fontana & Frey, 2003). Oralysis refers to the interactive combination of talk with visual texts, which in the case of this study, refers to participants providing a personal commentary on each of the photographs in the context of the semi-structured interview (Fontana & Frey, 2003). For convenience, the combination of these techniques within a constructionist approach will be termed 'multivocal oralysis'.

The semi-structured interview method consisted of a series of open-ended questions that drew participants' attention to the photographs and encouraged narrative or biographical responses – in effect, multivocal oralysis. It is suggested that engagement in a process of image-production allowed meanings to emerge that had been negotiated and considered in the lived textures of sociocultural contexts and not in the de-contextualised moment of the interview. Multivocal oralysis may also have allowed the interview participant to be prompted by visual reminders of the sociocultural context, such that the interviewee was 'with' the context of his everyday life in the moment of the interview. This process matches the aims of the study in terms of exploring gender subjectivities in microcultural contexts. Given the open-endedness of the oralysis process, a diversity of spatiotemporal



contexts was possible, allowing access to the multiple subject positions that might occur across microcultures and sociocultural contexts. This technique thus matched the aim of exploring the multivoiced performance of masculinity in school microcultures and across social contexts.

#### **4.5. Procedure**

Adolescent boys from two schools participated in the study. School A was a single-sex, former Model C in an urban area with over 1200 learners. This school had been desegregated since the early 1990s however, at the time of the study, white learners and educators still comprised the majority of the school body with sizeable minorities of learners who were black, Indian or from other racial categories. Black learners were mostly Zulu-speaking and Indian learners were from various cultural backgrounds – Tamil, Hindi and Muslim. Like many such schools in the province (see Attwell, 2002), School A had been established during colonial times and was centred on competitive team sports, particularly rugby. School B was a state-subsidised community secondary school on the outskirts of a small semi-rural township. Established in 1995, and funded in part by the white farming community, the school was attended by boys and girls who were almost exclusively by Zulu-speakers from the township and the nearby farming areas. In both schools, the process of gaining access to the school learners began with a formal meeting with the respective principals, after which approval for the research was granted through the school authorities including the governing body.

At an initial meeting, potential participants were introduced to the plan and purpose of the study, and a process of obtaining informed consent was begun. Once written parental consent and participant assent had been obtained, participants were enrolled in the study and were briefed in groups. At the briefing, each participant was individually issued with a disposable camera and was invited to take about 12 photographs with the caption 'My life as a young man living in South Africa today'. Ethical concerns around the taking of photographs were discussed with participants in the briefing meeting, including the consent of photographic subjects and photographing explicit material or criminal

activities. Arrangements were then made to collect the cameras after a week for film processing. Once the photographs were developed, they were returned to the participants at individual semi-structured interviews held in school rooms allocated for this purpose by arrangement with the teaching staff. Prior to the commencement of the interview, issues of informed consent were revisited, with issues of voluntariness, confidentiality and the participant's rights over the data being raised. The interview then started with a debriefing, in which the participant was invited to share the experience of taking the photographs. In a mutually collaborative process with the interviewer, the participant chose photographs for discussion. Prompts for open-ended questioning were provided by a semi-structured interview schedule based on the guidelines of Ulin et al. (2002). Where the participant's responses were relevant for the research question, probing questions assisted in clarifying, verifying, elaborating and interpreting these responses. At the end of the interview participants were given the opportunity at the end of the interview to comment on the process and ask questions, as done in other studies (Frosh et al., 2003; Karlsson, 2001). Participants were also invited to select the photographs they wanted to keep and arrangements were made for them to obtain the reprints which took place with all respondents. The invitation to have copies of the photographs was generally very enthusiastically received and may have had the benefit as a lasting reminder to participants of their own process of considering meanings of masculinity.

The interviewing team consisted of the researcher, a white English-speaking male educator and psychology student; Celani, a Zulu-speaking clinical psychology intern and Mqobi, a Zulu-speaking youth camp counsellor. All members of the interviewing team had basic counselling skills and were briefed by the researcher prior to conducting interviews. Participants at the School A were all very fluent in English, so interviews were conducted in this language. Celani interviewed some of the black participants at School A, and co-facilitated a focus group. Mqobi interviewed all the School B participants in Zulu, and transcribed and translated these interviews into English. Having the same person interviewing, transcribing and translating was considered a cost-efficient means of producing a complete transcript record that may be verified through back-translation.

A third meeting was offered to most of the participants, except those who had been unable to attend from School A because of examinations. This third meeting took the form of focus group discussions facilitated by the interviewing team. One focus group took place at School A and two at School B. Focus group discussions at School B were hampered by practical constraints and language barriers and as a result yielded much less useful data than the individual interviews which had been conducted in isiZulu. As the focus group discussion at School A yielded useful data it was included in the data set. This focus group was also interesting as it was a mixed race group and was co-facilitated by the researcher and Celani, one of the Zulu-speaking interviewers. In both schools the entire process took place between three and six weeks which allowed for debriefing meetings to be held by the interviewing team and with supervisors. These meetings generated useful discussion, reflexivity and critical appraisal of the process.

#### **4.6. Sample**

The population studied were the adolescent boys from School A and School B. Following Silverman (2001), a purposive sampling strategy was applied in selecting individuals from the populations being studied. This included a consideration of the parameters of the population and its diversity, the resources available within the study, potential deviant cases and increasing sample size to confirm or elaborate on emerging findings (Silverman, 2001). In keeping with the aims of researching boys in middle adolescence, the first parameter for the sample was age. The age range of the complete sample in both schools was between 15 years 0 months and 17 years 8 months, with a mean age of 16 years 1.6 months. The sampling strategy was then to draw an initial sample of maximum diversity that could be feasibly studied within the resources of the study. This diversity was considered in terms of the parameters of the population being studied. Participant observation and collateral information about the school contexts informed this strategy. This included meeting with the principal, informal conversations with educator staff, visiting each school prior to the commencement of the study in order to observe the microcultural milieu of the school by attending assemblies, sports events and generally observing. Participants were actively recruited by the researcher with the



assistance of educators, who were appropriately informed that it was not just the compliant 'good' boys or academic boys that should be enrolled and that participation was completely voluntary. On this basis, initial sample groups were selected to maximise diversity. School A, it was important to include the following elements in the purposive sample – racial and ethnic diversity; a range of academic ability and interests; leaders, followers or non-leaders (prefects or sports captains; those not in leadership roles within the school's institutional microculture) and school boarders or those who lived with their families ('day boys'). School B presented with an apparently less diverse population, with almost all the boys in the school being Zulu-speaking and from the local community. By drawing the sample from various classes within the grade, which were grouped according to subject choices and academic ability, the initial sample represented a diversity of academic ability and interests. In School B, the initial sample of 9 boys was sufficient to adequately address the research problem and provide deviant case analysis, thus further purposive sampling was not required. In School A, the initial sample was expanded on the basis of emerging questions which will become clear in the discussion of the findings: more 'sporty' boys were recruited, particularly rugby players; black and Indian boys in leadership positions were included; the 'unusual' cases of an 'unsporty' white boarder, a rugby-playing black day boy and a boy who lived in the township were included for the purposes of 'deviant case analysis' (Silverman, 2001). The final sample size for School A was 20 participants. Expanding the sample in a purposively sensible way is considered a means to improve the generalisability and reliability of findings as it allows emerging findings to be confirmed, disconfirmed or explored in greater depth (Silverman, 2001). The final data set comprised 20 participants from School A and 9 participants from School B to form a total of 29 participants.

For the purposes of confidentiality, each participant was coded with a number and fictitious name, with recorded and transcribed data bearing codes only. Fictitious names were chosen for the researcher to remain more personally connected with the data, as appropriate for qualitative research (Korobov & Bamberg, 2004; Frosh et al. 2003; Kehily, 2001). Table 1 summarises the characteristics of the sample.

Name*	Age	Year	'Race'	'Ethnicity'	Interviewer
School A					
Sibusiso	17 y 7m	11	Black	Zulu	David
Kevin	16 y 9m	11	White	SA English	David
Nkosinathi	17 y 3 m	11	Black	Zulu	David
Jan	17 y 8 m	11	White	Afrikaans	David
Aaron	15 y 0 m	10	Indian	Tamil	David
Dean	17 y 4 m	11	White	Indian	David
Ziyeed	15 y 7 m	10	Indian	Muslim	David
Richard	16 y 2 m	10	White	SA English	David
Thulani	15 y 10 m	10	Black	Zulu	David
Aslaam	15 y 8 m	10	Indian	Muslim	David
Jason	16 y 7 m	10	White	SA English	David
Mark	16 y 0 m	10	White	SA English	David
Nathan	16 y 8 m	10	White	SA English	David
Tim	16 y 5 m	11	Indian	Hindi	David
Kegan	16 y 1 m	10	White	SA English	David
Warren	16 y 6 m	10	White	SA English	David
Mandla	16 y 1 m	10	Black	Zulu	Celani
Nkululekho	15 y 7 m	10	Black	Zulu	Celani/David
Sandile	16 y 2 m	10	Black	Zulu	Celani
Dane	15 y 5 m	10	White	SA English	David
School B					
Dumisane	15 y 0 m	9	Black	Zulu	Mnqobi
Mbongiseni	16 y 10 m	12	Black	Zulu	Mnqobi/David
Vincent	16 y 10 m	12	Black	Zulu	Mnqobi
Nkanyiso	16 y 8 m	11	Black	Zulu	Mnqobi
Bhekani	16 y 7 m	11	Black	Zulu	Mnqobi
Jabulani	16 y 7 m	11	Black	Zulu	Mnqobi
Vusimuzi	15y 5 m	10	Black	Zulu	Mnqobi
Nhlanla	15y 9 m	10	Black	Zulu	Mnqobi
Qinisane	15 y 2 m	10	Black	Zulu	Mnqobi

Table 1 Participant characteristics (\* names changed)



#### 4.7. Data analysis

A strategy for analysing the visual and verbal data was developed alongside the sampling strategy, data collection and review of literature, in keeping with the idea that qualitative research should be an iterative, non-linear process (Durrheim, 1999). Replicability and low-inference description were included as important aspects of reliability in developing the data analysis (Silverman, 2001). This meant that the exact process could be replicated and in a way that inferences drawn were concretely based in the visual and verbal data. Following Ulin et al. (2002), the data analysis process occurred in three overlapping phases, data immersion, fragmentation and integration.

The data immersion started concurrently with the data collection. As preparation for the interview, the interviewers looked through the photographs to establish a sense of the microcultures and sociocultural contexts presented in the visual data. In training interviewers, it was stressed that the interviewer should avoid assumptions or conclusions based on this preview of the photographs. As interviews from the initial samples were completed they were transcribed in full and analysed for core themes, thus allowing for questions to be developed alongside the purposive sampling and data collection processes. 10 interviews from School A were transcribed in full, including the 6 from the initial sample. The interviews which were not transcribed were those that had been added to the sample on the basis of a purposive strategy, and only core narratives were transcribed from these interviews. This was on the basis that the transcription of all interview data is no longer considered a criteria for validity or reliability, particularly in the case of peripheral data which serves the purpose of elaborating, confirming or disconfirming the findings from a core data set (Toolan, 2001; Silverman, 2001). In the case of School B, all 9 interviews were transcribed and translated by the interviewer, with a transcript being made available to the researcher in isiZulu and English. At this stage, the researcher aimed to explore the data fully, developing a relationship with the texts, following hunches and intuitions regarding possible findings that would lead towards a systematised means of 'fragmenting' the data (Ulin et al., 2002).

The phase of data fragmentation followed a systematic approach involving quantitative content analysis and qualitative narrative analysis. Once the complete set of 371 photographs from the 29 participants' data had been collected, systematically coded and stored in photograph albums, the complete data set was coded according to principles of quantitative content analysis as an accepted method of textual investigation (Krippendorff, 1980; Silverman, 2001). These principles are first, that sets of precise categories are established for the data and second, instances that fall into each category are counted (Silverman, 2001). The precision of the category definitions is considered a key feature of reliability and the precision of the counting process necessary for reliability (Silverman, 2001). These issues were addressed by setting up specific criteria for each category and using a co-researcher to verify the counting process. Each photograph was coded according to (a) whether the participant was in the photograph or not; (b) thematic categories; (c) categories of settings and; (d) number of persons in each photograph according to race and gender. Where the themes were tentative, the interview data was engaged in establishing what the photograph was about. For example a photograph of a basketball court could be coded as 'sports participation' with knowledge from the interview that the participant had been playing basketball at the time. This process was less cumbersome than it might sound and resulted in a useful tabulation of the complete visual data set on a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Basic counting techniques and descriptive statistics were then be applied to the data and presented graphically. The thematic categories were then compared across four groups defined as School A Black, School B Black, School A White and School A Indian. As there was much evidence in the verbal data that there were multiple subject positions in relation to racial identities, it is noted that comparison between these artificial racial 'groups' represented a limited view of the more complex cultural processes identified in the qualitative analysis.

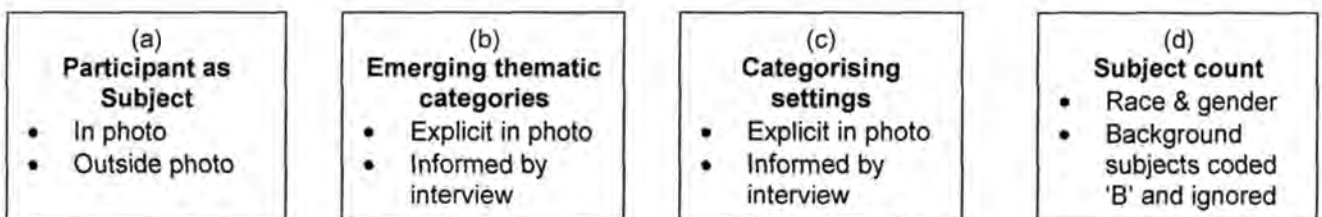


Figure 1 Content analysis categories

As noted by Silverman (2001), although categorisation allows one to make sense of people and events it can serve to maintain a static view of identities. The second part of the fragmentation phase related to the narrative analysis of the verbal data. The qualitative narrative analysis of the verbal data as a process that was integrated and triangulated with the quantitative content analysis of the visual data. The content analysis helped to pose the questions that could be asked of the interview texts by identifying themes, microcultural settings and other participant concerns. The interview texts were used in clarifying categories or counted instances in the content analysis.

The language of narrative analysis may appear very technical at first, and the reader is guided to the glossary for detailed definitions of terminology. It is argued that once the process and its terminology are understood, the narrative method used provides a unique perspective on interview data that is complementary with the theory basis of this research. The qualitative analysis focused on embedded narratives, defined as the diffuse stories which occur within the interview dialogue (Toolan, 2001; Mishler, 1986). An embedded conversation may be a collaboration of a principal story teller with multi-party conversational glossing which serves to amplify or clarify aspects of the story, as might occur in a focus group, or it may be occur in the interviewer-interviewee dialogue (Toolan, 2001). The narrative analysis was based partly on a study by McQueen and Henwood (2002) which used Labov's model of narrative categories to identify and organise embedded narratives. Labov's model is based on the hypothesis that there is a fundamental narrative structure that may be found in the ordinary narratives of personal experience (Mishler, 1986). Labov suggested that stories are organised in a general pattern involving a 'headline' or orientation, an abstract which provides a sense of the what the story is about; a complicating action in which pivotal actions and experiences occur, an resolution or ending of the action and an evaluation in which the meanings for the action are given (McQueen & Henwood, 2002; Toolan, 2001). Embedded narratives may not always fit neatly Labov's categories of narrative action, however the organising structure provides a useful starting point from which to analyse the text (Toolan, 2001; McQueen & Henwood, 2002).



With core narratives extracted from the interview dialogue and assembled according to Labov's categories, a process of data integration could occur (Ulin et al., 2002). The texts were read for tropes – the repeated figures of speech or expressions used by speakers. The identification of tropes then allowed for recurring core narrative themes to be identified with careful attention to naming themes in a way which matched the words used by the participants (McQueen and Henwood; 2002; Silverman, 2001; Ulin et al., 2002). For example, one of the participants used the tropes 'show' or 'show off' in his core narratives about boys behaviour with girls at nightclubs. From this trope was identified a main narrative theme of 'displayed' masculinity.

Following Toolan (2001), narratives were then analysed for the position of the narrative voice or diegesis. As the narratives were framed as 'stories' told by the interview participant to the interviewer, they tended to have the quality of diegesis rather than mimesis, that is of an externally reported story rather than an immediate description. The terms intradiegesis, extradiegesis, heterodiegesis and homodiegesis were used to identify the narrative voice along with whether the pronoun used was in the first, second or third person or in the plural or singular form (Toolan, 2001). Intradiegesis and extradiegesis refer to whether the narrative voice was positioned within or outside the events of the story respectively. Homodiegesis and heterodiegesis refer to whether the narrative voice remained the same throughout the embedded narrative or whether there were diegetic shifts in the narrative voice. To return to the example above, the same participant related his story about boys at nightclubs heterodiegetically, that is he shifted from the position of an intradiegetic observer at one of the nights out in the abstract and action of the story to that of a removed, extradiegetic commentator on the boys' behaviours in the resolution and evaluation parts of the story (see Appendix N9 for the full transcript and its analysis).

Following Toolan (2001) and McQueen and Henwood (2002), attention was given to the orientational words of each narrative or its deixis and the spatiotemporality of each unit or unit cluster was considered with particular attention to chronologically retrospective or prospective accounts. The term 'analepsis' was used to describe events that occurred chronologically before the story and 'prolepsis' to in order to establish perspectival



'pastness' or 'futuraity' of the narrative. Full definitions of these terms may be found in the glossary. Findings were organised with illustrative data and schematic representations to depict the links between core narratives, tropes and the extracted main narrative themes as in the study by McQueen & Henwood (2002).

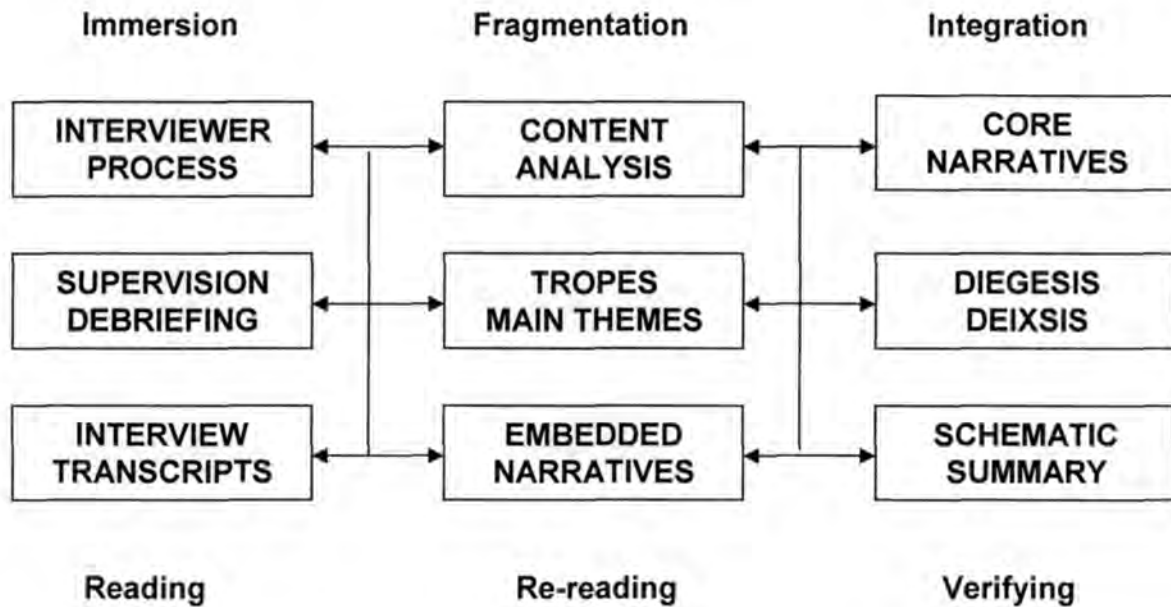


Figure 2 Schematic representation of data analysis method

The schematic representation of the data analysis method (Figure 2) depicts the iterative, overlapping and non-linear processes of extracting and analyzing narratives from the verbal data. The reading, re-reading and verification of the data correspond to processes of data immersion, fragmentation and integration – the process suggested by Ulin, Robinson, Tolley, and McNeill (2002) for qualitative data analysis. At the reading stage, there were three interactive aspects: (a) the self-reflexive interview process; (b) peer debriefing and interviewer supervision and (c) the initial transcription of narratives. The reading stage produced immersion in the data from which were derived questions for purposive sampling and further analysis. During the re-reading phase, the 'conversation' among three processes produced a more focused reading of the 'fragmented' data. These processes were: (a) the content analysis of the complete visual data set; (b) identification of recurring words (tropes) and main themes; (c) embedded narratives extracted from the

transcripts and audio recordings. Integration of the data occurred through the verification of findings through a systematic analysis and consolidation of the embedded narratives by means of: (a) identifying core narratives; (b) examination of deixical and diegetical aspects of the text (spatiotemporal context and narrative voice) and (c) representing data in a schematic summary. Note that Appendix 1 contains examples of this data integration phase.

#### **4.8. Ethical considerations**

The following discussion of ethical considerations is based on the suggested guidelines for research by Emanuel, Wendler and O'Grady (2000). In South Africa there is a need to identify constructions of adolescent masculinity in relation to hegemonic standards. The role of masculinity constructions in the HIV pandemic, in gender violence and the mental health of male adolescents are priority areas where research is urgently required to inform interventions and practitioners at various levels.

The populations studied were chosen on the basis of a purposive, scientific sampling strategy that maximised diversity and voluntary participation. Other than the sampling strategy there were no specific criteria for initial inclusion or exclusion other than the explicit consent of parents. To avoid undue incentive, participants were not made aware that they would be receiving their own copies of the photographs until explicit informed consent had been obtained. Compensation for participation was provided by giving each participant copies of the photographs and providing refreshments at the interviews.

Information around the research purposes was provided to potential participants prior to enrolment in the study. Parents received a letter explaining the aims, purpose and duration of the research. Participants were only enrolled in the study once signed consent had been obtained from parents each participant had signed a statement of assent. Informed consent continued throughout the study to meet the objective of maximising participant ownership over the data and the process. The privacy of subjects was protected through steps to maximise confidentiality both of persons and the photographs produced. This

included coding and safe-keeping of all material within the research team, the use of fictitious names in reported findings, not including identifying data for either participants or participating schools. In the event of any concerns about the well-being of a participant as a result of his involvement in this research, all interviewers were supervised and had basic skills in counselling. In the event of major concerns or crises interviewers were briefed to refer participants for professional help and provide counselling for their withdrawal from the study. With appropriate debriefing arrangements in place, participants were more likely to be supported in the event of difficulties. The participants may have derived benefit from increased awareness of the links between their masculine identity and psychosocial or health issues. The unprompted feedback from most participants was that they had benefited from the process and had enjoyed the visual method. As compensation for their involvement in the study, participants were able to keep copies of some or all of their photographs, which may have had the added benefit of reminding participants of their own process in considering issues of masculinity.

The research proposal was reviewed and approved by internal staff of the psychology department and the university higher degrees committee. The research was presented in process at a research conference at which unaffiliated persons were able to review the research and comment on ethical aspects and scientific validity. An article was submitted to the *South African Journal of Psychology* for publication. This also allowed for an independent review of the research in terms of ethical and related aspects.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **FINDINGS**

#### **5.1. Content analysis trends**

Findings from the quantitative content analysis of the visual texts will be followed by the findings from the qualitative narrative analysis verbal data. A total of 371 photographs from 29 participants were included in the final data set. The content analysis was preliminarily completed and then reworked in order to refine category definitions and more systematically recount instances, yielding the final content analysis.

##### **5.1.1. Themes**

Seventeen theme categories were identified and tabulated. These were the 'visible' or probable orientations of the photographs, confirmed where necessary by information from the interview. Of the 371 photographs, 305 were given one of the 17 coding categories ( $f = 82.1\%$ ), with 52 of them being coded in more than one category ( $f = 14\%$ ) and 66 of the photographs falling outside of the categories ( $f = 17.9\%$ ). There were no notably occurring common themes among these 66 photographs. A rank-ordered list of the categories (descending) most identified in the total sample was developed, the categories according to participant representation ( $N$ ) with actual number of photographs within the group ( $N_p$ ) used as the deciding criteria in the case of ties. In the case of a further tie, the spread of the category was considered and its explicitness within the data. Comparative lists for the data groupings according to school and 'race' were developed in the same way. The category lists suggested key areas of convergence and divergence among the sample groups. 'School activities' was the only category to occur in the top three for each sample group. This suggested that the school context might be considered an important context in which meanings of masculinity were situated. Other categories presented differentially across groups suggestive of different configurations of practice among the groups. Particular anomalies, such as the appearance of a category in the top



three for one group and at the bottom of the list for all others was taken as an indication of a notable inter-group difference. One such anomaly was the ‘work activities and household chores’ category which was the second most represented category in the School B sample group yet was not represented at all in the School A groups apart from one individual from the School A Black group. This suggested a notable difference between the sample groups in which the School B group considered work activities and household chores as more important contexts for meanings of masculinity than School A participants. Similarities were noted, for example, the high rating of the ‘cars’ category for the School A Black and School B groups as compared with other groups. This category was allocated where cars were the main subject either as a poster or magazine or as photograph of the family car. Included were several photographs of boys in front of teacher’s cars, confirmed by the interviews to be the main subject of interest in the image.

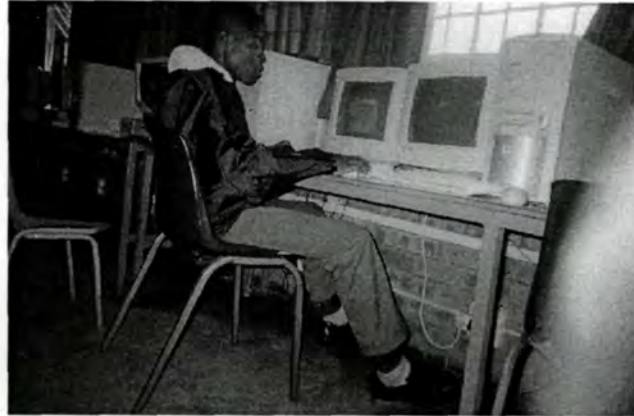
<b>Total Sample (N=29; Np=371)</b>	<b>School A Mixed (N=20; Np= 225)</b>	<b>School B Black (N=9; Np= 146)</b>
School activities	School activities	School activities
Sports participation	Sports participation	Work or chores
Family members	Family members	Family members
IT or media	Religious activities	Clothing fashion
Cars	Music consumption	Cars
Clothing fashion	Card games	Sports participation
Work or chores	Sports consumption	IT or media
Religious activities	IT or media	Appearance
Music consumption	Cars	Religious activities
Appearance	Music performance	Music performance
Card games	Appearance	Music consumption
Sports consumption	Non-relational sexuality	Trophies
Music performance	Clothing fashion	Non-relational sexuality
Non-relational sexuality	Trophies	Animals
Trophies	Animals	
Animals	Cigarettes/alcohol	
Cigarettes/alcohol	Work or chores	

Table 2.1 Rank order of thematic categories for complete data set and school samples (most frequent descending)

<b>School A Black (N=6, Np=68)</b>	<b>School A White (N=9, Np=97)</b>	<b>School A Indian (N=4, Np=50)</b>
School activities	School activities	Religious activities
Sports participation	Sports participation	Family members
Cars	Music performance	School activities
Family members	Card games	Sport participation
Clothing fashion	Family members	Music consumption
IT or media	Non-relational sexuality	Sport consumption
Religious activities	Music consumption	Trophies
Sports consumption	Trophies	Cars
Cigarettes/alcohol	IT or media	Clothing fashion
Non-relational sexuality	Appearance	Card games
Work or chores	Cigarettes/alcohol	Appearance
Card games	Sports consumption	Animals

Table 2.2. Rank order of thematic categories across sample groups  
(most frequent descending)

‘Sports participation’ figured prominently for the School A Black and most highly for the School A White groups. This suggested that for these groups this was a context closely associated with meanings of masculinity. This category did not feature in the top five for School A Indian and School B Black groups, suggesting less importance. A notable feature was that although ‘sports participation’ was less elevated for the School A Indian group, the ‘sports consumption’ category was elevated relative to other groups. This suggested a different configuration of practice for the School A Indian group around sport and the meanings of masculinity. The sports codes identified for both ‘sports participation’ and ‘sports consumption’ analysed in relation to N suggested a differential pattern of identification with sporting codes. There was a notable split between rugby against soccer and basketball as ‘racially marked’ sports (see Figure 3). The School B sample was largely identified with soccer only, whereas the School A Black sample was identified with soccer, basketball and cricket.



Photograph 1: In the computer classroom (School B)



Photograph 2: Participant in his brother's car (School B)



Photograph 3: Magazine collection (School A)



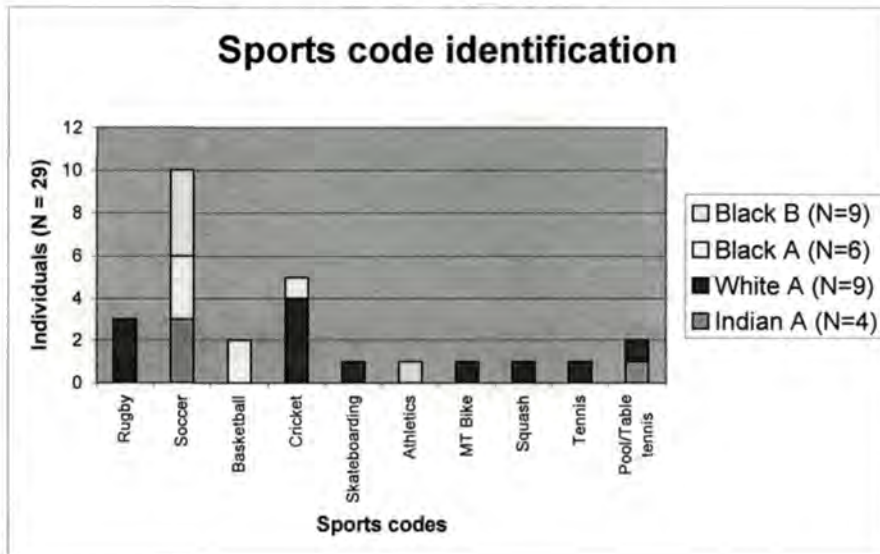


Figure 3 Sports codes per participant identified in SP (sports participation) and SC (sports consumption) categories

Splits suggested that identification and participation in sporting codes differed across the school samples and across the racial categories in School A. Attention was also given to the less represented categories on the basis that these might suggest hidden or subordinate narratives of particular interest to a qualitative inquiry. Notable themes are reported below with the number of photographs (Np) indicated.

- (a) Cigarettes and alcohol (School A Np=4; School B Np=1; Total sample N=5)

In School A these consisted of three photographs involving cigarettes or cigarette boxes, a photograph of a bedroom 'pub' and one of a social situation involving alcohol use. All of these were associated with the School A White group. The photograph from School B was of the local liquor store. Given that such photographs are 'riskier' subjects for participants their appearance at all in the data set was notable and suggested that a substance use or abuse was a context for significant meanings.





Photograph 4: Bedroom 'pub' (School A)



Photograph 5: Soccer players (School B)



Photograph 6: Cigarette box collection (School A)

(b) Trophies (School A: Np=7; School B Np=2; Total sample N=4)

These were photographs of trophies, certificates and medals put on display. The presence of these images suggested that unprompted, several participants situated their experience as young men within a context of 'displayed achievement'. This tendency was also suggested in some of the sporting photographs, which depicted various 'displays' of sporting feats such as balancing a soccer ball or doing a handstand on a skateboard.

(c) Non-relational sexuality (School A Np=5; School B Np=1; Total sample N=4)

In the School A White sample, where most examples of this theme were found (N=4) several photographs showed boys with copies of the Sports Illustrated Swimwear edition or FHM magazine or posters of swimwear models on the bedroom wall. This category was completely absent for the School A Indian sample and was represented with only one example each from the School A Black sample and the School B sample.

(d) Clothing fashion (School A Np=5; School B Np=12; Total sample N=10)

This category was present in the top five categories for both School A Black and School B samples, suggesting similarity in this area and was also present for the School A Indian sample groups. The presence of this category in these groups and not at all in the School A White sample group suggested a differential construction of masculinity around the context of clothing fashion, a question raised for the narrative analysis. The photographs included in this category were arranged displays of clothing or posed subjects in casual clothes named as 'style' by the interviewees. This category occurred in over a third of the entire sample, all 'non-white' participants, suggesting significance.



Photograph 7: Trophy and medal collection (School A)



Photograph 8: Swimwear posters on bedroom wall (School A)



Photograph 9: Fashion and music styles (School A)

(e) Religious activities (School A Np=17; School B Np=1)

This was a highly varied category that included photographs of religious services, prayers, festivals and items such as religious texts or symbols. Within the complete data set, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity were depicted by various participants. This category was the most present category for all participants in the School A Indian group but was not represented at all in the School A White group. The category was sparsely represented in other groups. The inclusion of religious activities, by a total of 7 participants from the complete sample, suggests that for a sizable minority, religious activities were considered an important context for meanings of masculinity.

(f) Card games (School A Np=7; School B Np=0; Total sample N=6)

The presence of photographs of card games in the photographs from 6 Indian, white and black participants in school A was intriguing. These card games were generally depicted in peer group contexts and suggested a core theme of contestation. This theme may also be deduced from the categories of sports participation and trophies.

### **5.1.2. Self as subject**

Coding of each photograph according to whether the participant appeared as a subject or not yielded interesting trends. The participant appearing in the photograph implies almost certainly that someone else has taken the photograph. In School A, in all groups, most photographs did not include the participant ( $f = 77\%$ ), whereas in School B fewer photographs did not include the participant ( $f = 44\%$ ). This trend raised the possibility that participants from the rural context approached the photographic project less individualistically than those from the urban school or that the rural boys situated their meanings of masculinity within a more socially embedded context.



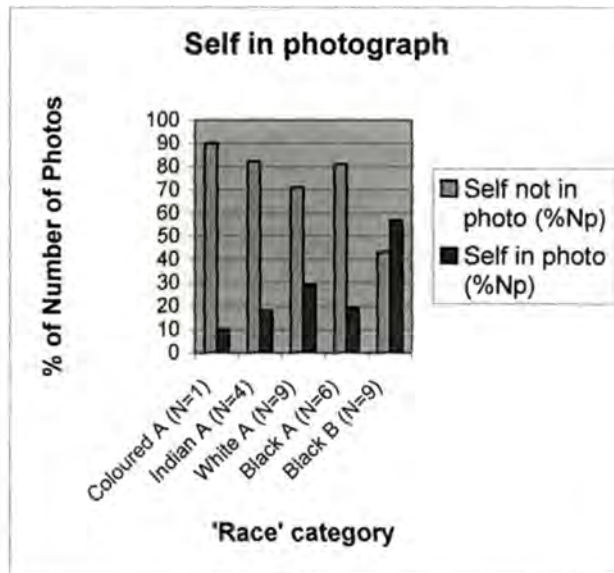


Figure 4 Number of photographs including participant as subject

### 5.1.3. Settings

The location of each photograph was established with reference to interview collateral when the setting was not clearly evident. The data was organised in rank order lists of settings in descending order of frequency, following the same deductive process as with the thematic category lists. Home and school settings were the most prevalent settings across all sample groups however there were inter-group differences in the part of the home and school settings where photographs were taken. The School B group and the School A Black and Indian groups focused more on outdoor areas of the school whereas the School A White group took more photographs inside the school buildings. The bedroom occurred as a common setting for all the School A groups but was much less present in the School B group. A significant anomaly was the high prevalence of the workplace settings in the School B sample and the complete absence of such settings in the School A sample. The School B settings included farms, timber mills, service stations and gardens in which participants were shown doing manual labour. There were a notable number of diverse religious settings in photographs from five participants, and the particularly high incidence of these settings for School A Indian group.

<b>Total Sample (N=29; Np=371)</b>	<b>School A Mixed (N=20; Np=225)</b>	<b>School B Black (N=9; Np=146)</b>
School environs	Home (bedroom)	School environs
Home (bedroom)	School indoor	Workplaces
School indoor	School environs	School indoor
Home (shared areas)	Home (shared areas)	Home (shared areas)
Home environs	Home environs	Township street
Workplaces	Place of worship	Home (bedroom)
Township street	School sport	Home environs
Place of worship	Suburban street	Social sport
Social sport	Social sport	Other
School sport	Township street	
Suburban street	Other	
Other		

Table 3.1. Categories of settings for total sample and school samples

<b>School A Black (N=6, Np=68)</b>	<b>School A White (N=9, Np=97)</b>	<b>School A Indian (N=4, Np=50)</b>
Home (bedroom)	School indoor	School environs
School environs	Home (shared areas)	Home (bedroom)
Home (shared areas)	Home (bedroom)	School indoor
School indoor	School environs	Place of worship
Home environs	Home environs	Home (shared areas)
School sport	School sport	Home environs
Place of worship	Social sport	Social sport
Township street	Suburban street	Suburban street
Other	Other	Other

Table 3.2. Categories of settings across sample groups

Analysis of the settings suggested that the most of the participants produced photographs from different settings. Conflating the home and school settings into two categories,



Photograph 10: Work setting (School B)



Photograph 11: Sporting items (School A)



Photograph 12: Bedroom posters (School B)

the mean number of categories for the sample was 3.48 settings per participant (N=29). For School A the mean was 3.25 settings (N=20) and for School B the mean was 4 settings per participant (N=9). This data suggested that this difference could be accounted for by the 'workplace' settings which acted as an additional feature in the School B sample. These trends raised the question of whether the participants found meanings for masculinity in a variety of different settings, a possibility which suggested a situational diversity in subject positioning both individually and across the data set.

#### **5.1.4. Subject composition**

Without the need for statistical analysis it was observed that there existed a high concordance between the identified 'race' of the participants and the racial composition of the subjects photographed. In School A samples, the notable exception across all groups was that racial integration was present in classroom scenes and in contradictory ways in the school environs. Scanning through the photographs suggested that there were some areas of the school where social groups of boys tended to be monoracial and other areas that were more integrated, particularly a peripheral area where informal soccer was played at breaks. This pointed to a spatialisation and temporalisation of racial identities and interaction in the informal peer group microcultures of the school

In School B, there was an almost complete concordance with only one photograph depicting a subject who was not of the same race as the participant. This suggested the racial homogeneity not only of the school but of the social context outside of the school. Given that many of the boys reported having white employers or living on farms owned by white people, it was notable that the presence of these 'racialised others' seemed to be invisible. For example, Jabulani had a photograph taken of himself lying on a bank and told me that he was watching a game of rugby involving only white players. This could not be confirmed by the photograph itself, which was from one of the player's perspective. With a real or imaginary rugby game taking place behind the camera, this photograph was an intriguing exercise in invisibilisation and perspectivity.



Peer groups in the School A sample were overwhelmingly boys only, even outside of the school context with only two participants including photographs of non-familial female peers. This amounted to three photographs from a data set of 225. In the School B sample, photographs of non-familial female peers were also surprisingly few, given that the school was co-educational. There were five participants who produced eight photographs of non-familial female peers. Only two of these participants produced photographs showing peer social interaction across genders, however. The others showed classroom situations or group or individual photographs of girls.

### 5.1.5. Subject count

This was a count of the clearly intended subjects of the photographs and excluded peripheral or background persons and crowd scenes.

	Photographs (N)	Subject count	Male subjects	Female subjects	Subjects per photo	% Male subjects	% Female subjects
Total sample	371	729	671	58	1.97	92	8
School A	225	438	416	22	1.95	95	5
School B	146	291	255	36	1.99	88.6	11.4
Black A	68	138	131	7	2.03	94.9	5.1
White A	97	168	157	11	1.73	93.5	6.5
Indian A	50	128	125	3	2.56	97.7	2.3
Coloured A	10	4	3	1	0.4	75	25

Table 4 Counts of photographed subjects

The data suggested that the vast majority of the photographs were of male subjects with female subjects particularly under-represented in the School A sample. The subject counts suggested an average of about two persons as subjects per photograph. Notably fewer persons appeared in the School A White sample especially as compared with the School A Indian sample. These trends suggested an inquiry into the apparent 'invisibilisation' of female subjects and exploration of whether the trend of some groups to present less populated photographs reflected a real aspect of lived experience. As with other aspects of the content analysis, the extrapolation of these trends into valid findings was not feasible, however the trends suggested questions for the qualitative analysis.

## **5.2. Narrative analysis findings**

Following Frosh et al. (2002) the findings are arranged in terms of a discussion of themes and issues with illustrative extracts from the interview transcripts and analysed embedded narratives. The complete text and schematic for each of the embedded narratives discussed is contained in Appendix I. The reader is directed to the glossary for the terminology of narrative analysis. In keeping with the voice-centred research paradigm, the findings are presented with reference to the actual words of participants.

### **5.2.1. Male peer groups and social imperatives**

The content analysis and interview data suggested that for participants from both school contexts, male peer groups were identified as important sites for identity construction. This was largely achieved through talk about rather than the enactment of a hegemonic standard to prove 'acceptable' masculinity. Five narratives from the data set (N1 to N5) illustrate this process of accomplished talk in the peer group.

In the male peer group, masculinities were configured around a displayed 'conversational toughness'; an emphasis of 'doing' over 'being'; emphasised hegemonic standards in groups and the need to 'prove' masculinity to the male peer group. Hegemonic standards for black participants in both settings tended to be organised around two competing

imperatives for maturity, one imparting a meaning of unrestraint to peer social groups and the other suggesting an imperative to 'join' with peers through emerging 'black' music styles and fashions.

For Aslaam, a Muslim boy from School A (N1), peer group conversation centred on a 'witty' repartee with others in the group that involved 'classing' or pseudo-hostility. It was the capacity to 'click' with the group and 'tell him back' that existed as inclusion criteria in the peer group at school. Aslaam established a significant distance between his break time group and 'some of the white guys', who were defined as the boys who 'just start punching each other all the time'. Rather than displays of physicality, the alternative standard suggested by Aslaam was a conversational toughness and alertness. The speaking position shifted as Aslaam assumed heterodiegetic perspectives in relation to the peer group narrative. The speaking positions included that of the group in relation to the 'othered' white boys; his own position as a commentator on his peer group and that of a nonspecific outsider wishing to join the group in an imaginary scenario. The agency of the group to control its boundaries was admitted and denied at points in the narrative. At one point it 'just happened' that the group would 'click' in the way it did, and at others, the group assumed a more defined position in relation to its identity as having certain 'kinds' of people, and a less stated link with the playing of indoor soccer as an 'entrance ticket' to the group.

From School B, Themba's peer group narrative (N2) took a collective intradiegetic perspective, speaking 'on behalf' of his social group, the 'abafana' (Boys). The unfolding of the story revealed a tension between conversational and action performances of masculinity. While in the orientation of the narrative, Themba's 'sitting and talking' with peers in the afternoons was an 'okay' way to let the 'time pass', the interpolation of actions into the narrative (prompted by a photograph of soccer team-mates) introduced a tension around a 'dangerous' stasis in 'just' sitting and talking. Soccer was then positioned as an external constraint against the dangers of idle peer group conversation, linked to the 'bad things' such as smoking and stealing. This response may reflect an unconscious process in which passive 'being' is feared and unrestrained and active

'doing' is identified as control and prohibition. Mandla's narrative about socialising with peers in a township tavern (N3) suggested, like Themba's account, a fear of unrestraint and irresponsibility. Mandla's account revealed a tension between a subjectivity situated with 'playing games' and an imperative to discard these practices with increasing maturity. As with Themba's narrative 'social idleness' with peers was ambivalently understood as both a threat to maturity and a context for displaying competency or experiencing belonging ('everybody's here'). Mandla presented an insider view but then shifted to an extradiegetic positioned outsider when introducing the core theme of 'staying with the crowd'. An imperative to be current with music trends was introduced as an alternatively voiced counter to the speaking position of 'imperative maturity' from earlier in the narrative. The trope 'it's cool to like stay with the crowd' suggested that this alternative voice was identified with peer music styles of Hip Hop and Kwaito, creating alternative imperatives for the speaker to be 'cool' by having fun 'with the crowd'.

The narratives of Sandile (N4), Warren (N5) and Dane (N6) from School A converged on identifying powerful processes of social inclusion and exclusion which served to maintain group hegemonic standards. These narratives pointed to a critical commentary emerging from the male peer group around physical features or any other markers of difference. This was signified by a similar trope which appeared in all three narratives as 'isolation', 'bringing down' or 'criticism'. For Warren, the process was not one of 'true criticism' and was more about how the recipient was able to 'handle it' and not let it 'get' to him. Warren and Dane introduced similar tropes for how they or others had 'handled' criticism or isolation, these were to 'learn how to take it' or 'just get over it'. In all three, a core narrative emerged of the persons 'building up' their own acceptability within the group by 'bringing down' the individuals on the periphery. This suggested a process of projective identification in which boys on the periphery were marked with otherness. It was notable that these three narrators managed diegetic shifts in the narrative to account for both inside and outside perspectives of the group and the marginalised individual.



For the isolated protagonists in the narratives, coping styles varied – Warren’s friend’s verbal counter-attacks appeared to win peer approval, Sandile tried to balance the picture by allowing the group to ‘lift’ and ‘bring down’ his self-esteem, whereas Dane’s intradiegetic protagonist emphasised passivity of action with the phrase ‘get over it’.

### **5.2.2. Positioning alcohol use and smoking**

Following from the content analysis, four narratives (N7, N8, N9 and N10) are used to illustrate positioning tactics used by the boys around alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking. Only one of the narratives (N9) was linked to a photograph which had a visible identification with this theme. The presence of narratives beyond the visual data may suggest a less visible yet significant site for the identities in relation to hegemonic standards. The narratives suggested that boys from both school contexts held contradictory and ambivalent positions in relation to drinking and smoking, which was generally constructed as one of several routes towards a peer-verified ‘acceptable’ masculinity. The narratives also suggested that these distances were managed through oppositions with alternative ways of doing, being or having.

Dumisane’s biographical narrative (N7) constructed an opposition between educational success leading to future employment against present risks of smoking, alcohol and going out with girls. To manage the opposition, he depicted himself as someone identified with other peers who wanted ‘to be something’ in the future and, in a contradictory way, as an individual who was ‘different’ from the others. This suggested a conflict in how boys managed the appearance of going along with the crowd while at the same time managing future aspirations. This conflict was also depicted by Vusimuzi, also from School B, whose story of a local tsotsi (petty criminal) represented the end point for a masculinity assembled around risk-taking activities, smoking, drinking and a lack of future aspirations. From the School A sample, Mandla offered a similar narrative (N8) which constructed drinking ambivalently as a means to gain peer ‘acknowledgement’ or ‘respect’ and as a danger if continued excessively. The temporal emplotment of

Mandla's narrative suggested that drinking was considered the 'right' way for young men to behave in the present yet was a danger if located in futurity.

Kevin's narrative (N9) suggested that alcohol and smoking figured prominently in the emphasised masculinity that some boys displayed in the night club social scene. While impressing the girls was the overt objective of these displays, which included 'getting into fights', looking 'big' and 'showing' that they could handle drinking and smoking, Kevin suggested that it was more about 'looking good' in front of male peers. Elsewhere in the interview, Kevin spoke of the exaggerated 'stories' his friends would regale one another with on Monday mornings around 'getting it' with a certain girl or other weekend conquests. Another participant, Dean, also a rugby player like Kevin, presented a similar configuration in a narrative about a party where it appeared that the interviewer was positioned as an approving male 'audience'. These narratives suggested a hegemonic display enacted as conversational performance around conquest and competence. While Kevin's stance towards these displays was less adulatory than Dean's, he appeared to have managed his position towards these enactments by drawing a boundary between boys who had something to 'prove' and those who had girlfriends, including himself. For Kevin, a boy with a girlfriend could 'just be himself' in the night clubs. This suggested an identity position which excused boys from hypermasculine displays situated in the 'possession' of a girlfriend possibly as a displayed trophy of 'acceptable' masculinity. At the same time this opposition served to condone and normalise the displayed hypermasculinity around drinking, smoking and aggression.

Aaron's narrative (N10) located a racially-marked masculinity measured by success with girls, visible affluence and consumption. This Indian masculinity was represented in a 'sharp' style that was both 'influenced' by fashion styles and part of accepted trends and uniquely 'stylised' or embodied in an individual's self-confidence. The heterodiegesis suggested conflicting identifications and disavowal in relation to these hegemonic standards. Situated with a racially marked 'rebellious' masculinity, alcohol consumption and smoking were identified as an alternative means of accomplishing an acceptable masculinity or 'getting in'. In both cases, with the style-based masculinity or the rebel

masculinity, the enactment was a display that was not directly linked with having a girlfriend. Aaron constructed a hegemonic femininity parallel to the style-based male identity represented as the girlfriends using guys as 'fashion accessories' and a means to attend the music concert.

### **5.2.3. Envisaged futures, doing and having**

The luxury motor car was a recurring image in the narratives of most black participants for example Thulani (N11), Mandla (N12), Nkosinathi from School A (N14) and Bhekani (N13) from School B. The narratives in which they occurred largely contained intradiegetic future scenarios or aspirations that were signified by the image of the luxury car and associated with descriptions of middle class, professional lifestyles. Finding a single canonical narrative for accomplishing this future identity was not however possible, as there were also opposing alternatives or re-inscriptions around imagined futures as adult males.

Thulani was a son of professional parents and attended School A. In his narrative (N11) the luxury motor car was associated with 'passion', 'power' and the feeling of being 'a young free South African'. Thulani envisaged his first motor car as a gift from his parents when he had left school and become a university student. For Mandla, a township boy also attending School A, car ownership signified success with girls coupled with approval from the 'guys', converging on the image of being a 'player' (rich and heterosexually successful). Mandla presented multiple narrative perspectives on the imagined scenario of a young man driving a luxury car in the township (N12). From the onlooker's perspective, the car was a signifier of multiple 'successes' including 'he's good at girls' and 'he's doing well for himself'. For the imagined owner of the car, the ownership was a 'having' that displaced the need for 'doing' in order to prove 'acceptable' masculinity. It was, in effect a 'fetish' signifying an accomplished dominance or a 'passport' to a hegemonic masculinity based on 'having'. This interpretation linked well with Kevin's portrayal of boys with girlfriends (as 'trophies')

not having to display a peer-verified emphasised masculinity – a process of ‘having’ masculinity displacing ‘doing’ masculinity.

Bhekani (N12) from School B organised his aspirations of owning a house and having professional employment around the image of the Mercedes Benz as a signifier of independence. The means to this independence were opportunities in the present, particularly those around education and access to technology. Similar narratives occurred elsewhere in the School B sample and were evidenced in the recurring ‘canonical’ photograph of participants working on computers at home or in school. Further on in the interview, Bhekani introduced a counter-narrative to the canonical version that education and technology would create individual opportunities and stable professional employment. He began by contrasting the situation of the local factory workers with the canonical narrative.

Mnqobi Awungichazele ngalaba (Tell me about these people)

Bhekani This was at work with my neighbours. I work with them. This was overtime day working in the plank factory. In life I can never say what work the Lord is going to offer me. These people I work with when they were growing up they thought they would have better jobs but it must be up to you to study for a job when you are a young man. You must grow up believing in your dreams.

Challenged by the interviewer, Bhekani then introduced a counter-narrative, perhaps more rooted in the past struggle than Thulani’s ‘young’, ‘free’ South Africanness.

Mnqobi How does it make you feel that some jobs are still done by certain races, like in this plank factory, when we are supposed to be living in a democracy?

Bhekani Well, I think it’s because of poverty but we can see change. Yet there is oppression here. You shouldn’t see blacks only working here. We must see that we are the same. Jobs should not be determined by colour.



An opposition was evoked between the optimistic canonical narrative and a narrative that drew on the language of the liberation struggle. The partial resolution to the conflict was suggested in terms of the 'shoulds' of living in the democracy and not its economic and racially divided realities.

Nkosinathi (N13) was a School A participant originally from the townships who had then moved to the suburbs. His narrative suggested a contrast between a township view of success as the wearing of 'nice clothes' and driving 'fancy cars' with his less valourised success as an educated young man. Although Nkosinathi positioned himself as intradiegetic narrator in future scenarios of educational accomplishment and vocational success, rather than in images of visible consumption, the tension in his narrative occurred around the trope 'slayer'. Although 'slayer' was negatively associated with 'thieves' and 'taxi-drivers', it seemed that for Nkosinathi, a part of him was drawn towards being a 'slayer' of sorts. At the same time he maintained a direction towards becoming a 'responsible citizen or whatever'. Nkosinathi resolved the tension elsewhere by suggesting he would be 'successful' but not 'flashy'.

- Nkosinathi    After success you get to buy nice things (.)  
David            What sort of car would you like to own?  
Nkosinathi    Uh (.) I wouldn't be flashy even though I'd have money I would  
                     be under-cover (.) ja (.)  
David            Under cover?  
Nkosinathi    Ja (.) So false image or whatever (.) but I don't like being flashy

Visible consumption featured strongly in Aaron's and Aslaam's descriptions of hegemonic standards among Indian boys. This focus was less so for Ziyeed, who focused on cultures of sports consumptions through supporting soccer teams and following Islam, and Tim, a prefect at School A, who focused on academic and sporting achievements. Although distancing himself from this by focusing on academic success, Aaron named

the 'flash' of new cars and clothes as the signifiers of accepted masculinity among most Indian young men, as indicated in the closing words of the interview.

Aaron ... If you 'in' with the new trends the new fashions (.) you masculine think that's the whole masculinity in the new generation and that's what they see as important (.) that's my final thought on the matter (.)

Visible consumption was positioned as a signifier of 'having' a masculinity that was decided on the basis of peer-group affirmation.

#### **5.2.4. Racialisation in the school-based peer culture**

Racialisation was understood as a process whereby identities were inscribed and re-inscribed based on constructed categories of colour, culture or appearance. Shifting tensions between peer-group hierarchies and polarised racial identities were a recurring and multivoiced pattern across the narratives from School A. Across all contexts, sporting codes were identified with racial terms, such as rugby being labelled a 'white sport' and soccer or basketball, a 'black sport'. Areas of integration, transracial friendship and non-racial sport were permitted in some narratives and not in others, and were also contended by opposing speaking positions within narratives by the same speaker. Racialisation within peer group cultures and in relation to sport were sometimes made visible or emphasised and at other times invisibilised or backgrounded. This suggested multivocal positioning around unconscious and social processes of racialisation in relation to masculinity and its relationship to sport. These processes are discussed in terms of Jason's narrative from the focus group discussion (N14), Sibusiso's and Nkosinathi's sports narratives (N15 and N16), narrative extracts from Kevin (N17), Warren (N18), Thulani (N19) and Aaron (N20, N21). A narrative from School B participant, Jabulani (N22) provides an alternative perspective from this context.

In his focus group narrative about marginalised 'skaters', rugby 'jocks', complicitous aspirants and the peripheral 'break time soccer league' (N14), Jason's main narrative

themes converged on defended positions (or 'distances') in relation to perceived hierarchies of exclusion and inclusion. This perception was signified by a pronominal 'they' and the 'they're out of it' trope. This may have established a defensive boundary between the extradiegetic speaking position and the marginalised 'skaters'. Reinforced by his own 'invisible position', it may have been an unconscious tactic to defend against his own exclusion in the peer group. This narrative was extracted from a composite conversation in the focus group, and the peer context was an important background for it. From a second speaking position, Jason maintained a grammatical and narrative distance from the 'sporty jocks' by locating this group in a fixed position, circled by the 'minions' and distanced from the peripheral and more mobile peer group configurations. Jason's observing position at this point appeared to be an undefined 'in-betweenness', neither part of the 'accepted' hierarchy or its peripheral alternative, the distant soccer players. Jason described with ironic ambiguity, the rugby playing 'jocks' as the 'hard okes', yet seemed not conscious that despite his sarcasm, the qualifier 'really' left unchallenged the core assumption that acceptability resides in being 'hard' in some way.

A pivot in Jason's narrative was the shift to intradiegesis in line 11, introduced by the trope 'everyone'. Here, the shift was from the confident though undefined 'everyone else' to a defensive individual 'I' position. Thereafter, the 'break time soccer league' entered as a contender to the simple sport-related hierarchy that Jason had presented. The existence of another valid set of racial 'others' neither complicit nor marginalised, but rather 'subversive', was signified by the repeated pronominal 'they'. Whereas the 'sporty jocks' were located in the 'here', this other group was positioned 'there', in the peripheral environs of the school. Not without a sense of irony, the heterodiegetic re-positioning allowed Jason to be caught within opposing aspects of his imaginary social environment. there, he had to find a tactic to resolve these complexities. Unconsciously egocentric, and perhaps developmentally appropriately so, Jason took for granted that his perspective was the invisible normative, on the basis that the boy from the soccer players that he failed to recognise was not part of his assumed normative social environment.

Jason's racialisation of the break time soccer league was contradictory, being first associated with the Indian boys and then broadened and possibly displaced onto the 'black guys'. Here, distance was defended, and Jason settled for a position of apparent disinterest and doubt ('they might' to smooth over the contradictions. Distance was also defended by the analeptic presentation of these tensions, particularly as a speaking position as a 'doubting but duped innocent'. This suggested a sense of 'pastness' that may have set a distance between the contradictions of a 'there-and-then' and the conversational 'here-and-now'. Jason's conspicuous lack of intradiegetic positionality, somewhere in the 'in-betweenness', suggested ambivalent feelings towards the accepted hierarchy or its transracial alternative.

Sibusiso from School A was a very keen basketballer, and produced a set of narratives arranged around an opposition between the 'compulsory exclusivity' which he perceived in the rugby-orientated 'white' sports culture of the school and the 'voluntary exclusiveness' that defined the 'black minority' basketball players and spectators (N15). Sibusiso's collective intradiegetic speaking position as 'we', the basketball team, suggested a shared history, depicting peer 'bonding' around the notion of the 'team sport'. This was signified by the trope 'we know each other'. A change occurs in line 09 where the 'togetherness' assumed a racial meaning as the unity of the 'team sport' was re-inscribed upon the identity as a 'black player'. Further on, Sibusiso spoke from the position of the basketball spectators, contrasting an atmosphere of togetherness around an inclusive blackness with the compulsoriness of 'white' sport.

Nkosinathi's narrative (N16) was a forthright response to a question on the changes he would like to see taking place in the school. Nkosinathi wanted soccer to be elevated and included in the 'official' sporting culture of the school, thus offering an alternative to Sibusiso's upbeat view that 'black minority' sports offered an alternative of tolerance and diversity. Nkosinathi amplified the core theme that soccer deserved an equal and valid place in the school culture by moving quickly from an intradiegetic biographical 'I' to a collective speaking position that was ambiguously either racialised or identified with soccer players. The core theme of sporting polarisation was also amplified by the



addition of further markers of difference, the categories 'day boy' and 'boarder' added to 'black soccer player' and 'white rugby player'. As with Sibusiso's narrative, a core theme of voluntariness and tolerance emerged, signified by the trope 'everyone wanting to be there'. This was set against the word 'forced', a trope for the 'white' sporting culture that included 'compulsory' spectatorship of rugby games.

On the other side, Kevin and Warren, both white rugby-playing boarders, presented narratives (N17 and N18) that identified rugby as a defining standard of acceptable masculinity. Kevin varied between a speaking position as the intradiegetic 'we', identified with the perspective of the 'white boarders' and an extradiegetic 'I' spectator view. The trope 'everyone' used by both Sibusiso and here in Kevin's narrative, had a certain 'undecidability'. Used by Kevin, 'everyone' indicated the compulsory playing of rugby 'at least once' to accomplish through 'doing', a 'having' of acceptable masculinity. In order to be deemed acceptably masculine, 'everyone' must try to play rugby, at least once. This was different from Sibusiso's 'everyone', which signified, at one level, an inclusive yet black identity. Warren's narrative drew on an opposition between 'team sport' and individual games as a means to elevate rugby without reference to racial identities. Both Warren and Sibusiso drew on a canonical narrative that situated acceptability with team sports. For Warren, it was the secure sense of belonging offered in the team sport that made it preferable for 'people' over the threatening 'independence' of the individual player.

At a deeper level, the four narratives converged around tensions and ambivalences between isolation, exclusion and difference on one hand, and immersion, belonging and group identity on the other. Speaking 'for' the group – an intradiegetic collective speaking position – was used by all four respondents. This 'we' perspective was also juxtaposed with a threatening or threatened 'they', often ambiguously defined and reinforced as a repeated trope.

Alongside the canonical narratives of racialised sport, however, there also emerged alternative positions in the school contexts, particularly from the participants who were

associated with the peripheral social soccer games, Thulani, Aaron, Ziyeed and Aslaam. Thulani (N19) expressed an inclusive view on soccer and rugby as both equally acceptable and masculine. One of Thulani's photographs was a close-up of a soccer ball in front of his suburban home in order to represent his life-long love of the game. Thulani's route to an inclusive stance was to celebrate the difference between the sports, the skills of soccer and the physical strength of rugby. Unlike the intradiegetic 'us' versus 'them' perspective, Thulani spoke from an intradiegetic first person position, presenting a personal lived experience rather than the collective view.

Aaron's embedded narrative (N20) presented an ambiguously involved 'observer' view of peer social relations on the 'backstage' periphery. Aaron's core narrative was indicated by the tropes 'different' and 'people, both of which signified values of respect for diversity and equality of all people in a democratic South Africa. Aaron utilised a plural intradiegetic speaking position in explaining the situation of relative racial integration on the 'periphery'. The analepsis gave a sense of a shared journey in which valid transracial friendships had developed among the boys, as they themselves had been developing ('in the mud' together). At the same time, Aaron maintained a contradictory and possibly unconscious positional 'us' and 'them' throughout the narrative, which took as normative the social configuration of 'us' that a somewhat deviant group of 'them' had 'joined', traversing an interesting and othered 'jock stage' en route. Soccer was introduced as the common interest that had facilitated the joining process. Perhaps this was an unconscious rationalising of the possibility that the boys may have simply enjoyed each other's company for its own sake. Aaron's use of the ungendered trope 'people' may have acted as an unconscious or dialogical distancing from the hyper-masculine racialisation narrative of the othered and invisible 'jocks'. Following this narrative, Aaron went on (N21) to describe himself as one of two 'types' of Indian in the school, the type who associated with those of other races, particularly whites and those who were more 'gangsterish' and assumed a defensive pose that maintained the boundaries of accepted racial identities.

The tactics of controlling racial boundaries through negative labelling and a reactive racialised identity pose, represented here as a 'gangster' masculinity, was also found elsewhere in the data. Aaron's qualifier 'more like me' (line 32) created a dialogical tension between the dichotomous social narrative that allowed only 'two types of Indian people in this school' and Aaron's subjective experience that he did not quite conform to either, although to a large extent he identified more with one position than with the other. This dialogical tension was found elsewhere in the data. Nkosinathi spoke about the pressure to remain visibly identified with Zulu culture in a monoracial group through the speaking of his home language, and not wanting to appear to be violating the rules for acceptability.

Nkosinathi      comes naturally (.) we speak it at home (.) it's easier (.) to put out your points in Zulu than in English (.) some words don't come out as easy (.) ja and (.) ja (.) it's mostly Zulu (.5) and because of the fact (.) because you are perhaps viewed as a coconut when you speak English in front of your black friends

The data from School B shed very little light on the complexities of racialised sport. This may have been because of the visibly monoracial context or the invisibilisation of the white farming community in the photographs, this was not clear. Jabulani's cameo narrative about watching white people playing rugby was a glimpse of an alternative narrative that matched Thulani's stance towards soccer and rugby. For Jabulani, living in a free South Africa, allowed the appealing possibility of being a black rugby player.

### **5.2.5. Homophobia in the school-based peer culture**

The data suggested that in the male peer cultures, homophobia operated as a peer-validated process of making, managing and maintaining the boundaries and meanings of a dominant standard of 'acceptable' masculinity. The findings suggested that homophobia was accomplished through processes of language, where toxic or defensive narrative distances were created at the level of the 'us' and the 'them'. Processes of



naming operated to disempower threatening ambivalences through projections of shame and powerlessness. These findings are illustrated with reference to the focus group discussion, interview narratives with Mark (N23, N24 , N25, N27) and Dane (N26), and interview narratives with Vusimuzi (N27) and Bhekani (N28).

Although the researchers did not introduce the topic of homophobia, many of the boys interviewed individually mentioned the negative associations of being labelled 'gay', as well as 'sissy girl', 'spaff' or other verbal put downs. There was more serious discussion of homophobia in the individual interviews than in the focus group context, where discussion of being gay or homophobic was humorous. In the focus group, the boys teased one another about physical attractiveness, dating ugly girls or hidden homosexual tendencies. In response to an interviewer's question about perceived differences between themselves and girls, for example, the boys responded with jesting and teasing.

- Mark ((laughter)) I don't know about me but ( )  
Jason prettier than you (.) you're like pretty (.) (but not) that much  
Mark ((laughter))  
Nathan what is he do:ing ? (.) he's like having a nervous breakdown or something (( laughter))  
Dane gi:rls (.) say hello  
Mark I'm having a breakdown (.) Jason's doing his little gay thing he does

Marks's laughter evoked the collective attention of the group. Mark responded by parodying and then diverting attention from himself onto the 'gayness' of Jason's remark. The trope, 'what is he doing?' or 'what are you doing?' occurred in other narratives and was linked with the collective attention or 'male gaze' of the group upon individuals acting outside the parameters of the group norm. Dane's response was to comment ironically that they were beginning to act like girls themselves while simultaneously implying that the very mention of girls should evoke some kind of compulsory response



from them all. This brief group interaction showed clearly how fluctuating distances towards 'otherness' occurred in unconsciously in the male peer group context.

In complete contrast with their light-hearted focus group presentation, Dane and Mark voiced serious lived experiences of homophobic harassment in the individual interviews. The orientation of Mark's narrative (N23) normalised or naturalised homophobia (this 'whole gay thing') to the high school context, comparing the homophobic labels to 'badges'. Mark's noted that 'slightly resembling it' elicited homophobia, suggesting perhaps that the peer group maintained an embodied standard of 'acceptable' that repudiated any deviations from expected gender behaviour. Though distancing himself from his peers' judgments, Mark also acknowledged that there existed a reified 'it', implying a notion of a 'real and 'other' form of sexuality, thus linking him with a shared canonical narrative about gayness. Further on (N24), Mark compared his own position as 'knowing his status' with those who were 'insecure' about their masculinity and thus needed to display toughness and emphasise their interest in girls. Mark distanced himself from those who compensated for being 'insecure' with an emphasised masculinity, yet he was careful to state that he wouldn't like to be recognised as feminine by appealing to an inner subjectively 'real' masculinity. This implicit link between gender performance and homophobia confirmed the view that homophobia is intertwined with misogyny, with the effect that a young man who presents with 'soft' or 'feminine' characteristics is immediately labelled homosexual.

Speaking from an ambiguous and fluctuating speaking position, Mark's third narrative (N25) suggested that it was visible appearance and performance that educed homophobic responses. This blatant homophobia contained a perspectival gap between self-concept and the concept a pronominalised 'they' constructed around the individual. Mark's narrative suggested that homophobic labels were used in the peer group context to isolate those who did not conform sufficiently to an illusory accepted standard. The isolated individual then received a group projection of disavowed femininity and otherness which he was then compelled to respond while being scrutinised in the collective (male) gaze of the group. This suggested not only processes of splitting and projection at the individual

level but also a group process of projective identification. Here, a projective identification was imposed upon the othered person who was made to feel helpless, ashamed and unacceptable. The individual's response then culminated in group members feeling 'good' and more securely positioned as acceptably masculine.

Dane's narrative (N26) shifted from an extradiegetic detached 'observer' position to 'insider' perspectives of the group and the individual. Like Mark, Dane linked homophobic performances with hierarchies of contestation and a chained dichotomous 'them' versus 'me' process of isolating or disempowering individuals to maintain group identity. The abstract of the narrative signified that this was experienced as an empathic failure ('they don't feel other people's feelings'). The imagery of 'facades', or 'walls' suggested the ambiguity of the process. Through the process of isolating others, the individual was himself isolated within the group by being unable to express vulnerability or empathy. The defensive 'benefit' was a protective wall against appearing vulnerable or unacceptable in the face of a group standard that was unattainable and illusory. The trope 'they have to' suggested a compulsive pattern of behaviour, a repeated 'vicious circle'.

Mark's biographical narrative (N27) also suggested that the experience of homophobic abuse was intensely distressing and confusing. Positions alternated between finding the experience distressful and finding it absurd. Further on in the narrative these alternating positions moved to anger at the unfairness and invalidation of the experience. The trope 'suddenly' signified confusing and inexplicable feelings of shame, unacceptability and powerlessness stirred up by the experience.

Accounts of homophobia and compulsory heterosexuality were also present in the School B context, although less visibly foregrounded. Vusimuzi (N27) presented a biographical narrative around the pressure to conform to his male peer group's expectation of compulsory and displayed heteromascularity. Responsible attempts to defer involvements with girls in favour of future plans were countered by a group pressure to not be 'serious' and to go 'looking for girls'. As a resolution to this tension, Vusimuzi drew on a

canonical narrative of young people who leave school because of risk-taking, in this case, having heterosexual relations while young. Even if this meant being 'like a girl', Vusimuzi and other unnamed 'responsible' boys, were willing to delay their involvements with girls in order to reach goals of education and professional employment.

As with several other boys in the School B sample, Bhekani disclosed that his chores at home included cooking and housework (N28). Asked about how peers might respond to this knowledge, he speculated that the reaction might be to say he was 'uyalahla' (gay). Bhekani's imagined response was to say he was a 'strong' cook and that he was orientated to his future plans rather than relationships with girls at this time of his life. This appealed to a narrative of masculine toughness combined with responsibility and independence. As with Vusimuzi, the risk of his girlfriend falling pregnant was posed as a threat to attaining his goals in the future.

## CHAPTER SIX

### DISCUSSION

#### 6.1. Sociocultural contexts and self as subject

The visual data suggested that the participants located multiple sociocultural contexts and settings which were relevant to their subjective meanings of masculinity. Important contexts were school microcultures, including school sport and the male peer group, the family, places of work and worship and neighbourhood peer microcultures. A striking anomaly was the relative importance, particularly for Indian participants of family and religious contexts, which were often overlapping. The inference to be drawn from this for discussion is not that these are static categories of comparison across cultural 'groups', but rather that cultural processes were evidenced with different degrees of emphasis. Cultural diversity should not be ignored, however nor should it be reified or set up in static categories. It is argued that, on their own, the content analysis findings may appear to do just that but that the qualitative narrative analysis makes better sense of the processes that appear to set up these differences. It is also suggested as a broad implication of the findings from the perspective of social constructionism that masculinity *is* a cultural phenomenon and is deeply embedded in sociocultural contexts such as school microcultures (Beynon, 2002; Mac an Ghail, 1994).

The gendered and racial composition of the photographs were interesting findings but could not be over-interpreted or judged according to static categories for gender, culture or race. Tentative conclusions however may be as follows: (a) across the sample, cultural and situational factors favoured homosociality to a greater or lesser extent; (b) the racial composition of the photographs reflected contextual factors of the schools. To deduce from the presence of more photographic subjects of one race or gender than others that a participant's identity was 'racialised' or 'gendered' in a more emphasised way than another's would be erroneous as these variations could have been influenced by any number of variables, particularly the demographics of the school. One would expect less



gendered and more 'monoracial' photographs from School B by virtue of its geographically rural context as a co-educational school and cultural homogeneity. Similarly, the School A data set represented the greater diversity of an urban environment, and one would expect there to be more photographs of boys of different cultural backgrounds, also, as a 'single-sex' school, less gender diversity was likely in the photographs. An interesting feature was the overwhelming predominance of boys as subjects in the photographs from School B, given that this was mixed-gender setting. However, the confounding variable might be a research effect – the boys may have interpreted the task of photographing 'my life as a young man' to mean an exclusive focus on boys.

The representation of self as photographic subject, that is, the participant having someone else take the photograph of himself, yielded an interesting finding. Explanations would be speculative, but it would be possible that the School B participants included themselves as subjects significantly more often than School A participants because of more communal, less individualistic cultural meanings that influenced the manner in which the task of photographing 'my life as a young man living in South Africa today' was interpreted. Placing a camera in someone else's hands to represent one's life has the quality of a discursive act that contextualises and perspectivises in a different way. Speculatively, this might put one in the position of being embedded in the context, observed, a part of a social group and presented to the researcher as the object of study. Taking the photographs oneself of objects, events and people to represent one's life may perhaps be an objectifying of the social context through a controlling, individualistic perspective of the photographer. In such an approach, the participant joins with the perspective of the researcher in observing the sociocultural milieu, presenting a perspective that looks out on the world of lived experience rather than presenting oneself as embedded in that experience. These trends may reflect cultural processes or even cultural conceptions of the self. These tentative hypotheses would make an interesting research problem.

## 6.2. Peer-group talk and 'acceptability' norms

The findings consistently suggested that the male peer group was an important context for the construction of masculinities against a standard of 'acceptability', indicating the instantiation of identities through processes of 'accomplished talk' in the peer-group microculture (Edley & Wetherell, 1997; Kehily, 2001; Korobov & Bamberg, 2004; Mac an Ghail, 1994). The findings suggested (a) that the norms for masculine 'acceptability' varied considerably across peer-group configurations and contexts; (b) that within the diversity of the sample there were some overlapping or core features of these norms; (c) that these norms set up standards for inclusion and exclusion that served to construct 'acceptable' identities, particularly through the citation and repudiation of abject identities. These findings will be explained below.

The male peer-group featured as the most influential microculture for the construction of masculinities within the school context and especially in relation to sport, socialising after school and outside recreation. As with the findings of Kehily (2001), a key feature of peer-group conversation was an emphasised heterosexuality, centred on penetration as accomplishment and conquest. Performances of 'acceptable' masculinity involved active and penetrative 'getting in' and 'getting it' or 'looking for girls'. This standard of 'doing' masculinity was also related to ownership and display as a hegemonic standard of masculinity through 'having'. For some boys this was the image of the 'player' or 'slayer' associated with heterosexual success, a luxury car and style. For others, it was 'having' a girlfriend as a 'trophy' of success that excused one from having to 'prove' masculinity to one's peers through displays of toughness or invulnerability. For some boys masculine acceptability was about accomplishments that would allow one to reach this objective of hegemonic 'having' – that is, the boys who focused on other accomplishments such as academic or sporting success as the means towards the longer term hegemonic ideal. These findings support the conclusion of other studies, that school peer microcultures are marked by compulsory heterosexuality as one of its 'constitutive cultural elements' (Epstein, 1997; Mac an Ghail, 1994; Phoenix, 2004a). Along with

compulsory heterosexuality, the construction of girls in terms of trophyism and display gave credence to the idea of non-relational sexuality, as the objectification and sexualisation of the 'other' gender in group talk (Korobov & Bamberg, 2004).

An area of difficulty for a range of boys in this study was managing the group pressure for penetrative (heterosexual) accomplishment with objectives that matched a private sense of self. For some, managing the dissonance involved putting on a facade of invulnerability, appearing to 'get over it' while at the same time managing personal feelings autonomously, without risking emotional vulnerability with male peers. For several boys, the containing relationships with mothers and in some cases, fathers, were a space for expressing vulnerability. This emerged in the narratives of boys' relationships with parents. Some boys also spoke in detail of how emotionally close relationships with girls, either relatives, friends or girlfriends, provided validation and relief from the anxieties of the peer-group standards. In these narratives, girls were constructed in very different terms to the objects of emphasised heterosexuality, and rather than the proving of masculinity through symbolic or literal penetration and conquest, soothing emotional intimacy and validation was the key feature of real relationships. These findings confirm that emphasised heterosexuality is one of the behaviours employed by boys in accomplishing a peer-mediated imperative for 'displayed readiness', as in the study by Korobov and Bamberg (2004). What boys said about their relationships with girls in the peer-group context was very different from their private experiences, suggesting an important discrepancy between the peer-ratified hegemonic standard and individual subjectivities.

A further feature of peer microcultures were group norms around 'toughness'. The 'toughness' standard was a core feature of peer-group microcultures although its meaning was ambiguous and its expression appeared to differ within cultural and social diversity. Among some boys, 'toughness' was being able to produce 'sharp' responses in the 'witty' repartee of the group. For others, it was being able to withstand or 'take' the 'criticism' from the group, be it criticism of one's appearance, sportiness or the possibility that one might be 'gay'. At another level, and among peer microcultures in

which 'tough' team sports figured more prominently, 'toughness' was more physically embodied as a 'big' or 'hard' appearance. In each of the above instances, the exact standard of 'toughness' was ambiguous – boys could easily be 'pulled down' by the group for being too clever or not clever enough with words; being overly accepting of 'criticism' could bring more or a trying too hard be a physically impressive 'main oke'. The link identified by Nayak and Kehily (1996) between emphasised heterosexuality and 'looking big' in terms of tone of voice, physical presence and verbal repartee was also present in the data for this study, and was notably present in displayed masculinity for the purposes of peer-group acceptability. For example, Jan's evocation of the word 'sissy boy' to describe someone who was outside a definition of masculine toughness, even, as in his own positioning as an alternative 'skater', this toughness was about agility, speed and balance rather than the muscularity and endurance of the rugby player. The idea of 'emphasis' links both *displayed heterosexuality and toughness* as 'constitutive cultural elements' of the male peer group (Mac an Ghaill, 1994).

On the basis of the findings, it is argued that what Morrell (1998a) calls 'inversions' of the dominant institutional masculinities can develop behind the curtain of peer-group microculture, akin to Mac an Ghaill's identification (1994) of a survivalist masculinity among black minority youth in Britain. These 'inversions' are paradoxical negative identities that represent alternative sets of norms to the dominant cultural form of masculinity. Different contexts (for example, sporting clubs, classroom peers and youth groups) and these inversions may account for the differences observed among the participants' accounts with regard to these groups. Aaron's contrasts are of interest here, the 'rebellious' versus 'stylish' masculinities in the Indian community or the school-based Indian masculinities of 'gangsterish' versus 'academic'. It is argued that these versions offer reframed alternatives of masculinity, but that it is difficult to identify which of these is dominant, marginal, complicitous or subordinate, which may be relative to a perspective that one takes. The antagonistic 'gangsterish' identity is evoked for a purpose, to maintain a distance from a dominant white masculinity.



It was extremely difficult to identify the 'one' hegemonic masculinity in the School A or School B sample, or to differentiate a 'hegemonic' masculinity from an alternative masculinity, or a masculinity of contestation against the hegemonic norm. For example, the hegemonic norm within the basketball microculture – active, popular, tolerant, and inclusive – was set against the rugby microculture imbricated upon the dominant institutional masculinity of School A. The hegemonic dominance of a group was subjective to the point of fantasy, and it was hard to differentiate what might be the 'real' qualities of the dominant form or what they were reflecting in terms of the speaker's position and his group identification. Also, in terms of Connell (1995), one set of standards might be 'hegemonic' in relation to one microcultural masculinity and 'marginalised', 'subordinate' or 'complicitous' in relation to another. This finding suggested multiple masculine identity positions within the realm of individual subjectivity, supporting the notion of dominant and subordinate self-narratives from dialogical theory (Hermans & Kempen, 1993).

### **6.3. Sporting microcultures**

In various male peer-group contexts, acceptability was constructed through displayed enactments or 'doing', such as 'handling' pressure, displaying 'sharp' conversational skills, taking alcohol or risky behaviour. Sport and other forms of contestation provided a context for peer-verification, with team sport most identified as a signifier of acceptability, although sporting codes differed in terms of their associated qualities. As suggested by Morrell (2001c), sport in South Africa is woven into hegemonic masculinity with generic features of bodily skill, toughness, sporting knowledge and the ability to 'talk sport'. Morrell further suggests that specific emphases emerge among sporting codes in association with class or race identities. In this research, boys keen on soccer and basketball celebrated the skills, dexterity and speed of the games while the rugby players stressed physicality, endurance and courage. The findings from School A also suggested what Morrell (2001c) also notes, that winning was more important in the game of rugby than for other codes, and was an area of strong emotional investment, school 'pride' and was most closely associated with the 'tradition' of the school. It was

surprising for the researcher how many boys were engaged in social sport outside of the official school programme, be it skateboarding, indoor soccer or touch rugby, and that these forms of sport microculture were more identified with fun or recreation and appeared less fraught with competition or racialised meanings. Formal or informal sports teams were one of the most influential peer microculture often exerting power through inclusion and exclusion. These findings explain why as suggested in other studies, sport can be a powerful vehicle for changing identities and hegemonic practices, as in the Shosholozza AIDS project, and how it may also be strongly linked with contestation, racialisation and the organization of hegemonic identities, as in the historical racialisation of rugby in this country (Attwell, 2002; le Grange, 2004; Morrell, 1996). The evident contestation between school-based sport and extra-school sport represented two competing microcultures for the construction of masculinities either of which could be positioned as hegemonically acceptable, depending on the position of the individual subject in relation to these microcultures.

#### **6.4. Homophobia and abject identities**

It is argued on the basis of the findings that (a) homophobic practices were practiced and embedded in the male peer group microculture; (b) homophobic practices occurred at the affective and discursive level, a simultaneously unconscious and social process; (c) homophobic practices were viscerally embodied in unconscious processes of abjection and shame, and served powerfully to regulate the boundaries of normative identity constructions. The extent to which homophobic performance was racialised as well as gendered could not be fully established in the data, although it is suggested that racial meanings were constructed in relation to processes of homophobic abjection.

As in the study by Pascoe (2005), the data suggested that homophobic performance occurred in relation to subjective norms of acceptability for male peer-groups and that this was not in relation to actual or perceived sexual preferences. In the boys' narratives, homophobic performances occurred almost visibly within the male peer-group microculture, although there were instances in which it was extended into the

microculture of educator-learner interaction, particularly with the male teachers at School A. The findings suggested that homophobia acted to create parameters for acceptability and that it was powerfully reinforcing through the collective 'male gaze' of the group and the fluctuating boundaries of exclusion and inclusion. This supports the notion that homophobia involves the invocation and repudiation of a 'constitutive outside' in order to regulate a named identity from the threat of failed or unrecognizable otherness, as described in queer theory (Hook, 2004; Pascoe, 2005).

The findings suggested that unconscious projection, disavowal, splitting and other defences operated at the group and individual levels, particularly in the context of the peer group, and in relation to homophobic performances. These processes were linked with a reinforced hierarchical contestation and the ambivalent dependency of the individual upon the group. Particularly striking was the strong affective processes that accompanied homophobic acts. Participants described the hurt, shame, confusion or distress associated with receiving homophobic messages, giving credence to the idea that homophobia may be embedded in early conflicts, fantasies and perceptions of threat that relate to the process of abjection (Redman, 2000). These findings confirm the process of homophobia to be an unconscious and social process that operates at the affective and discursive levels to monitor boundaries through the iteration and disavowal of named otherness (Hook, 2004; Pascoe, 2005). In these findings, homophobia is closely linked with a collective 'heterosexual assumption' in which gender relations are maintained through the privileging of normative heterosexual relations and subordinating femininities and masculinities that fall outside of the hegemonic standard (Frosh et al., 2002; Redman, 2000; Renold, 2003). The denial of unconscious homosexual interest may also have played a role in these defensive processes, lending support to Attwell's (2002) finding that homophobia was linked with unconscious homosexual interest.

## 6.5. Doing and having

The findings suggested that in various contexts, 'acceptable masculinity' was constructed in relation to a hegemonic standard of proving masculinity by 'doing'. It is argued from the findings that this 'doing' was primarily for a real or imagined audience of male peers, and that it was configured around the key feature of symbolically or literally penetrative acts that involved daring, risk, autonomous action or embodied physicality. This explanation accounts for why at School A, boys identifying as the rugby-playing type were more accepting of boys who did drama while being quite scornful of those who did music or played chess. Most commonly, acceptable 'doing' was about playing sports, in particular team games. Just as emphasised heterosexuality demanded a compulsory display in the peer group, so sports participation was framed as an essential constitutive element for acceptable masculinity. Across the diversity of the sample involvement with sport as a player, spectator or consumer was a core narrative theme that signified acceptability as a male through inclusion and membership. Vusimuzi, Sibusiso, Kevin and others described sports teams in terms of the power of exclusion and inclusion of being 'on the team', with the 'team' given a kind of reverential regard. As ways of 'doing', alcohol use, smoking and other risky behaviours was an area of conflict for many boys, as it may have offered a short-cut to masculine acceptability for those who subjectively lacked other means of 'proving' themselves yet also posing risks to longer term objectives as a successful male. The stories surrounding the substance-related risk-taking tended to be exaggerated and were used to evoke reactions of approval, including that of the counter-transference in the interview situation. Risk-taking in general was constructed as a display to 'look good' or 'be hard', submitted for approval to the male peer-group.

The findings further suggested that despite its importance, a masculinity of 'doing', a masculinity of 'having' presented a symbolic level of enactment beyond the literal enactments of gendered performance. 'Having' included the possession of 'trophies' or symbolic 'fetishes' of hegemonic acceptability put on display for the real or imagined audience of male peers. A sense of being constructed as the approving or disapproving



male audience was often encountered by the interviewers in the counter-transference. For example, Dean and Kevin's accounts of parties and touch rugby often took on this character in the interaction with the researcher. Signifiers of accomplished hegemonic acceptability included 'having' a girlfriend on display, 'having' a luxury car or 'flashy' fashion style or even 'having' the latest electronic technology. As explained in the findings, these acceptabilities were intertwined with racial subjectivities, identities of consumerism and the constructions of the self in the future and fantasy. The real or imagined 'audiences' of peers were negotiated in the diegetic shifts between individual speaking positions and intradiegetic collective speaking positions, suggesting the ambivalent tension between group and individual speaking positions. The presence of imagined audiences and fantasy in the construction of masculine acceptability gives credence to the idea of dialogical selves as autonomous 'I' positions in an imaginal landscape (Hermans, 1989).

The visual and verbal data confirmed a variety of 'displays', supporting the notion of non-relational sexuality as a configuration of practices that include voyeuristic objectification, 'lookism', emphasised heterosexuality and trophyism (Korobov & Bamberg, 2004). The visual evidence is particularly persuasive in this regard, with many 'displays' of trophies, fashion, CDs, swimwear posters, sports equipment, motor cars, medals, certificates or other signifiers of 'having'. A key aspect of non-relational sexuality is the objectification of the gendered other through a visual modality, clearly evidenced in the visual and verbal data.

## **6.6. Race identities, racialisation and commodified masculinity**

Frosh et al. (2002) claimed that racial subject positions intersected with constructions of cultural identity and situated masculine identities, with boys investing energy in the appropriation or repudiation of race identities and race masculinities. The findings suggest that in School A particularly, perhaps because the range of diversity was more obviously connected to culture and race than at School B, there was considerable evidence for 'cultural borrowings', that is cross-over identities (Archetti, 1999; Beynon,

2002). These 'cross-over' identities were sometimes positioned against the grain of the peer acceptability, for example, at School A, Sandile and Nkosinathi's position of caution around appearing in speech or action to be 'too white' or Aaron's description of white boys who identified with the Indian peer-group microculture. What Frosh et al. (2002), called the 'cool pose' associated with black identities and cross-over derivatives was more in evidence in the School A sample, exemplified by Sibusiso's kwaito style. There was a notable presence of what Beynon (2002) calls 'hybridisation' or cross-over identities within the School A sample. For example, some of the white boys from School A were more interested in 'black' Hip Hop music than many of the Zulu boys at School B. The African-American 'cool pose' was not limited to the black adolescents, and some of the black boys did not identify with this style at all, for example, Sandile and Nkululekho who appropriated a more 'white' sporting style. In contrast to the African-American 'cool pose', the Indian boys appropriated a 'style pose' associated with luxury consumer items, football clubs supporter gear and the element of 'flash'. These kinds of commodified masculinities, associated with clothing brands, music styles and dance, were most emphasised among the black and Indian participants from School A. This could be understood in terms of these boys representing the first generation of an emergent black middle class in South Africa. There was a notable absence in the School A data and presence in School B data, of places of employment and themes around work or household chores. Clothing items and personal belongings put on display for School A were in marked contrast with those of School B, for example Bekhani's meagre display of school shoes and textbook in contrast with Sibusiso's branded gear and CDs.

It is argued from the data that the concept of abjection, as applied to homophobia, was also present in racialised constructions of masculinity. Racial constructions were closely imbricated upon and intertwined with the boundaries of acceptability, with raced masculinities that did not conform to these norms repudiated as a 'constitutive outside' (Hook, 2004; Pascoe, 2005).

## **6.7. Theoretical implications of this research**

A consistent finding of this study was that subjective male identities were highly occasioned and situated, lending support to the view that within individuals there exist opposing positions in relation to hegemonic standards, as suggested by Wetherell and Edley (1999). Male subject positions were 'situated' in contexts defined in time and space, both in the lived texture of experience and in relation to imaginary sets of norms and 'audiences'. This finding suggests that boys are positioned in relation to hegemonic norms in more complex and contradictory ways than suggested in Connell's sociology of men. The finding indicates that in terms of subjectivity, that masculinities are constructed through multiple and contradictory narratives of the self, as in the dialogical theory of Hermans and Kempen (1993).

In relation to hegemonic standards, it was clear that boys did not simply 'occupy' one of four positions in relation to a single hegemonic standard, as in Connell's theory, but rather that within each boy's narrative subjectivity, positions existed in dynamic and contradictory relation to one another. These positions were not always consciously chosen but were rather a source of tension, influenced by the sociocultural context as experienced by the individual subject, and constructed through unconscious processes such as abjection, projection and fantasy. The varied positionality of narrative voices was evidenced in the diegetic shifts in the boys' stories, suggesting a constant flux in the realm of personal subjectivity, which lends support to the idea of multivocal and unconscious positioning within discourse (Frosh et al., 2003; Hermans & Kempen, 1993).

The findings suggested that identities and meanings of masculinity were constructed, verified and regulated by social and unconscious processes within the group, instantiated within the embodied multivocal self (Hermans & Kempen, 1993; Mac an Ghail, 1994; Wetherell & Edley, 1993). Tensions within multivocal positioning could be credibly explained in terms of dominant and emerging speaking positions, given that most participants varied their position or 'distance' from the hegemonic standards in relation to

real or imagined sociocultural contexts, for example, an imagined peer audience and an illusory set of hegemonic norms (Lindegger & Maxwell, 2005).

## **6.8. Credibility of the research**

This research is evaluated according to the criteria of Silverman (2001), who argues that credible qualitative research should be judged according to the validity and reliability of the knowledge it produces. Not all qualitative researchers agree on this, with some proposing a new terminology for standards of qualitative research – credibility, verifiability, transferability (Ulin et al., 2002), and others from a feminist research paradigm refuting any claims of ‘scientific objectivity’ (Silverman, 2001). It is argued however, that although qualitative research has a different logic from positivist quantitative research, it may still be subject to rigorous and critical analysis in terms of the validity and reliability constructs (Silverman, 2001).

### **(a) Reliability of the interviews**

The key criterion for reliable interview data and findings is *low-inference description*, that is, direct engagement with the verbal data rather than in the researcher’s reconstructions or personal perspectives (Silverman, 2001). The interview data was reliable in terms of the following three aspects (Silverman, 2001). First, all interviews were audio-taped and each recording listened to several times by the researcher. Second, there was systematic transcription of the tapes ‘according to the needs of reliable analysis’ (Silverman, 2001). 20 interviews and 1 focus group discussion were transcribed verbatim with selections used from the remaining 9 interviews, on the basis that the role of ‘peripheral’ data was to confirm or disconfirm the ‘core’ data of the study (Silverman, 2001). Third, long extracts from the data have been presented in the research report so that the words of the interview participants remain the basis for discussion. In terms of the second criterion, the transcription of the data from School B was done slightly differently from School A. The researcher transcribed interviews for School A whereas for B as it involved translation which then rendered some transcription conventions less



meaningful, such as marks for pauses, emphasis and so on. This shortcoming was not considered so serious as to call reliability into question, however, as even the interview data remained meaningful although it is noted that the data for School B would have been richer had these conventions been included. See Appendix 2 for transcription codes.

#### (b) Reliability of the visual data

The photographic data may be considered textual data and was analysed through a quantitative content analysis. The two key issues of reliability with textual data were the *precision of category definitions* and the *accurate counting of category instances* in a standardized way (Silverman, 2001). Reliability was enhanced by doing the content analysis, generating a set of emergent findings and then completely reworking it with more accurate definitions of categories and systematic counting.

#### (c) Validity of the findings

Silverman (2001) argues that although it is optimal to use multiple approaches to data collection and analysis, validity through the *triangulation* of data drawn from different methods may be limited. However, it is argued that in this study the quantitative and qualitative methods were complementary. Although each method produced different kinds of data, which would be expected as content analysis and narrative analysis are different perspectives drawn from different theories, it is argued that the ‘conversation’ between the two sets of data enhanced validity by making better sense of each other. It is argued that the mixed method approach also enhanced the quality of *comprehensive data treatment* (Silverman, 2001), such that ‘anecdotalism’ was avoided by providing illustrative examples from throughout the data set and presenting a corpus of data in the content analysis findings.

The design of the research lent itself well to *respondent validation* (Silverman, 2001) in the sense that meanings of the visual data were verified by the participants during the interview. Further respondent validation could have been included by then taking the

findings back to the participant sample. This did not take place within the resources available for this research and may represent a limitation to the validity of the study. *Appropriate tabulations* also enhance validity by avoiding the selection of fragments of data (Silverman, 2001). The tabulation of sample characteristics and content analysis findings provided a sense of the illustrative data in relation to the complete data set. *Deviant case analysis* was employed during the study and was integrated with the purposive sampling strategy where there were planful attempts to recruit participants who might challenge the findings, as recommended by Silverman (2001). Examples of such deviant case analysis are the contrasts provided between focus group and interview responses or contrasting perspectives of two participants on the same topic, for example Sibusiso and Nkosinathi on the subject of school sport. The search for tropes in the narrative analysis also added both to deviant case analysis and *constant comparison* (Silverman, 2001) as finding the similar or differing tropes across the narratives guided the researcher to a comparison for similarity or difference among participants. Moving from a smaller to a larger data set may also support validity (Silverman, 2001). For this research, this occurred as purposively expanding the initial sample on the basis of questions and trends that emerged from the data. Constant comparison and deviant-case analysis means a moving to and fro between different aspects of the data (Silverman, 2001). It is argued that this occurred effectively in the 'dialogue' between the content analysis and narrative analysis. It also occurred in terms of the replication of the process in two research settings.

(d) Further aspects of credibility

*Prolonged engagement and persistent observation* is considered an indicator of credibility in qualitative research (Creswell, 1998). In this research participants were engaged in a prolonged process that meant meeting with researchers on several different days during the course of the data collection. All participants had at least three meetings with the researchers during the course of the study. *Peer review and debriefing* may also enhance credibility (Creswell, 1998). Debriefing and discussion among the researcher and interviewers offered peer supervision and reflexivity. The researcher also spent time

debriefing and discussing with two supervisors and was also concurrently involved as an interviewer in a study of adolescent masculinity among the visually impaired, an extra involvement that provided an opportunity for peer discussion and reflexivity.

*Clarifying researcher bias* is an important aspect of credibility (Creswell, 1998). As the researcher I was aware that my identity as a privileged middle-class white male was important and, over the course of the research my understanding of gender and cultural processes has shifted on the basis of prolonged engagement with the subject matter and the study itself. Thus, in listening to the interviews now I can in retrospect identify some masculinist biases and implicit 'blind spots' in relation to cultural diversity that would not be present were I to do the research now, having 'grown with the study'.

*External audits* and *rich, thick description* are an aid to credibility (Creswell, 1998). The presentation of preliminary findings at a conference midway through the research allowed for critical review and the development of the content analysis. A journal article was written on the basis of preliminary findings from the narrative analysis and its review by supervisor, co-supervisor and submission for publication provided a useful audit of the process and its product, especially in terms of thinking critically about the relevance of the study. Presenting emergent findings is considered a useful way to enhance credibility of qualitative research (Silverman, 2000). The appended illustrative data and narrative analysis schematics are included to enrich the description and retain voice-centredness in the findings. Findings were framed as far as possible in the actual words of the participants to enhance what may be called low-inference description (Silverman, 2001).

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CONCLUSION

#### 7.1. Revisiting aims and objectives

##### (a) Identifying constructions of hegemonic standards by adolescent boys

The photo-narrative method provided an excellent window into the lived sociocultural experience of the boys, enabling hegemonic constructions to be identified and explored for meaning. In the complete sample there were various sets of hegemonic or alternative standards that were experienced in different ways by the boys in terms of context or subjective positioning. There was a convergence across contexts that peer-group norms produced norms of acceptability that were at times unattainable. This implied that hegemonic 'standards' had an elusive and illusory quality, and represented impossible standards of masculine acceptability. Possibly the most influential context for hegemonic standards was the male peer-group microculture, a finding also reported by Mac an Ghail (1994). In various peer contexts, acceptable masculinity was constructed around displayed enactments or 'doing' in order to 'prove' masculinity. These enactments occurred as displayed readiness in relation to compulsory and emphasised heterosexuality, signifiers of 'toughness' and risk-taking. The construct of non-relational sexuality (Korobov & Bamberg, 2004) was found to be an accurate descriptor for the focus of 'hegemonic talk' or discursive accomplishment within the male peer-group microculture. The findings suggested that performative acts or 'doing' masculinity could be overtaken by a masculinity based upon the possession of acceptability signifiers, a masculinity of 'having'. Closely connected with the objectification, voyeurism, trophyism and obsessive 'lookism' of non-relational sexuality, and drawing on discourses of commodity masculinity, these masculinities of 'having' were organised around symbolic displays. These displays of 'having' were diverse across the sample but included the trophy girlfriend, fashion style or the 'cool pose', conspicuous consumption and symbols of accomplishment.



(b) Individual positioning towards dominant norms for masculine performance

Dialogical tension was evident in most of narratives examined. In most examples there were identifiable contradictions among multiple speaking positions and in relation to hegemonic standards. Unconscious blind spots around these contradictions within the respondents' narratives suggested that individual positioning occurred at multiple levels and were influenced by unconscious processes. This was also true of positions that were left as 'in-between' or that were invisibilised through spatiotemporal or diegetic positioning. Individual orientations were influenced by opposing developmental and social imperatives, for example, an imperative to take on responsibility against the social pressure to be having fun 'with the crowd'.

In terms of the four positions in relation to hegemony (Connell, 1995), it is suggested that the findings of this study indicate that subjectively individuals may occupy any number of these positions simultaneously, and that identifying such positions in relation to hegemonic standards depends on context-dependent norms of acceptable masculinity that the subject draws upon, and from which perspective, both of self and other. For example, Mark's biographical narratives of homophobia slide among (a) complicity, in the sense of normalising the experience as a 'stage'; (b) subordination, when speaking analeptically as the individual subject of homophobic harassment'; (c) marginalisation, when commenting extradiegetically; and (d) hegemonic, when advocating his 'secure' masculine identity. Another example might be Jason's description of the 'hierarchies' within the school where the narrator's ambiguous stance of 'in-betweenness' allows a layering of all four positions within the narrative. It may also be contended that a stance of ambiguous 'in-betweenness' is a position in its own right, one that falls outside of the Connell 'big four'. From the perspective of queer theory, this undecidability may define it in exciting new ways as a 'non-position' or 'constitutive outside' (Pascoe, 2005). Such a 'non-position' may open alternative or subversive spaces that are not defined in relation to hegemonic norms, that lead away from masculinities defined in relation to hegemony, or maybe even away from 'masculinity'. This may be related to what MacInnes (1998, cited in Beynon, 2002) calls the 'end of masculinity', the argument that the notion of

masculinity is becoming increasingly untenable in a world of post-identity politics. 'Undecidability' is a characteristic of queer theory, which aims to defamiliarise texts, representations and identities normatively assumed to have fixed meaning and endorse heterosexual normality (Beynon, 2002).

(c) Challenges of positioning according to dominant norms

The findings suggested that conformity to expected norms of acceptability was a source of tension and difficulty for many boys, particularly in relation to the male-peer group's power to exclude and include through processes of othering. These processes occurred at the deep level of abjection, projection and projective identification and as such were associated with strongly affective and at times, visceral responses of distress, anxiety, confusion and disempowerment. One of the challenges facing the boys in the study included pressure to performatively prove masculinity through compulsory heterosexuality or sporting involvement and contestation. Academic success, alternative sub-cultural style or rebellious negative identities were some of the tactics boys used to maintain a distance from this imperative to perform. A further challenge was managing the conflicting demands and imperatives within the microcultures and sociocultural contexts. For some boys it was assuming a critical stance, setting up alternative sets of standards within marginalised affiliations. In coping with pressure to conform to group norms some boys set up envisaged futures of academic and vocational success as a means to resist these pressures. Sport was sometimes set up, particularly among boys whose contexts were more threatened by relative deprivation and social threat, as a means to prevent anti-social or irresponsible behaviour. As discussed, particular risk for habits of alcohol use and smoking among boys this age may be linked to microcultural processes, as these practices serve as immediate signifiers of the constitutive cultural elements of acceptability, such as toughness (being able to 'handle' it) and displays of risk-taking.

Definitions of the self by the group was a challenge to the boys' sense of themselves and their self-esteem, particularly when the group defined acceptability by 'criticisms' of appearance, interests or apparent sexual preference. One way of managing this problem

was to re-think the categories, practice a kind of 'visibility management' (Lasser & Thoringer, 2003) or manage an undecidability about oneself. An alternative set of masculine standards that better matched the person's authentic sense of self could be located in cultural and religious contexts, which perhaps offer a sociocultural context in which boys can experience an alternative way of being in the world.

(d) *Managing distances for alternative or subordinate masculinities*

Cross-over identities, negative identities and sub-cultural affiliations were some of the contexts in which were managed alternative sets of standards to those within school and peer microcultures. Religious practices, particularly those in which there were rites of passage, were also located as areas in which distance could be established from standards embedded in toughness, non-relational sexuality, contestation and displayed risk-taking.

(e) *The multivoiced performance of masculinity across sociocultural contexts*

Suggested evidence to support the notion of multivocal performances include (a) the wide range of settings and themes used by participants to represent photographically their experiences as young men; (b) the more 'hegemonic' presentation of the boys in the focus group in contrast with the individual interviews; (c) the shifting of diegetic positions within situated embedded narratives; (d) ambiguous identity positions both from shifting diegetic perspectives and within the spatiotemporal frame of the embedded narrative.

## **7.2. Implications of the research findings**

Positioning in relation to or against a confusing, contradictory, racially marked and illusory set of hegemonic norms for an 'acceptable' masculinity may be difficult and challenging for many boys. While peer-group microcultures operate as a source of important learning about oneself, they may also be areas of powerful social and unconscious pressures for boys to perform according to an ambiguous standard. For

many boys living in two worlds (Bennewith, 2003), the challenge may be finding coherence among conflicting expectations and imperatives.

The findings of this study made particular sense in terms of the concept of non-relational sexuality, as a cluster of hegemonic behaviours and attitudes which constructs sexuality as sport or lust, is centered voyeuristically on physical appearance, objectifies sexual partners and is organised around trophyism, voyeurism and hypersexuality (Korobov & Bamberg, 2004). The implication of this in practice might be to facilitate new ways of being for boys who are caught up in the practices of hegemonic non-relational sexuality to reduce the personal cost in anxiety and stress of measuring oneself against an elusive set of imperatives. Facilitating change may occur in a range of contexts – schooling, psychotherapy, peer education projects to name a few. The findings suggest that assisting boys to challenge hegemonic attitudes and behaviours may require the following: (a) making available alternative narratives and ways of being; (b) traditional cultural and religious practices may provide such alternatives; (c) involving peer role-models and sporting cultures may be the most effective way to mobilize changing constructions, given that these are highly influential microcultures; (d) for educators, critical awareness and sensitivity around the gendered cultures of schools and the conflicts and challenges facing boys. Educators who succeed in ‘teaching against the grain’ may be well positioned to challenging their meanings of masculinity, particularly within the peer group context and in relation to issues such as sexuality, substance abuse, anti-racism, tolerance and the rights of others (Beynon, 2002; Frank et al., 2003; McQueen & Henwood, 2002).

The findings of this study also suggest that school-based cultures have a crucial part in encouraging or discouraging practices in schools which foster tolerance and respect rather than exclusion and conflict. Schools which remain bound to monocultural legacies of the past risk maintaining practices which are harmful to the well-being of adolescent boys at a number of levels. Adolescent boys who experience active exclusion, homophobic or racial harassment may well be at risk of discouragement, low self-esteem,



anxiety or depression and it is thus important that South African schools become places in which difference is embraced rather than seen as threatening.

The enthusiastic participation of most of the boys in this study suggested that resilience could be enhanced through struggling for and against what it means to be masculine, projects such as Targeted Aids Interventions (TAI) and Men as Partners (le Grange, 2004; Mehta et al., 2004). The work with the boys, and their efforts and engagement with the process suggested that the active involvement of adolescent boys in changing gender practices should not be underestimated. As suggested in the literature young men can exercise agency in their lives, can become actively engaged in gender equity work by working with their peer group, and can be empowered to act against heterosexism or racism, especially if equipped with the intellectual tools to reflect critically on masculinities (Coulter, 2003; Frank et al., 2003; le Grange, 2004). This potential for counter-hegemonic awareness and activism was particularly evident among the young men who voluntarily attended the post-interview focus group, but was also present among many of the participants from both schools. These participants displayed an energy and enthusiasm for getting to grips with the challenges and difficulties facing adolescent boys.

### **7.3. Limitations of this research**

This study attempted to develop an integrated research method that facilitated a window into the complex and dialogical interplay of unconscious and social processes in the production of situated subject positions. The photo-narrative method offered a feasible process which enhanced the validity of the interview by facilitating the active involvement in exploring meanings and a unique grounding for the interview in the textured life experience of the person. While the photo-narrative method enriched the process and product of interviewing, finding a workable solution for the data analysis proved the greatest challenge. What was developed was a mixed method that blended qualitative with quantitative approaches. This approach had a 'zooming-in' effect as one moved from the broad brush strokes of the content analysis to the fine detail of line-by-

line narrative analysis. Nevertheless, despite the workable solution, it was found that integrating the rich visual data with the interview narratives was very challenging. The most integrated way of presenting the findings was challenging, and the approach used here may not be the only appropriate one for this data.

Perhaps the most significant limitation of this study was the open-endedness and breadth of the inquiry, particularly in its initial phase. In the hands of a more experienced qualitative researcher, fewer subjects and a more defined focus, this study may have produced more useful findings with far less work. As a template for future research with this method, however, it is hoped that this study has made a useful contribution in developing a data analysis method for studies using visual data in this way and in relation to theories of subjectivity. This method has particular potential for researching groups with very specific challenges and where large samples are not possible. This is because in terms of process and product, the approach is suited for high participant involvement and where there is a need to empower participants more within a research process and possibly where participants are highly invested in the product of the research. It is suggested that this method is the most useful approach for research based in narrative psychology and dialogical theory, as it presents a unique window into lived experience and perspectivity in the moment of the interview.

#### **7.4. Directions for future masculinity research**

At a theoretical level it may be argued that in terms of much of the social constructionist research such as the Frosh et al. (2002) study, insufficient attention has been given to the developmental aspects of adolescent masculinities, although the article by Korobov and Bamberg (2004) offers some direction towards a developmental psychology that does not rely on the unilinear notions of ages and stages. While traditional developmental theory has assumed static universalism around cultural issues, it is suggested that there is a need to articulate theories which link developmental imperatives with a process orientation towards culture, particularly within South Africa's contexts of social change and cultural flux.

It is proposed that photo-narrative research methods provide a unique window into gender subjectivities that may be most usefully applied to small groups and organised around focused questions. An area for relevant research using this approach might be adolescent boys infected or affected by HIV, perhaps particularly boys living in child-headed households or in relation to antiretroviral adherence. Given the effectiveness of the photo-narrative method for the population of this study, the method might also be very usefully applied in evaluation research on projects like Target AIDS Interventions or the Shosholozza AIDS peer education project. A feasible extension of this investigation might be longitudinal follow-up interviews with the same young men who participated in this research, a '16 to 21' study in which participants could listen to the tapes and provide commentary on how their perceptions of masculinity have changed.

It is also suggested that much research on masculinities in South Africa has been overly reliant upon the social constructionist formulations of Connell (1995) and that further study of adolescent masculinity should be paralleled with the development of a dialogical theory that makes better sense of masculinity in terms of subjectivity and cultural processes. While the construct of hegemonic masculinity has been useful in providing critical analysis of masculinity in relation to patriarchy, there is a need to for masculinity researcher to generate theory which contributes to the critical debates in and around gender, especially in relation to feminism, post-feminist critique and queer theory.

Given the local crisis in masculinity, there is a need for a comprehensive research project on masculinities in South African schools, perhaps replicating the effective methods used in this pilot study in a wider range of schools or following replicating the design of Frosh et al. (2002) or Mac an Ghail (1994). Currently, there is no local equivalent of the Frosh et al. (2002) study. A larger scale exploration of meanings of masculinity would be best informed by theory that accounts for the neglected area of subjectivity in masculinity studies and accounts for culture as process. A rationale for replication is that it enhances the reliability of meta-analysis more reliable. It is suggested that beyond a comprehensive research project, there is a full meta-analysis of the local research on

adolescent masculinities would be another helpful means of directing further inquiry and the articulation of concepts and theories.

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## GLOSSARY

**Abjection:** Based in feminist psychoanalysis, particularly the work of Julia Kristeva, it refers to an affective, somatic and symbolic process that regulates the boundaries of individual subjectivity, through the concomitant invocation and exclusion of that which is intolerable to the existence of the subject within social life (Hook, 2004). For Judith Butler, the abject identity is a 'constitutive outside to the domain of the subject' (Hook, 2004, p. 689).

**Analepsis (analeptic):** An achronological movement back in time, such that an event which occurred earlier is related later in the text. Analepsis may be external or internal, that is, inside or outside the story. See *prolepsis*. (Toolan, 2001).

**Deixis (deictic):** The elements of language that function to anchor or orientate a narrative from a particular time, at a particular place and from a particular speaker (Toolan, 2001). Deictic elements include tense choices, adverbs of time and place and relative pronouns such as *this* or *that*

**Diegesis (diegetic):** Presents the events that happened in the sense that a detached external reporter who is able to organise the teleology of the story prior to its narration. See *mimesis*. (Toolan, 2001)

**Embedded oral narratives:** Labov's hypothesis that a fundamental narrative structure may be found in the ordinary narratives of personal experience. Thus, from the personal account of events may be drawn core narratives which correspond to Labov's framework for oral narratives. See *Labov's categories* (Toolan, 2001; McQueen & Henwood, 2002)

**Extradiegetic narrator:** A category of narrator who speaks from outside the story. See *intradiegetic narrator*. (Toolan, 2001)

**Hegemonic masculinity:** The configuration of gender practice taken as normative, that embodies what is considered a standard of acceptability and legitimises the dominant position of men (Connell, 1995). 'Hegemony' is a state of ideology which normalises or legitimises social practice (Edley, 2001). Hegemonic masculinity has featured as in a number of studies of adolescent masculinity (Frosh et al., 2002; Mac an Ghaill, 1994).

**Heterodiegetic narrator:** A category of narrator who takes various speaking positions, shifting from one position to the next. See *homodiegetic narrator*. (Toolan, 2001)

**Homodiegetic narrator:** A category of narrator who takes one consistent speaking position either inside or outside the story. See *heterodiegetic narrator*. (Toolan, 2001)

**Intradiegetic narrator:** A category of narrator who speaks from inside the story. See *extradiegetic narrator*. (Toolan, 2001)

**Labov's categories:** Labov claims that oral narratives are organised in the following way: they have an *abstract* or headline for the story; an *orientation* that identifies setting and characters; a *complicating action* which forms the pivotal enacted experience of the story; an *evaluation* of the action and its meaning and a *resolution* and *coda* which resolve the action and terminate the story (McQueen & Henwood, 2002; Toolan, 2001).

**Mimesis (mimetic):** Presents the events that happened in the sense that a witness at the scene, typically from an internal character focalisation. See *diegesis*. (Toolan, 2001)

**Multivocal oralsis:** The dialectical interaction of visual texts with divergent interviewee responses. See *photo-narrative method* (Fontana & Frey, 2003).

**Non-relational sexuality:** A cluster of hegemonic attitudes and behaviours identified in the peer-group conversations of adolescent boys, identified as a developmental life-stage by Good and Sherrod (1997, cited in Korobov & Bamberg, 2004). These attitudes and behaviours include the objectification of girls as sexual partners, describing sexuality as sport or lust; obsession with physical attractiveness, tendencies towards voyeurism, trophyism and emphasised heterosexuality.

**Prolepsis (proleptic):** An achronological movement forward in time, such that an event which occurred later is related later in the text. Prolepsis may be external or internal, that is, inside or outside the story. See analepsis. (Toolan, 2001)

**Queer theory:** An eclectic critique of essentialism drawn from gay and lesbian Scholarship. Queer theory 'defamiliarises' texts, representations and identities that are commonly taken as normative (Beynon, 2002).

**School microcultures:** The constitutive cultural elements of the school as a site for the construction of masculinities, such as the administration of the school, the material, social and discursive practices of educators, management and students, including the peer-group microculture (Mac an Ghail, 1994).

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## APPENDIX 1

### EXAMPLES OF EMBEDDED NARRATIVES

#### N.1. Aslaam (A)

	[any people at school you don't like to mix with?]	
01	I don't ah: I don't think I'm being racist or anything	<b>abstract</b>
02	but some of the white guys just start punching each other	
03	all the time (.) I don't really hang with those kind of people	
04	These type here that just hang out and ta:lk	<b>orientation</b>
	[the white guy in the group?]	
05	he's like ( ) our type	
06	this is just a bunch	
07	I'm sure he's here at school	
08	and there's a certain group of guys	<b>action</b>
09	and another group of guys	
10	and they all get together at break	
11	>this is my group<	
	[your type?]	
12	ja well ahh: we just ermm: we like very <u>witty</u>	
13	we always like ah >you know< like <u>classing</u> each each other	
14	like this and you te:ll him back	
15	and I just like ah and people that ah	
16	>mostly like to play indoor soccer< like over here	
17	and erm: ja and just like people that ah who <u>click</u> with us	<b>resolution</b>
18	you know we: all everybody in this school gets along	<b>evaluation</b>
19	and if someone else comes in	
20	we come and play with that guy	
21	and <u>if</u> they don't enjoy >they probably won't come after that	<b>coda</b>

**CORE NARRATIVES**

groups are the people who 'just' click vs the white guys who punch each other

denied volition of the group – it 'just' happens that way

group has identity as witty classing indoor soccer players

**TROPES**

**DIEGESIS**

**SPATIOTEMPORAL**

<p>our type/kinds just a bunch just hang out and talk certain groups we like very witty always classing you tell him back this is my group people who click</p>	<p>Intradiagetive collective and singular Heterodiegetic narrative</p> <p>Including individual into group Excluding group from individual</p> <p>We/us I you him</p>	<p>at school at breaktime</p> <p>links to contexts indoor soccer</p>
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**MAIN NARRATIVE THEMES**

Everybody in the school gets along vs certain kinds of groups or types

Toughening up through classing the others with witty repartee



## **N.2. Themba (b)**

[tell me about your photos]

01 here it was during the A F C O N **orientation**

02 we were watching Morocco and Nigeria

03 these are my abafana **abstract**

04 we usually sit in the afternoons

05 and talk letting time pass by [what do you boys do for a living?]

06 they go to school **action**

07 we sit in the afternoons [how is life in the afternoons?]

08 no it's okay

09 we just walk around or sit and talk [this photo?]

10 this is the weekend **orientation**

11 we are playing soccer

12 just before the match

13 I play for a team called Tornado [what makes you play soccer?] **action**

14 I play it because I'm good

15 and it keeps me away from doing bad things

[so you see it as a wall for not doing bad things?]

16 yes I think that's it **resolution**

17 Maybe like smoking

18 and maybe if I just sit and do nothing **coda**

19 I'll end up doing bad things like stealing

## CORE NARRATIVES

ending up standing still

sitting and talking is okay vs sitting and doing nothing leads to trouble

sports participation prevents the smoking, the stealing, the doing nothing

## TROPES

## DIEGESIS

## SPATIOTEMPORAL

we sit in the afternoons these are my abafana walk around sit and talk we are playing soccer good at soccer end up doing bad things sit and do nothing	mostly collective intradiegetic  speaking for the group  self in relation to competence	in the streets after school before soccer matches  also wider sporting context  proleptic scenarios what might happen
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## MAIN NARRATIVE THEMES

Conflicting trajectories of stasis and non-doing vs good and bad activity

Non-doing, non-playing, sitting and talking is dangerous

### N.3. Mandla (A)

01	like we play there in this place by my house	<b>abstract</b>
02	where you can just go play these games	<b>orientation</b>
03	and I enjoy them [important in the life of young men?]	
04	no it's not important to play these games	<b>action</b>
05	but then at <u>this</u> time you still play games	
06	you getting (rid) of them slowly	
07	you playing less and less games	
08	ja but then they help	
09	if you good at them then people say ja you good	
10	every (.) usually everybody's here	
11	this is like a place where everybody hangs out	
12	there's a jukebox	
13	there's music playing in the background [kind of music?]	
14	it's like kwaito (.) hip hop (.)	
15	and there's a bit of gospel put in [music important?]	
16	no but <u>then</u> there's some artists that you have to know	<b>complication</b>
17	and if somebody asks do you know the song?	
18	you feel like you don't know much	
19	so it's like the new thing and you don't know it	
20	it's like the old-fashioned	
21	ja (.) you have to stay with the crowd ((laughs))	<b>resolution</b>
22	it's erm <u>no</u> (.) because it is like <u>cool</u> (.) ja	<b>evaluation</b>
23	to stay up with the crowd	<b>coda</b>

## CORE NARRATIVES

maturity is playing fewer games vs people saying you are good at something

staying with the crowd being in fashion an imperative

ambivalence around the time to play games vs having fun with peers

## TROPES

you can just go  
you still play games  
everybody hangs out  
no  
stay with the crowd

## DIEGESIS

intradiegetic collective  
insider view  
  
heterodiegetic shift to  
positioned outsider  
  
you we they

## SPATIOTEMPORAL

township tavern  
arcade shop  
after school  
  
scenarios of when/if  
futuraity and  
analeptic pastness

## MAIN NARRATIVE THEMES

maturity imperative to stop playing games

imperative to stay with the crowd through fashion and music

being tested by the crowd against standard of knowing the latest music trends



#### **N.4. Warren (A)**

01	ja as you become a man a lot of people <u>do</u> critici:se you	<b>abstract</b>
02	often you don't (.)	
03	it's not true criticism ((stutter))	
04	just a <u>lot</u> of people criticise others	
05	in order to get a status for themselves	
06	to get a name for themselves	
07	I think it's important to know how to handle it	<b>evaluation</b>
08	yes yes ja [must be hard?]	
09	yes (.) a good mate of mine	<b>orientation</b>
10	he's one of (.) he's actually my best friend	
11	he gets criticised quite a lot	<b>action</b>
12	but he's really a nice chap	
13	because it doesn't get to him	
14	he's learned to take it you know	
15	it's all a very <u>big joke</u> they say	
16	ja it's just that then he's not a <u>fat</u> chap	
17	people just <u>tune</u> him >ja you thin hey<	
18	say to him ja: (.) you <u>fat</u>	
19	but he just laughs	
20	which is he's learned a bit so it's a good thing for him	<b>resolution</b>
21	ja my mates and I were discussing the other day	
22	if you in a group you feel more secure	
23	so you prepared (.) to say to him (.)	<b>evaluation</b>
24	to say something bad about him	
25	because he's one person	
26	and you're a group of people	
27	so if he decides to say something back	
28	you've got your backing	
29	so you're more powerful with strength	<b>coda</b>

## CORE NARRATIVES

criticising as the way to defend or gain status or a name in the group

not caring what others think as a distancing device

knowing how to handle and take it important

## TROPES

## DIEGESIS

## SPATIOTEMPORAL

people do criticise you not true criticism to get a name to get status for themselves people just tune him learned to take it a very big joke you got your backing put to shame	heterodiegetic shifts  extradiegetic story  intradiegetic evaluation  I him themselves	in the peer group  individual vs group  insiders group perspective  outside perspective  peer conversation
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## MAIN NARRATIVE THEMES

mental toughness idea – learning to handle the pressure

the individual in the group has backing to marginalise persons

receiving criticism as inevitable or natural vs the power to shame others

## N.5. Sandile (A)

	[this photo?]	
01	here (.) it's my peers here	<b>orientation</b>
02	they influence me in a good and bad way	<b>abstract</b>
03	erm they influence me in a good way cause they give me	<b>action</b>
04	they give me people I can relate to	
05	at erm erm the same stage of their lives	
06	bad things that influence you badly	
07	they can bring down my confidence	
08	by erm <u>isolating</u> me in certain things	
09	like certain feature that they I have	
10	that are not ( ) the standards they're expecting	
11	physical features	
12	and they can build down like my my self-esteem	
13	for their own benefits	
14	they can destroy (.) physical features	
15	no necessarily that you need but maybe you have	
16	ja like you might have (.) my eyes are not the whitest tone	
17	those physical features (.) they can isolate me	
18	tease (.) erm tease me about (things) like that	
	[good things they do?]	
19	they give me support	
20	so support is a good one	
21	they they try to lift you up	
22	ja something like that	<b>resolution</b>
	[should a real man be independent or part of a group?]	
23	everyone is different	<b>evaluation</b>
24	so I'd probably put the one that people judge you for who you are	
25	cause they have different purposes	
26	different ways of expressing themselves	<b>coda</b>

## CORE NARRATIVES

peer groups needed at a time of life for self-comparison with others
peer groups influence negatively by building up or bringing down self-esteem
physical features as a standard of comparison for the peer group
isolation or teasing from the group

## TROPES

## DIEGESIS

## SPATIOTEMPORAL

they influence me	mostly homodiegetic	peers in school
in a good way		
in a bad way	intradiegetic singular	peer talk
bring down		
build up	with extradiegetic	biographical
isolating me	perspectivity	
standards		real events
physical features	I me them they	
tease		possible scenarios
different individuals		

## MAIN NARRATIVE THEMES

building up and bringing down influences of the peer group
peer group creates belonging but threatens self-esteem around appearance



**N.6. Dane (A)**

01 they they you know how they say School A guys stick together? **orientation**  
02 and (.) ja they're they're all mates  
03 and they all big buddies  
04 no it's not like that **abstract**  
05 they mock and they ridicule each other  
06 and they (.) it's actually quite sick really **action**  
07 and they (.) they just isolate some people  
08 just to:tally isolate  
09 I know in our dorm (.) there's one oke  
10 that I actually feel quite sorry for  
11 e:veryone just totally isolates him  
12 it's actually (.) not nice really  
13 and especially for me as well  
14 because I live so far away I don't get to go home that often  
15 so I have to stay and keep my troubles to myself  
16 and if I phone my parents then they'll  
17 it's not like they can do anything  
18 but they'll say ( ) hang in there  
19 hang in there ( ) I'm re:ally a strong person  
[how do you cope?]  
10 (.) I just get over it **resolution**  
11 sorry that's my motto at the moment  
12 it's actually quite interesting that that's quite a nice thing  
13 that's come out of School A is to get (.) over (.) it  
14 that's what I've done **evaluation**  
15 I've just (.) I've thought all right my bad years are over  
16 like I'm nearly at the end of my school career  
17 so I'm just going to stick to it  
18 and carry on (.) cope with it (.) live with it **coda**

## CORE NARRATIVES

peer group buddiness is a display
mocking ridiculing and isolating used to isolate individuals from the group
coping with isolation means hanging in, getting over it and carrying on

## TROPES

## DIEGESIS

## SPATIOTEMPORAL

big buddies it's not like that they totally isolate they mock and ridicule hang in there I just get over it I am a strong person stick with it carry on	extradiegetic collective  (what they do to them)  shifts to intradiegetic singular  (the experience of self in the peer group)	moves  distanced stance outside of the them  experiential self  biographical analepsis proleptic scenarios
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## MAIN NARRATIVE THEMES

Isolation by the peer group through verbal description
Coping with the isolation by 'getting over it' or withdrawing

**N.7. Dumisane (B)**

[most important things to you as a young male?]

01 as a male I consider studying as very important

**abstract**

02 because if I don't study that would be a problem

03 my taima ((father)) passed away this year

**orientation**

04 then I realised that I would be in trouble if I don't study

05 and nowadays everyone wants to be something

**action**

06 and I am one of those people

[how are you different from other young people?]

07 one thing I am always cautious about

08 is that young people don't know what they want to be

09 but they think they know too much

10 they drink

11 they smoke

12 and I don't even on Christmas

13 I don't enjoy myself that way

14 When I see them do that I just laugh at them

[what others think?]

15 I am thinking about my future

**evaluation**

16 and they say so many girls

17 and I ask them what am I gonna do with girls

18 so I tell them that I can never stay with a girl

19 because they just get pregnant

20 when they stay together all you think about is having sex

21 it won't even take a year sure-sure

22 and worse you don't know what you want in life

**resolution**

23 so I'm not into girls that much

24 because there are better things to worry about

**coda**

## CORE NARRATIVES

smoking, drinking and going out with girls in present vs studying for the future

future plans and scenarios more important than present enjoyment

defines self as different vs joins with others who have plans for the future

## TROPES

## DIEGESIS

## SPATIOTEMPORAL

studying is very important I would be in trouble to be something they drink they smoke thinking about my future what you want in life so I'm not into girls	intradiegetic biography  sets distance between self and other youth	the present in terms of future scenarios  future scenario of being someone or something
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## MAIN NARRATIVE THEMES

moving beyond present situation to future scenarios of being something

avoiding alcohol, smoking, girls as impediments to future plans

## N.8. Mandla (A)

01	here's my brother my cousin	<b>orientation</b>
02	and the rest are friends >okay (.) my cousin's friend<	
03	it sho:ws I'm exposed to this almost every day	
04	I see the same almost every day [important?]	<b>abstract</b>
05	<u>no</u> it's not important	
06	I <u>could</u> develop without it	
07	but maybe to <u>know</u> what could happen	<b>action</b>
08	and to watch them <u>do it</u>	
09	and maybe see them get drunk	
10	and see how stupid they act	
11	maybe it could help me not to do these kinds of things	
12	<u>no</u> (.) it's fun (.) they just say stupid things	
13	((laughs)) so I sit with them all the time [drinking important for young men?]	
14	<u>no</u> but then <u>at this stage</u> (.) drinking is <u>cool</u>	
15	but (.) to get <u>respected</u> or <u>acknowledged</u> you have to drink	
16	no because everybody does it	
17	all the <u>cool</u> people do it so:	
18	you just feel to be <u>cool</u> you have to drink	
19	in the long run (.) it's better not to drink	
20	at <u>this</u> stage (.) drinking is good for people	<b>resolution</b>
21	like at this age they like drinking [important for you to be in a photo like this?]	<b>coda</b>
22	it's not important	<b>evaluation</b>
23	it depends who you showing it to	
01	if you go and show it to people from your community	
02	<u>no</u> friends your age (.) it's like important to be in this type of photo	



## CORE NARRATIVES

drinking as a means for peer acknowledgement and respect as a cool young man

drinking leads to stupid actions and is not good in the long run

## TROPES

## DIEGESIS

## SPATIOTEMPORAL

almost every day exposed to see them get drunk everybody does it cool to drink at this stage it depends who	intradiegetic perspective  biographical experience  extradiegetic scenario  I they you	home environs in township community  young working men  acceptability to peers but not for older generation
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## MAIN NARRATIVE THEMES

tension between drinking as needed for acknowledgement and respect as a cool young man and the stupidity or dangers of long term use

drinking as a right or natural activity for young men at a certain stage

## N.9. Kevin (A)

01	Saturday night	<b>orientation</b>
03	I normally see a whole lot of (.) [School A] boys	<b>abstract</b>
04	that I see every day	
05	most of them go out on Saturday night (.)	<b>action</b>
06	so I go with my same group of friends (.) [how do they behave?]	
07	At the close of school the guys just like to show off and stuff	
08	I mean, I've got a friend (.) he's not in this photo	
09	but he also (.) he's quite a big guy	
10	he likes throwing his weight around and stuff	
11	so there are lots of guys who go out to fight	
12	just to show how big they are	
13	but I mean it's more guys trying to show off	
14	or not even (.) I mean if you have a girlfriend	
15	his identity's just himself	
16	but other guys show off (.) dancing	
17	I mean it's wearing clothes (.) smoking	<b>resolution</b>
18	to show off themselves	
19	alcohol (.) drinking I mean guys that drink a lot [what are they thinking?]	
20	I think they are trying promote their self-image	<b>evaluation</b>
21	I think (.) that's what they're trying to do (.)	
22	it's not really the macho thing	
23	because they just show they can fight	<b>coda</b>
24	they can drink	

## CORE NARRATIVES

displays of drinking, dancing, clothes, smoking to show size counts
displays to impress girls vs show vs to prove self with male peers
those with (trophy) girlfriends relieved of pressure to perform

## TROPES

## DIEGESIS

## SPATIOTEMPORAL

to show off themselves see lots of guys show how big they are a big guy throw weight around go out to fight show they can fight show they can drink	intradiegetic commentary  self in relation to group  shift to extradiegetic observation  distancing	Saturday nights night clubs  boys from school  guys in the club  transformation
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## MAIN NARRATIVE THEMES

pressure to prove masculinity vs changed expectations with (trophy) girlfriend
drinkings as occupying space and displaying weight and size

**N.10. Aaron (A)**

01	a lot of these guys actually came to this concert	<b>abstract</b>
02	( ) and brought their girlfriends along	
03	and see (.) for the girlfriends	
04	they're just the accessory to watch the concert	
05	and that's how it's all stated (.)	<b>orientation</b>
06	in an Indian community (.)	
07	if you more <u>sharp</u> with the fashion sense	<b>action</b>
08	then you're <u>cool</u> (.) then you're <u>ma:sculine</u>	
09	then you're <u>talked about</u> (.)	
10	you have to be rich	
11	you have to be fashionable	
12	you have to drive a nice car	
13	you have to have an earring (.)	
14	you have to look like a Hip Hop style or something and R'n B style	
15	you have to look stylish (.) you see and that's	
16	( ) well that's what the young Indian community stylises	
17	that 's the style	
18	you have to be it (.) so you're not it (.) so (.) [any variation on the style?]	
19	people at the top (.) they're stylish	
20	they've been <u>in:fluenced</u>	
21	>they've been influenced by all the people before them<	
22	and it like sweeps down into the people (.)	
23	I mean to change something like this	<b>resolution</b>
24	you need like a <u>major</u> fashion revolution	
25	or something that becomes <u>more</u> important than fashion (.)	
26	something that <u>speaks</u> to them more (.)	<b>evaluation</b>
27	like smo:king and dri:nking	
28	and going out is <u>in</u> (.)	
29	it gets you <u>in</u> (.)	<b>coda</b>

## CORE NARRATIVES

accepted masculinity is sharp style and visible consumption

accepted masculinity implicitly measured by success with girlfriends

accepted alternative is to be a rebel (word used elsewhere in transcript)

accepted rebellion a combination of drinking, smoking 'gangsterish' style  
(elsewhere in the transcript)

## TROPES

## DIEGESIS

## SPATIOTEMPORAL

guys girlfriends accessories sharp fashion sense you have to drive a nice car style stylish stylise influenced speaks to them more smoking drinking gets you in	intradiegetic commentary layered heterodiegesis  distanced insider explanation directed at outsider and self  ironic distance and identification with them (Indian young men) you they	music concert Indian community  neighbourhood  status quo alternative  alternative scenarios in futurity
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## MAIN NARRATIVE THEMES

contending acceptabilities for being a man are visible consumption through fashion, cars but also 'stylising' (having a unique image) or having a gangsterish rebel style that includes drinking and smoking



**N.11. Thulani (A)**

- [photo of a car?]
- 01 ever since I was young **orientation**
- 02 I've just had a passion for them **abstract**
- 03 the sheer po:wer something about them **action**
- 04 it makes me feel like a >young free South African<
- 05 I'm not sure >what it is< (.) [owning a car important in the future?]
- 06 yes er cause it kind of gives you a sense of independence
- 07 yes (.) that's like the main part of it [kind of car?]
- 08 it depends what I'm looking for
- 09 there's quite an amount of variety out there
- 10 or what my parents are willing to spend [will they buy you a car?]
- 11 I'm not sure that's (.) I'm not sure (.) I'm hoping
- 12 well there's a car (in the magazine that's appealing) [male thing to own a car]
- 13 well traditionally it is
- 14 just the way it's been over time **resolution**

**CORE NARRATIVES AND NARRATIVE THEMES**

freedom, independence, South Africanness, identification with father (further on)

TROPES	DIEGESIS	SPATIOTEMPORAL
since I was young free young South African sense of independence parents spend	intradiegetic narrative biographical extradiegetic evaluation I me you	biographical pastness future scenario continuous thread including present

## N.12. Mandla

	[this photo]	
01	<u>no</u> this is my father's car	<b>orientation</b>
02	and this is my mother walking in the background	
03	<u>no</u> this is like the car that I <u>might</u> have	<b>abstract</b>
04	and this is like (.) ee what can I say	
05	(.) my (.) like <u>inspiration</u>	
06	to have a car like my dad has	
07	ja because (.) if you have a car (.)	<b>action</b>
08	all the girls just come ((laughs))	
09	you don't have to do that much	
10	that's what they want	
	[are girls important?]	
11	ja (.) cause all the <u>guys</u> (.) get jealous	
12	ja that's what it is	
13	he's good at girls	
14	he's got a car	
15	and that's it	
16	[girls in your life as a young man?]	
17	no (.) it depends on what age group	
18	if you still young	
19	just doing it for the guys	
20	so they can think you are a <u>player</u> and all	
	[type of car important?]	
21	yes because (.) <u>no</u> valueless (.)	
22	no these types of car attract (the ladies)	<b>resolution</b>
23	and people look at you	
24	and say a:ah he's doing well for himself and that	
25	so <u>this</u> type of car is good for your manhood	<b>evaluation</b>

## CORE NARRATIVES

car ownership signifies success with girls vs approval of the guys

car ownership evokes envy, recognition, status as a 'player'

'having' a car means not need to be 'doing' in order to meet hegemonic standard

## TROPES

## DIEGESIS

## SPATIOTEMPORAL

<p>inspiration if you have you don't have to do the guys get jealous he's good at girls a player just doing it for the guys</p>	<p>intradiegetic biographical extradiegetic evaluation  shifting perspectivity I me if you people look at you</p>	<p>self as future car owner inspired  observational perspectives in imagined scenarios</p>
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## MAIN NARRATIVE THEMES

configuration of meanings around car ownership – heterosexual success

car as a status signifier among imagined future male peers

'having' as a superior means of 'doing' hegemonic status

## N.12. Bhekani

	[this photo?]	
01	one day I want to have a house like this one	<b>orientation</b>
02	knowing that my family has a good shelter	
03	growing up I've always wanted to be independent	<b>abstract</b>
04	and have my own house	<b>action</b>
05	and a good job	
06	and I also want to have a nice car	
07	knowing what model it is	
08	my favourite is the Mercedes Benz model the new one	
09	I would be happy to have a car like this	
10	it's important because most things need a car	
11	especially in emergencies	
12	and here I'm at school	
13	we are at assembly	
14	praying like me	
15	I'm happy that we can pray	
16	because there are people who don't get that opportunity	
17	because of problems	
18	I would be happy if I could grow up	
19	knowing what job I'm doing	
20	when I work I will work on a computer	
21	I would be happy to have a job with a computer	<b>resolution</b>
22	because it's a part of life	<b>evaluation</b>
23	and I have learnt a lot from it	<b>coda</b>

## CORE NARRATIVES

future fantasies organised around image of car – independence, professional work, home ownership, envisaged family life

present opportunities not to be taken for granted by the collective as others have problems

## TROPES

## DIEGESIS

## SPATIOTEMPORAL

I want to be independent own house a good job to have a nice car new model opportunity happy job with a computer	intradiegetic singular voice  future scenarios  shift to intradiegetic collective for the school	future fantasies and wishes  present opportunities  future uncertainty
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## MAIN NARRATIVE THEMES

education as a route to professional work, middle class stability with luxury car as central signifier of imaginal future for self and family



**N.13. Nkosinathi**

01 some township boys are still hooked up **abstract**  
 02 over the image of being a taxi driver (.)  
 03 you have money **action**  
 04 but me(.) I know what they get (.) they work for someone else (.)  
 05 I wanna make my own money (.) ja (.) [images of success?]  
 06 black people view thieves as success stories or whatever (.)  
 07 and (.) because mostly they are successful  
 08 because they are able to drive around in (.) in fancy cars  
 09 and wear nice clothes  
 10 and ja (.) if you have a degree or whatever (.) hey, what's that  
 11 they don't even notice you (.)  
 12 but (.) you've done most work  
 13 I think (.) it's better being a slayer most days  
 14 ja but you gotta make your own choice in these things (.) **resolution**

**CORE NARRATIVES AND NARRATIVE THEMES**

future fantasies business, getting degree contrasted with taxi driver consumer

<b>TROPES</b>	<b>DIEGESIS</b>	<b>SPATIOTEMPORAL</b>
images of success make my own money black people success stories fancy cars nice clothes	intradiegetic singular voice future scenarios contrast self with other youth	future fantasies of success  contrasting scenarios

#### N.14. Jason (A) Focus Group

01 they're (skaters) sort of out of it really **orientation**  
02 there are (.) I think there are like  
03 there's the people who who aspire (to)  
04 and (.) you'll say (.) the sporty jocks **abstract**  
05 there are people who aspire to be them  
06 and if you look at break  
07 you got like the really hard ones sitting here  
08 and you've got like (.) their little minions  
09 who are as:piring to be them like standing around them  
10 they think they're sort of like getting there **action**  
11 while everyone else ( ) well I know I look at them  
12 >and say< what are you doing? you know  
13 break time soccer league (.) they're also (.)  
14 they're also until like re:cently outside  
15 I didn't even (.2)  
16 I always used to wonder  
17 like how come there so few people in the quad  
18 and they're all over there **resolution**  
19 and I used to see people in class that I'd never seen before  
20 because they're always ((Mark laughs)) playing break time soccer  
21 because the Indian guys all hang around together  
22 and no one like (.) I think the whole sporting hierarchy **evaluation**  
23 is very much within the white (.) within the white guys then  
24 because the white guys don't judge the black guys  
25 all the black guys might hang around  
26 they might have a hierarchy  
27 I don't know **coda**

**CORE NARRATIVES**

exclusion within a hierarchy of acceptable masculinities

acceptable masculinities situated in white sporting hierarchy surprise at other more nebulous peripheral hierarchies

contradictory feelings towards accepted hierarchy

**TROPES**

**DIEGESIS**

**SPATIOTEMPORAL**

they're out of it	extradiegetic distancing	jocks located here
people who aspire	pronominal they	racial others there
the really hard	second person you	here-and-now
sporty jocks		there-and-then
until recently	intradiegetic analepsis	emphasised distance
they're all over there	defensive I stance	closeness of racial
sporting hierarchy	racial others they	hierarchy
hang around together		distant integrated place

**MAIN NARRATIVE THEMES**

set of racial others challenge Jason's subjective perception of the hierarchy

racialisation of the break time soccer league not shared by all (Mark's laugh)

defended distance positioned among disinterest or surprise or subjective space

**N.15. Sibusiso**

01	this one we've been playing since under 14	<b>orientation</b>
02	we've been playing <u>with</u> each other	<b>abstract</b>
03	most of us have <u>known</u> each other since under 14	
04	when we've been playing together	
05	so we <u>know</u> each other	<b>action</b>
06	>we know each other pretty well<	
07	we try to (.) work as a team	
08	because it is a team sport and togetherness	
09	because it's like erm blacks are a minority	
10	so we come together come together in soccer (.) in >basketball<	
11	in all the <u>other</u> sports	
12	it feels good	
13	because (.) erm the shouts (.) it's like everything has more meaning	
14	it's like (.) you <u>know</u> what you're shouting for	
15	there's a <u>reason</u> why you're here	
16	you (.) you have better reasons to come	
17	and actually <u>support</u> the first team	
18	you're not forced to do it	<b>resolution</b>
19	you <u>want</u> to do it	<b>evaluation</b>
20	so we try to instill a bit of pride	<b>coda</b>

## CORE NARRATIVES

identity as team player vs racialised identity as a black player in black sport

mandatory exclusivity in official school culture vs free inclusivity

yet instilling pride and imposing standards upon the spectators and younger boys

## TROPES

## DIEGESIS

## SPATIOTEMPORAL

known each other well	collective protagonist	the basketball game
work as a team	collective biography	school
team sport	perspectival shift	
blacks a minority	you as the spectator	perspective of players
come together in sport	we as the team	spectator's perspective
actually support	we as the black minority	
no forced to do it	we as the basketball	coming together
instill a bit of pride	players	moving towards

## MAIN NARRATIVE THEMES

racialised voluntariness as part of black minority masculinity in the school

official school culture vs a voluntary inclusiveness



**N.16. Nkosinathi (A)**

01 I'd like sports like soccer to be taken more seriously  
 02 compulsory game for the first team  
 03 because we are forced to go watch the first team rugby  
 04 and we are part of this school  
 05 so as part of the school our games must also be watched  
 06 to me it sends a message  
 07 that (.) well (.) some sports are more important than others  
 08 which means that some people are more important than others in this school  
 09 ja (.) ja (.) it's because of the tradition and whatever of the school  
 10 but (.) hey (.) we are here now  
 11 and things have to change [what if soccer had a compulsory game?]  
 12 they'd probably go there  
 13 but not in the like (.) not wanting to be there  
 14 like the white people or the white boarders whereas in rugby they go there  
 16 cause they wanna be there [why the white boarders especially?]  
 17 well (.) we had some differences between black day boys and white boarders  
 18 hey sometimes we don't see things with the same eye

**CORE THEMES AND MAIN NARRATIVES**

emphasised dichotomies, voluntariness, sports defined markers of masculinity

TROPES	DIEGESIS	SPATIOTEMPORAL
part of the school important differences we are here now change	intradiegetic singular collective Intradiegetic us and them	emphasised dichotomy here-and-now versus irrelevant past

**N.17. Kevin (A)**

01 haven't really got much to do after school  
02 so some of use might even go and watch TV  
03 so to play rugby  
04 I mean it's just a great way to spend your afternoons  
05 with your playing rugby and that  
06 I mean sometimes we play soccer  
07 oh ja (.) I mean there are some guys that don't run and they're lazy  
08 everyone tries  
09 everyone tries to play rugby  
10 at least once someone plays rugby

**N.18. Warren (A)**

01 ja I think (.) er the team sports are lot more popular in this school  
02 rugby (.) hockey (.) cricket or whatever sport than say tennis or shooting [why?]  
03 cause people don't enjoy that independence  
04 they like to feel secure in a group  
05 and maybe if they feel independence they feel threatened  
06 not having anyone to rely on

**N.20. Thulani (A)**

01 soccer is not (that bad) it's not like rugby  
02 it's not (.) it's not that physical  
03 it's about your skill basically how good you are  
04 firstly I think there's nothing wrong with rugby  
05 it's okay (.) I wouldn't mind playing it  
06 rugby's okay (.) nothing wrong with it

**N.20. Aaron (A)**

01 there's three sets of people in this school **orientation**  
02 you're either white (.) black or Indian  
03 I think the white and the black people get on  
04 I mean you know this whole race issue (.) **abstract**  
05 whites and blacks (.) Indians with the whites (.)  
06 but this third group is actually the most culturally diverse group  
07 because (.) we're the minority  
08 we have different people in our group [white boys in the group different?]  
09 maybe they're not that white  
10 (.) but they maybe they (.) they similar to us **action**  
11 more than they are to maybe the jocks (.) the white jocks the white rugby players  
12 and that's in this picture here  
13 look (.) these are white people  
14 and they enjoy the similar (.) they enjoy similar aspects of life  
15 soccer is mainly a black and an Indian thing in South Africa  
16 these people enjoy soccer so they join up  
17 they join us (start) becoming like (us)  
18 when you go to a white school you start becoming less Indian  
19 I've noticed it  
20 my speech patterns change (.) everything  
21 these people are becoming more Indian (.) less white and more Indian  
22 they start to talk like us  
23 they use the same sayings as us  
24 they learn more about (.) they learn more about us our religions (.)  
25 our cultures [how do they fit in with the 'jocks'?]  
26 you see these people all come from different schools **resolution**  
27 as in like our primary school  
28 and we formed bonds (.) maybe with people our friends at primary school  
29 and they've already (.) they're all very close to us as friends

30 and we've just (.) the whole lot of us have brought  
 31 like we've generally had like three or four white friends  
 32 like close white friends and maybe this is them  
 33 these are the people you hang out with  
 34 and they are the people you used to play with on the playground  
 35 (.) stuck in the mud and stuff  
 36 and they've just crossed the whole high school thing past **coda**  
 37 the whole jock stage and just with us  
 38 so that's generally it

**CORE NARRATIVES**

diversity, inclusiveness of the third group vs racially polarised identities  
 becoming more or less Indian, individual similarity and group difference

TROPES	DIEGESIS	SPATIOTEMPORAL
culturally diverse group different similar people soccer a black/Indian thing go to a white school whole jock stage white rugby players stuck in the mud	intradiegetic we positional us/the,  heterodiegetic shifts to extradiegetic stance they shared journey	joining us crossing the jock stage  analepsis pastness collective epic unfolding changes

**MAIN NARRATIVE THEMES**

real transracial friendships and alternative peer group standards emerging

**N.21. Aaron (A)**

30 but you see there's two types of Indian people in this school  
31 you get the very gangsterish type  
32 and you get the type like me (.) more like me  
33 you see you associate with these people because their skins are white  
34 and you're called a coconut (.) dark on the outside (.) white on the inside  
35 you see that's why this group is separated from that group

**N.22. Jabulani (B)**

01 here I was next to a sports field  
02 next to a car with white people  
03 they were playing rugby  
04 I was watching because I like it  
05 maybe if I could play I would love to  
06 it's my favourite sport I want to learn  
[isn't it a white sport?]  
07 but now everyone has a right to play whatever they want to  
08 and do whatever they like  
09 it's not like before when things were divided according to colour  
10 now there are some black people who play rugby

**CORE THEMES AND MAIN NARRATIVES**

changing sporting identities in post-apartheid context, black rugby players



**N.23. Mark (A)**

- 01 I think security about your masculinity is like a big thing (.) now  
02 because of (.) especially in high school you get this whole gay thing going  
03 or this whole homosexual  
04 you know if you do anything even slightly resembling it  
05 you've got this sort of badge

**N.24. Mark (A)**

- 01 I'm not (.) not (.) as insecure  
02 I wouldn't like people to describe me as feminine obviously  
03 erm (.) I think if you are secure about your masculinity  
04 if you know your status of masculinity

**N.25. Mark (A)**

- 01 I think there's a lot of judgments in the school **orientation**  
02 I think people don't (.) don't erm get to know a person **abstract**  
03 before they can say things about him  
04 they look at a person **action**  
05 and they say he's this he's that he's this  
06 and I think it's wrong to do that  
07 and I mean I (.) if I (.) I'm not going to use anyone as an example  
08 but if (.) if someone was judged  
09 how would you feel if people looked at you  
10 in a way that you don't see yourself  
11 the irony of it is that people that are calling them that  
12 are more insecure about their own masculinity **resolution**  
13 then the people with the badge [who are these people?]

- 14 (5.0) it's pretty hard question ca:use (.)
- 15 you don't want to be left alone in (.) in ( ) **action**
- 16 >okay (.) if everyone is calling one person gay
- 17 or one person homosexual< one person sissy (.) .>so many things<
- 18 most people follow that person
- 19 because they want to be (.) in the crowd
- 20 ja so it's sort of everyone goes in there
- 21 everyone's laughing at that one person
- 22 >so everyone feels good< **resolution**
- 23 except that one person
- 24 it's just (.) it's not nice ((laughs)) I can tell you that **evaluation/coda**

### CORE NARRATIVES

visible appearance to the group labelled, withdrawn empathy, isolation

### TROPES

### DIEGESIS

### SPATIOTEMPORAL

they look at a person	ambivalent distances	distanced evaluation
judge a person	in and outside the text	draws in the empathy
people with the badge	crowd perspective	of listener
left alone calling	person's perspective	being looked at
in and out the crowd	self perspective	from crowd
everyone	they you him I	self and other

### MAIN NARRATIVE THEMES

the collective male gaze – homophobia located in inclusive/exclusive

**N.26. Dane (A)**

01 they don't feel other people's feelings **abstract**  
02 they don't really: give  
03 as long as they're happy: and on top of the pile that's (right)  
04 maybe building a wall around themselves (.) **action**  
05 an artificial face (.) facade um to block what's really inside  
06 ((quietly)) and they do it all over the place [do you see this much?]  
07 yes (.) because when there's a lot of guys in the dorm  
08 a certain person will act in a certain way  
09 but when I'm alone with them (.) he'll sort of come out of his shell  
10 and act very different  
11 I've noticed that  
12 and also there's another guy  
13 which I think is actually so two-faced it's scary **evaluation**  
14 like one time when we (.) **action**  
15 it's just us two or a couple of other friends there  
16 he'll (.) he's my big mate  
17 oh ja Dane you such a good oke whatever whatever  
18 but (.) with everyone else around he (.)  
19 he'll just mock me  
20 and ridicule me so much  
21 I think (.) I think (.) the reason is  
22 because it's sort of a vicious circle  
23 okay you: now how can I explain it (.)  
24 you mock someone else **resolution**  
25 so they feel down  
26 so they have to put the next person down  
27 so they have to put the next person down  
28 and everyone's trying to compete for the top spot  
29 trying to put everyone else down almost (.) if that makes sense **coda**

## CORE NARRATIVES

chained dichotomous them versus isolated and disempowered me

individual cost of emphasised facades and its payoff as a defensive wall against feared vulnerability or intimacy

sense of the compulsivity and absurdity of the continual process of contestation

## TROPES

## DIEGESIS

## SPATIOTEMPORAL

they don't really give happy on top of the pile build a wall a facade when there's lots of guys mock and ridicule a vicious circle they feel down put the next person down put everyone down	extradiegetic distance commentary analytic distance  intradiegetic I biographical  intradiegetic you inside the 'they'	sense of circular process  biographical narrative interpolates with closer personal view  distancing from an analytic perspective
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## MAIN NARRATIVE THEMES

compulsive and repetitive homophobia as means of protecting fragile  
'acceptable' positions in which ironically everyone is marginalised

**N.27. Mark (A)**

01 I've been through this experience  
 02 people know me now  
 03 they know me now so it's actually quite fun  
 04 but the other two are not doing so well  
 05 so they used to come during break  
 06 ((quiet aside)) funniest thing ever (.) I laughed  
 07 they used to come during break  
 08 and just (.2) pour out whatever they could  
 09 and it was just (.) we just sort of stood there  
 10 as if they had nothing else better to do than that  
 11 they just did it (.) hey ja and then suddenly when erm (.) like  
 12 I would go speak to them or something  
 13 they would speak to me like I'm a normal person  
 14 it's (.) just (.) that if I speak to one of them  
 15 okay I can speak to one of them say >hi whatever<  
 16 but suddenly all in a group  
 17 they all want they all want to say the same thing

**CORE THEMES AND MAIN NARRATIVES**

inexplicability of collective gaze and homophobia vs individual subjectivity

TROPES	DIEGESIS	SPATIOTEMPORAL
they know me now fun funniest thing all say the same thing	intradiegetic singular I me and they perspective us/them vs me/them	now it's over at break in the past I would/they would



**N.27. Vusimuzi (B)**

01 these are my friends I play soccer with  
02 we took this photo because they were in fashion coming from school  
03 I took off my school shirt  
04 and went looking for girls [how you dress important for girls?]  
05 you must be a lovable boy  
06 so dressing good makes them love you more [how we stand and talk?]  
07 we are not used to talking tsotsi  
08 because we don't know it  
09 we just talk normal and pose for the photos [are girls important?]  
10 especially when you are growing up  
11 because it happens that she gets pregnant  
12 and now you have to leave school  
13 and work in the farms  
14 but we must get good jobs  
15 it's just we like girls as boys [do you differ with society's expectations?]  
16 yes there is like my soccer team  
17 they would just laugh  
18 and I tell them let's start being serious  
19 and they tell me I am too serious  
20 and I left the team  
21 now they say I am a traitor [this photo?]  
22 this girl is my neighbour and my cousin  
23 she was doing his hair  
24 the girl has a child now [I see she is young?]  
25 yes she left school when she got pregnant  
26 she liked boys when she was young  
27 so already she didn't like school

## N.28.

- 01 when they think 'ngiyalahla' ((I am gay))  
02 you see with cooking I tell them I do it at home 'strong'  
03 and they say hawu you must be uyalahla  
04 how come when there are girls ((amatombazane)) all over  
05 and I tell them that I'm thinking about my future  
06 and they say so many girls  
07 and I ask them what am I gonna do with girls  
08 and they say they can never ((do without girls))  
09 so I tell them that I can never stay with a girl  
10 because they just get pregnant when you stay together  
11 an all you think about is having sex  
12 and once it won't even take a year sure-sure  
13 and worse you don't know what you want in life so I'm not into girls that much  
14 because there are better things to worry about

### CORE THEMES AND MAIN NARRATIVES

pressure to be interested in girls countered by focus on future goals and risks

#### TROPES

uyalahla so many girls  
they just get pregnant  
better things to worry  
about

#### DIEGESIS

intradiegetic self  
protagonist  
dialogue with group

#### SPATIOTEMPORAL

biographical  
male peer group  
home context  
school context

## APPENDIX 2

### TRANSCRIPTION SYMBOLS

Transcription conventions were those of Silverman (2001)

(.)	get (.) over (.) it	The dot in parentheses indicates a short pause of probably no more than 0.1 seconds
(0.2)	no (0.2) it's fun	The number in parentheses shows the length of a pause in tenths of a second
:	to:tally cool	The colon indicates a prologation of the immediately prior sound
( )	just ( ) in there	Empty parentheses indicate that the transcriber was unable to hear what was said
(word)	just (hang) in there	Words in parentheses indicate possible hearings of less audible speech
-	get <u>over</u> it	Underlined words indicate emphasis through varied pitch or amplitude
><	>you know<	Indicates speech which is noticeably faster than surrounding talk
?	why?	Indicates a rising intonation

**APPENDIX 3**  
**DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE RESEARCH SETTINGS**

<b>Demographic</b>	<b>School A Urban Single Sex</b>	<b>School B Rural Co-educational</b>
Number of learners	1152	360
Number of educators	62	13
Educator to learner ratio	1:19	1:28
Racial composition (approximations)	'White' 70 % 'Black' 20% 'Indian' 7% 'Coloured' 3%	'Black' 100%
Annual school fees	R 12 250	R 200
Grades	Grades 8 to 12	Grades 8 to 12