

Representing the 'Ouens': An Investigation into the Construction of Performed Identities on Stage in KwaZulu-Natal, in the works of Quincy Fynn (*Walking Like an African* 2004) and Kaseran Pillay (*My Cousin brother* 2003).

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DECLARATION

I declare that, unless otherwise acknowledged in the text, this dissertation is my own work. It is submitted for the degree of Master of Arts, Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus. It has not been submitted for any other degree or examination in any other university.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'V' and 'M' followed by a long horizontal stroke.

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ABSTRACT

The core of the theatre is an encounter. The [character] who makes an act of self-revelation is, so to speak, one who establishes contact with himself. That is to say, an extreme confrontation, sincere, disciplined, precise and total – not merely a confrontation with his thoughts, but one involving his whole being from instinct and his unconscious right up to his most lucid state. (Jerzy Grotowski, in Catron, 2000:19)

This dissertation investigates the construction of the marginalised self, an identity, and the impact that context, pre and post-apartheid South Africa, may have on that constructed masculine identity. This examination of the self is mediated through the medium of theatre. It is this 'encounter', which theatre offers, that becomes an important instrument through which the self, society and social issues may be examined and critiqued; and it is through this critique that change may be sparked and brought about.

This investigation of the self, the construction of a masculine identity, is looked at through the writings of, amongst others, Stuart Hall (1996 (a) & 1996 (b); 1997), Lawrence Grossberg (1996), Judith Butler (1993, 1999), Robert Connell (1987; 2002) and Robert Morrell (1998, 2001(a) & 2001 (b)). Further discussions around the construction of identity and its relationship to context (a multicultural and multiracial context) is examined via the writings of Richard Schechner (1991) and Patrice Pavis (1992).

The theatrical forms of self-standing monologues and stand-up comedy are useful forms through which 'protest' against the status quo may be engaged. These forms are utilised by Quincy Fynn (self-standing monologues) and Kaseran Pillay (stand-up comedy); and it is through their performance works *Walking like an African* (2004) and *My Cousin brother* (2003), respectively, that this dissertation looks at their challenges to hegemonic forms of masculinity.

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Introduction

In 2006, South Africa celebrated twelve years of democracy and voting rights for all South Africans. This landmark, supposedly, marks the eradication of race inequalities of apartheid South Africa. In South Africa, racial classifications created oppression; and, as a result of this classification, ranking occurred from white down to black, with the Coloured and Indian in between. Coloured and Indian were grouped under the same label as 'black'. Stuart Hall (1996 (a)) confirms that blackness signifies a range of experiences. Given this position, the act of representation becomes about exploring the myriad aspects of blackness. This dissertation interrogates the interface of race and gender in relation to the construction of performed male identities on stage. This interrogation will be premised on the idea that performance and theatre, as an active form, engages and challenges notions around representations, stereotypes or 'other'. I will look specifically at examples of performed construction of Coloured and Indian masculinities, as represented by two specific KwaZulu-Natal based performers, Quincy Fynn and Kaseran Pillay.

The two performers that offer the basis for debate in this dissertation are men that use theatre to challenge and question notions of masculine identity/ies. It is their performances that will be analysed and critiqued in this dissertation. Quincy Fynn is a Coloured¹ man, actor, slam poet and writer who actively constructs performances that challenge notions of Coloured masculine identities. Evidence of these constructions may be found in his performance of *Walking like an African: they have not wept, the men of my country*² (2004). Kaseran Pillay is an Indian³ man, actor, stand-up comedian and writer who, similar to Fynn, constructs representations of Indian masculine identities which are then challenged through performance. An example of this challenge appears in the performance of *My Cousin brother* (2003). Both these performers began creating work in the post-apartheid framework; and it is in this context that the construction of male identities is analysed.

The first chapter of this investigation will interrogate the construction of identity. Identities are structured representations. Hall (1996 (a)) explains that identities are always temporary and unstable. He suggests further that they are

¹ The author acknowledges that the term Coloured carries with it many problems. It is a term that is used to delineate racial division. For the purposes of this dissertation, the term has been utilised by Fynn, in performance, to reclaim Coloured identity. It is used as a means to identify stereotypes and reconstruct notions that are attached to the term Coloured. This dissertation aims to explore the ideology that is evident in this form of identification.

² Hereafter to be referred to as *Walking like an African* (2004).

³ The author acknowledges that the term Indian is also a problematic form of identification. It is used to define ethnic identities, but more specifically, it is used locally to define racial heritage. This form of identification is reclaimed by Pillay in performance, to deconstruct ideology that may be attached to the term Indian. This dissertation seeks to unpack the problems that are associated with this form of identification.

fragmented, and that within each identity there exists a multiplicity of identities. These identities change with shifting contexts. Using Hall's (1996) ideas, this dissertation examines the construction of identities, in particular masculine identities, and the influence that a multicultural and shifting South African context has on these said constructions. This dissertation further explores the impact of perceived hierarchies, created through a multiracial and multicultural society, on the construction of identity (Schechner, 1991; Pavis, 1996). The historical classification of people into black, white, Coloured and Indian groups in South Africa provided numerous inequalities and hierarchical structures. Within these categories, there is further marginalisation that occurs. The Indian and Coloured race groups were/are sidelined and within these race groups there is further marginalisation and construction of hierarchical structures. The South African context as it is constructed today, seeks in principle to eradicate and rectify the inequalities of the past, and yet the colour binary of black and white still exists. It therefore becomes essential to highlight the identities of Coloured and Indian men, so as to ensure that they are not sidelined in post-apartheid South Africa.

Following these discussions on identity construction, this interrogation will examine the construction of a gendered identity, looking specifically at the construction of masculine identities in this post-apartheid context. Masculinities are no longer limited to straightforward descriptions of maleness (Connell, 1995). The boundaries of masculinities have become blurred. Masculine identities include men of all ages, cultural backgrounds, and gendered constructions. These multiple forms of masculinities are constructed in relation to hegemonic masculinity⁴ (Connell, 1995; Morrell 1998). The constructions of masculine identities may cohere with or reject the notions of hegemonic masculinity. There are, however, different masculinities operating in the South African context. Within and between these masculinities, there exists tension and contestations for dominance. These contestations are examined through the two performance examples offered.

This investigation culminates in chapter two and three, in an analysis that looks at the relationship between constructed gendered identities and performed masculine identities on stage. It is through analysis of performance works in chapters two and three that both Fynn and Pillay, respectively, via their performance works *Walking like and African* (2004) and *My Cousin brother* (2003), construct and challenge notions of hegemonic masculinity. Butler (1999) states that gender and race are interconnected; racial presumptions invariably underwrite the discourse of gender. It is this relationship that Fynn and Pillay analyse through theatre. Butler offers a point from which to engage the complexity of gendered identities, when she states: "Gender, rather than merely constructed, is performative" (Butler, 1999: 10). Performativity occurs through the choices that are made by, and discourses which are imposed upon, social subjects (Butler, 1999). Representation on stage and gendered representations

⁴ This term, hegemonic masculinity refers to one form of masculinity that appears to be a dominant form. This term will be examined in later chapters.

are closely linked (Mangan, 2003). Theatre itself is a social activity and the performers in it resemble everyday life. Performance often incorporates constructed identities that are repeated and re-enacted; such constructions are based on social representations. It is the dual representation (the social/performance representation) that is of interest and is discussed, using Fynn and Pillay and their performance texts as case studies. Fynn's performance, and performance text, is analysed using the stylistic confines of the self-standing monologue genre, while Pillay's performance, and performance text, is analysed within the confines of stand-up comedy performance. These two forms are interrogated as a kind of post-apartheid 'protest theatre'. This dissertation compares both these forms of theatre, to protest theatre of apartheid, since both challenge societal norms. Protest theatre was significant in opposing the hegemonic ideology of apartheid South Africa⁵ (Barber, 1997). The role of theatre in South Africa has shifted with the changing context of the country. This said, Fynn and Pillay offer two examples of how theatre has shifted, but has also remained a tool for political critique and engagement.

⁵ The medium of theatre carries with it its own set of politics. In the past, one of the uses of theatre in South Africa was to protest against the apartheid government. An example of this form of protest is evident in the play *Woza Albert!* (Ngema, Mtwana & Simon, 1989). This is an example of how theatre may be seen to offer a space in which dominant ideologies may be critiqued, and alternatives offered. Post-apartheid South Africa has seen a growth in the forms of the stand-up comedy and self-standing monologues as tools to negotiate hegemonic discourse and resistance to it.

Chapter one: *The Construction of Identity: foreshadowing through theory*

Introduction

This dissertation seeks to interrogate marginalised masculine identities⁶ in relation to performance practices within the post-apartheid South African context. Very little has been written on the construction of masculine identities in relation to theatre practice in South Africa⁷. The idea of marginalised masculine identities is drawn from South Africa's history of racial segregation, and its impact on post-apartheid society. In order to establish the idea of marginalised masculinities, Indian and Coloured masculinities will be highlighted as the key focus in this dissertation. The two case studies, Durban actors Quincy Fynn and Kaseran Pillay and their works *Walking like an African* (2004) and *My Cousin brother* (2003) respectively⁸, are utilised in order to establish discussions around marginalised masculinities as these are represented on stage. Firstly, notions of identities as they are constructed will be introduced for discussion. A range of identity and cultural theorists are engaged for this discussion. Primary cultural theorist, Stuart Hall's (1996 (a) & (b); 1997) insightful discussions around the construction of identities are utilised primarily to introduce the concept of identities as a contested area of enquiry. Secondly, American post-structural feminist theorist, Judith Butler's (1993, 1999) ideas around the construction of normalised gendered identities are utilised in conjunction with Hall's theories, in order to establish a link between gender and identity and to introduce the concept of masculinity within the framework of general identity theory. These theories are supported by French philosopher/historian Michel Foucault's (1976, 1984) conceptions around identity as an area embedded in social and political power relations⁹.

These discussions around identity lead into discussions on constructions around identity as they are linked with culture. In the second section, cultural practice and notions of multiculturalism, as established by American performance theorist Richard Schechner (1991), are analysed in relation to performance practices

⁶ The idea of marginalised masculinities will be discussed in depth later in this chapter.

⁷ Much has been written about masculinity studies in other areas of academia. Robert Morrell (1998, 2001) for example, has written about masculinity studies in education, health and politics.

⁸ These two performers create masculine identities on stage for the purpose of challenging hegemonic views on race, culture and identity construction. These two bodies of work challenge specifically the construction of masculine identities within the Coloured and Indian race groups.

⁹ The idea that masculine identities are embedded in power relations is considered in more detail in the second section of this chapter, which concentrates primarily on the notion of gendered (masculine) identities. These notions of constructing gendered identities are discussed and linked to the construction of identities for theatre performances.

within the South African context¹⁰. In conjunction with discussions around multiculturalism, intercultural performance theorist, Patrice Pavis' (1992) theorisations around intercultural performance practices are used to reinforce the idea that identity is not a monolithic construction¹¹. These theoretical discussions foreground the third section of this chapter, which focuses on the link between gender and identity.

In the third section of this chapter, both gender and identity are interrogated as areas of social construction¹². Judith Butler's ideas around the performativity of gender are utilised to concur with ideas set out by Pavis (1992) and to generate discussion around how gender is constructed, and how constructed gendered identities filter into discourses of normal and abnormal (hegemonic/negotiated); and it is this constructed gender identity that is analysed through theatrical performances. Robert Connell (1987; 1995; 2000; 2002), an Australian sociologist, who specialises in the concept of masculinities, is used to support Butler's (1993) theorisations around the constructed nature of gendered identities. Connell's theorisations are also used primarily to engage the concept of masculinities within the construct of gendered identity. South African masculinities theorist, Robert Morrell's (1998, 2001 (a)) conceptions around masculinities as they are constructed within the South African context are used to locate these debates within the South African context¹³.

The fourth section of this chapter reflects on performance and the cultural representations that are examined through performance, on stage. The ideas of Michael Mangan (2003) - a British actor, director and lecturer focusing on issues surrounding masculinity and the performance of masculinities on stage - will be examined in relation to the construction of masculinities and the representations that emerge in theatre. Mangan's discussions are woven together with Pavis (1992) and Butler's (1997) in order to link gendered identity construction with theatrical performance; these notions are then linked specifically to analysis of the performance works of Quincy Fynn (self-standing monologues) and Kaseran Pillay (stand-up comedy).

¹⁰ Multiculturalism in this dissertation is used to establish a link between culture and identity, and to argue that identity is impacted by the cultural context in which it is situated.

¹¹ Intercultural theory is used in relation to Foucault's notions around power to re-iterate the idea that masculine identities are entrenched in interlocking systems of domination and power (race, class, sexuality).

¹² Theatre, according to Mangan (2003), forms part of a hierarchical structure, is a form of marginalised cultural practice, and is itself a form of social construction. Identities that have been socially constructed are further constructed, through mediation, for theatre.

¹³ This location within the South African context is imperative in relation to this dissertation which chooses, as its primary focus, two instances of constructed, performed, marginalised masculinities on stage in Durban, South Africa.

1.1.1 The construction of identities

This section of the chapter critically engages identity as a concept to examine some of its key meanings¹⁴. Identities are deeply personal; they define who we are, who we think that we are, and who we image ourselves to be. Identities are not a monolithic discourse that can be easily defined. Who we are, is often shaped by a variety of positions, institutions, social circumstances, languages, context and history.

The construction of identities is compounded by the notion that one's identity is always in a process of becoming, identities are not homogeneous and unified and identities change with shifting history (Hall, 1997). The identity that an individual develops in a certain context may change, and has the potential to change, with a shift in context. This hints at the fact that identities are not stagnant bodies; they are always in a continuous flux of becoming. Lawrence Grossberg, who also writes on the construction of identities, calls this incomplete process the anti-essentialist view (1996)¹⁵. This has positive outlooks in regard to theatre. In his life span, an actor may be required to perform many characters of diverse identities and histories. The shift in character traits from one constructed character to another may be made easier with reflection on the notion that the identity that the character is reflective of is not a fixed entity, but is able to shift and change with a change in context. Within this meaning, the possibility for diversity in theatrically performed characters is more likely.

Diversity, when creating different characters for performance, can be likened to Hall's (1996 (b)) concept of fragmentation of identities. This concept allows for the possibility of identities to be multiple, within any apparent identity. Within each identity there exists the possibility for change. One often wears different 'masks' for different contexts. The manner in which one behaves differs in different situations and social gatherings. This is referred to as a state of transformation (*Ibid*). Identities are never singular; they are always in a state of change and they are constructed across different discourses.

Identities are deeply personal and also indicate the multiple social belongings which individuals represent (Connell, 2000). This said, identities are constructed and determined further in relation to social structures and constructs. Identities

¹⁴ It is these key concepts around identities that are re-presented in theatre, and are offered as tools for analysis.

¹⁵ Identities, which are defined by either a common origin or a common structure of experience or both, are referred to as the essentialist view. The second, anti-essentialist, position rejects the first; rather this anti-essentialist position provides the idea that identities are always relational and incomplete in process. Identities are dependent upon their difference from, their negation of some other discourse (Grossberg, 1996). The latter conception of identity denies the prospect of a universally shared origin or experience. For the purposes of the dissertation focus is placed on the latter model. This position is often referred to as constructivist in the sense of being 'formed' (Barker and Galasiński, 2001).

are examined in relation to a broader social perspective. For example, an identity that develops within an Indian community reflects the values and representations that are evident within that community. 'Identities reveal where individuals 'fit into' in the world, or where they are placed in the world. Identities are those aspects that are classified or socially codified' (Derrida, in Schechner, 2002:90). Social codification occurs through a process of categorisation. Each category has within it, its own codes and meanings. These codes may be deconstructed and understood in relation to the representations that are layered onto an identity. The identity that is created represents the various codes that have created meaning for these categories. An example of this representation may be found in South African Indians¹⁶ that practice similar cultural practices; the individual that belongs to this collective, may often represent the codes that are set up by others. Identities are thus created through interactions with society at large. Through this interaction with society, social roles are delegated and placed onto the constructed identity. Evidence of this appears in the different roles that are set up for men and women. For example, it is often witnessed within social situations that men are perceived to be the breadwinners and women are seen as the nurturers and care givers. These social roles impact on the construction and development of identities.

These communities, in which identities live, are drawn together by many factors that are similar and evidently known to us, some of which include cultural practices and race. Identities, however, may also stem from the idea of what we are not (Hall, 1996 (b)). Certain representations that are placed outside of those that belong to the specific group, such as those that may derive from a different (superior) race group, may determine our identities. The notion that identities are constructed through identification with specific groups is supported by Michel Foucault (1984), who argues that the 'subject' becomes the bearer of, or has the potential to bear, knowledge that is created through discourse (1984). An identity, that notion of who we are, represents the knowledge that surrounds it. During apartheid, the identities that developed were reflective of the unequal race laws that were in place. Race groups were segregated from one another and placed in a hierarchical order, with the white race group at the peak of this hierarchy. This hierarchy, this notion of dominance, was reflected in the identities that developed.

Identities are also further created through reflection on binary opposites, marked by differences (Hall, 1996 (b)); binary opposites include male and female or black and white. This argument leads to the belief that identities are constructed on the basis of what one should or could not be. An example of a binary opposite would be, in terms of race, black and white. One would be defined as white in terms of not being black. Following this example, identities are often defined in terms of what they are not. Within the South African context, the power struggles of apartheid created a context in which race became a foundation on which

¹⁶ This term South African Indian, is not a monolithic concept. It carries with it diverse meanings and experiences.

separation and segregation were premised. This 'othering' that occurred, through racial practices, was the result of racial politics and segregation. The identities that emerged out of these contexts were directly relational to the power struggles of the apartheid era. The identities that emerged, and will emerge, were/are thus often constructed on notions of race classification.

Classifications that occur through racial othering have myriad impacts on identities. Hall suggests that, "often the representations that emerge within an identity are reconstructions of cultural stereotypes" (Hall, 1997:25). Cultural stereotypes are linked to codes that are used to determine aspects of a culture that are shared by a group of individuals. These stereotypes impact on the construction of identities in terms of their cultural assumptions. Often these stereotypes are constructed out of difference or 'othering' (Grossberg, 1996). Othering creates representations that are formed in relation to opposites, or something that is not. The stereotype is often a distinguishable factor or a label that is given to race groups or cultural practices by another. The stereotypes come from an individual or individuals that are seen as 'outsiders' to a group or practice that associate a frequently observed element to all members within a group. There are many examples of cultural stereotypes evident in the South African context. Examples of these stereotypes include assumptions that all Coloured men are gangsters or that Indian men are traders and businessmen¹⁷. Stereotyping limits the process of developing an identity since they derive from traits that are not common to all.

1.1.2 The cultural divide that builds character

Culture, in all its complex and myriad manifestations, is a strong component in the construction of identities. Hall (1997) provides the view that culture is about shared meaning. "Culture is the everyday lives that are lived by the majority of 'ordinary' people" (1997:2). It is the shared values of a group of people. The concept of culture then, is a process whereby a group of people produce and exchange meaning and practices. The members, participants, of a society or group have similar, or the same, interpretation of meaning or creating meaning, which allows them to situate themselves within a particular cultural practice. Therefore, the participants in the set of practices are an important aspect of culture. Theatre, in many ways, can be seen as cultural practice. Theatre carries with it its own set of codes and meanings. This array of codes and meanings assists in the construction of characters that are developed for theatre (Pavis, 1992). Theatre has the potential to recreate contexts, and examine constructs that appear within contexts, on stage. This ability of theatre creates a medium that can critically engage with the social context within which it operates. Hall explains that "within any culture there exists a diversity of meanings and

¹⁷ This notion of cultural stereotypes and the examples provided will be further examined in later chapters.

interpretations or representations of a particular topic" (1997:3). By this understanding we find that there are numerous ways to interpret the codes that are in place in any given cultural practice (for example the codes that are evident in theatre and performance).

Cultural practices are not static but fluid. Indian cultural practices in South Africa provide numerous examples of how cultural practices have shifted and been displaced from their origins in India. These Diasporic¹⁸ identities have appropriated western and African cultural practices into their 'Indian' cultural practices. Often it is the dominant, hegemonic culture that is appropriated (Grossberg, 1996:93). Evidence of this could be found in the language choices that are rife within these Diasporic Indian communities that are found in South Africa. The Diasporic Indian communities in South Africa, during apartheid, were seen as less than or inferior in relation to the white race group; there are traces of these practices in South Africa today.

These notions of inferiority are echoed by hooks, who says "within the politics of domination, the notion that the superior should rule the inferior is the advised ideology" (2004:19). Within a multicultural society there are numerous power struggles in place. South African Indians, a displaced and marginalised group of people, have been constructed in relation to these notions of power and domination. Identities are further constructed in relation to these notions of power. Racial segregation, racial power struggles and inequalities, to a large extent have shaped South African history. The apartheid regime capitalised on distinctions of race. Race thus became a determining factor in the construction of identities. Through apartheid legislation, the white race was established as dominant and the black race as marginalised. Coloured and Indian race groups were placed in the middle and often not spoken of. Identity construction was shaped by, amongst other things, notions of inferiority and superiority, class structures, job opportunities, access to housing, and access to education. The constructed identities that arose out of these systems of power often led to hierarchies being formed between the binary opposites (Hall, 1996:5 (b)): man and woman, black and white, young and old, rich and poor. The South African context created identities that were premised on binary opposites, yet the Coloured and Indian race groups were incorporated under the banner of 'black'. It thus becomes significant that these non-monolithic and non-unified terms, Indian and Coloured, be analysed as separate cultural, racial, practices, and the power struggles attached to these racial issues examined¹⁹. Post-apartheid South Africa has created a space in which race and identity constructions can be

¹⁸ Diasporic refers to that which has been displaced, removed and relocated; such would be the Indian community of South Africa which has been removed from India and relocated in South Africa.

¹⁹ It is important to recognise that they themselves, Indian and Coloured, are not monolithic and unified concepts.

questioned and renegotiated. Theatre creates a medium in which the power struggles and binaries can be renegotiated²⁰.

1.1.3 Identities that emerged from the 'melting pot': localising representations

The identities that emerge within a cultural practice are further influenced by the context in which that culture is situated. The cultural artefacts that emerge are shaped by Nationalism, or nationality (Anderson, in Hall, 1996 (a)). Cultural practice can develop congruently within the Nation that it is developed. Within these Nations, the hegemonic cultural practice is often prescribed to other cultural practices; an example of this can be found in the school syllabus (Education system), language choices, and dress codes. This National identity brings with it many problematic ideologies. The Nation is imagined as a community by those who belong within it and those external to it, and regardless of the inequalities and exploitations that may prevail, the Nation is seen as creating comradeship (Anderson, in Hall, 1996 (a)). This was evident in apartheid South Africa; the segregation of races, via the Group Areas Act of 1956, created locations in which the same race identities were clustered. Through segregation, racially divided groups of people were placed in specific areas. Within these segregated areas, cultural practices were allowed to ferment without extensive exposure to cultural practices of other race groups. Without prior knowledge of these different practices, stereotypes begin to underpin the identity traits that develop (Hall, 1997). The stereotypes that emerged were used to define and contain the 'other', or identities were defined in relation to what they were not. Often this 'othering' followed racial stereotypes and racial signifiers²¹.

Within a multicultural²² society, there is a hierarchy that forms. Multicultural societies lead to the appropriation of hegemonic ideology that is created through hierarchy (Pavis, 1996). The dominant ideology or cultural practice is prescribed to other practices that are seen as inferior. The dominant hegemony is placed at the centre of the power system. This is further explained by Okin, who informs that "Often the expectation is that the 'inferior' group or culture would be assimilated into the majority culture" (1999:9). This is problematic since the political struggle of apartheid placed white cultural practices at the peak of this hierarchy. These 'dominant' cultural practices are allowed to filter into other cultural practices but the reverse does not occur²³. A shift in paradigm, as in the

²⁰ The use of theatre as a medium through which renegotiation may occur will be discussed in section four of this chapter.

²¹ This dissertation examines, through theatre forms, the connotations that arise through these stereotypes and this notion of a racial divide that influences identity construction.

²² Multiculturalism, as set out by Schechner (1991), occurs when there are many different cultures existing side by side in a context. This will be expanded on later in this section.

²³ Rustom Bharucha is a theorist writing in the field of performance studies, he is acknowledged as the person responsible for the term 'intraculturalism'. He notes that when cultural concepts are

shift in the South African context, will allow for interaction between the different race groups and aspects from one cultural practice may be assimilated into another cultural practice.

The current era in South Africa, this post apartheid phase, offers a multicultural country that allows cultures and cultural practices to intertwine, creating a Nation that, as a multicultural society, has an imagined sense of Nationhood, where each race group may exist equally (Anderson, in Hall, 1996 (a)). Linking the discussions around culture and Nation to theatre, Richard Schechner²⁴, in *An intercultural Primer* defines multiculturalism "as each group or culture maintaining its own distinct qualities, remaining separate" (1991:29). The problem with multiculturalism is that there is still a hierarchy that forms. As in the case of South Africa, previously and at present, white and black are placed at the top of the hierarchy while the Indian and Coloured are 'othered' and placed between white and black. The hierarchy that was created through apartheid's racial politics filters through to create these boundaries where the hegemonic discourse again becomes dominant. This dissertation, thus, understands theatre to have the potential, as cultural practice, to unpack this notion of hierarchy and to voice the politically constructed identities within Coloured and Indian race groups.

A performer in this multicultural frame is able to create and critique identities in relation to race, culture and gender because of the impact that multiculturalism, fusion, and interculturalism, may have on an identity. Theatre examines cultural representations, often leading to intercultural exchange. Patrice Pavis (1996), a French performance theorist writer, argues that cultural exchanges are also possible through the theatrical medium. There exists, then, the possibility for intercultural exchange.

Theatre is seen as a cultural practice through which ideologies are sustained and at the same time challenged. Identities are shaped by cultural practices that occur within a context, and it is these identities that are represented on stage. The South Africa context has shifted, post-1994, to create a society that has, in theory, rid itself of racial segregation. There are, however, still marginalisations that occur in terms of Coloured and Indian identities. The presence of racial and gender stereotypes still lingers. An examination, through theatre, of these stereotypes will offer much needed insight into the construction of gendered, masculine identities within this current South African context.

appropriated, it is done polemically. By this we gather that there is an uneven sharing that occurs (Bharucha, 1996).

²⁴ Richard Schechner is one of the pioneers of the field of Performance studies within the American contemporary context.

1.2 Constructing Masculinities

Gendered identity is a complex concept to investigate. Gender is that part of an identity that reflects on gender roles that an identity represents. The term gender has been defined as follows:

Gender, rather than sex, refers to that which has been constructed, through social interactions and cultural practices. The gender of an individual is not merely made up of the biology of a person. (Berger, Wallis & Watson, 1995: 2).

This statement supports the argument that who we are, is shaped by a variety of positions, institutions, social circumstances, languages, context and history²⁵.

Gender roles, the subject position we occupy in society, are constructed from a complex web of influences, some of these effects we control, and others we do not. (Berger, Wallis & Watson, 1995:3).

This implies that the gendered being is chosen, constructed through factors that have been consciously chosen, and others that have been appropriated without knowledge or imposed by force. Therefore, gendered identities are not merely a question of biology. Theatre uses, in many of its forms, the notion that the constructed character is created through both conscious and unconscious choices. Performed identities on stage incorporate patterns of behaviour that have been done before, by the individual actor and by others (Schechner, 2002). The performer draws from everyday practices when constructing a character²⁶. The selected character traits are rehearsed and then performed on stage.

As with the construction of an identity, the construction of gendered identities is equally complex and challenging. "Gender is manufactured through a sustained set of acts, and revealed through the body" (Butler, 1999:15). Gendered identities are placed onto the body through acts that are practiced by the individual, and repeated over a period of time. The cultural practices within a culture govern and dictate the roles that are performed by men and women. Specific reference is made to the construction of maleness, or the male, through this dissertation; reason being that the examples focused on deal specifically with the construction around 'being a man' in post- apartheid South Africa.

Men's bodies are not determined only by biology, but are also defined and disciplined through the gender order of society (Connell, 2000:12). There is no masculine identity prior to social interaction. Masculine identities are learnt through social interaction and ideology that have already been set out by society.

²⁵ An example of this can be found in the social and cultural roles that are delegated to men and women (as mentioned earlier).

²⁶ The writer acknowledges that these practices are not the same for all theatre forms but are indeed pertinent for the theatre forms that are under discussion in this dissertation namely self-standing monologues and stand-up comedy.

Male gender roles are shaped by the context in which they are formed, and through interactions with power systems and other individuals that occur within these contexts. Within these contexts, in South Africa specifically, there are hierarchies that form, which govern the gender roles that are produced. Butler acknowledges that "the sexual hierarchy, along with cultural context, produces gender" (1999:12&20). Gendered identities, like the identities that are constructed in a specific context, are located in the cultural practices of that context. The gendered identities, produced during apartheid and post-apartheid in South Africa, are constructed in relation to the cultural practices of these paradigms; Morrell (2001 (a)) suggests that white, colonial, patriarchal masculine identities were prevalent during apartheid.

Masculinity is no longer limited to straightforward descriptions of 'maleness'. There are multiplicities of masculinities whose boundaries are blurred. "Masculinity is about men of all ages and cultural background, straight, gay, and bisexual" (Berger, Wallis & Watson, 1995:12). It is not as easy to define what it means to be masculine, as one may assume. It is important to acknowledge that the term masculine carries with it numerous connotations. The definitions of various masculinities are evident in the individuals that represent that masculinity, but each of these forms of masculinities are defined collectively in culture and sustained in numerous institutions (Connell, 2000). This dissertation showcases examples of specific forms of masculinity evident within Coloured and Indian cultures, in this South African context, and the power systems that are found within this context and how they manifest on stage. The apartheid era focused on creating a context in which the white masculine identity/ies was situated hegemonically, and prescribed as the dominant gendered identity for men of all race groups. Post-1994, there has been more reflection on black masculine identities, but there is still little focus on the construction of coloured and Indian masculine identities. There are stereotypes offered as representations of these constructed identities, which need to be deconstructed and alternatives engaged. Theatre as a form is utilised to create a space in which these notions around constructions of Coloured and Indian masculine identities may be renegotiated so that past marginalisations of Coloured and Indian are not repeated.

Often, marginalisation occurs in relation to hegemonic masculinity. Connell reinforces the notion that patriarchy is often seen as the dominant hegemonic masculinity:

Hegemonic masculinity is that form or model of masculinity which a culture privileges above others, which implicitly defines what is 'normal' for males in that culture, and which is able to impose that definition of normality upon other kinds of masculinity. (Connell; 1995:191).

Often, the hegemonic masculinity is patriarchy; assumptions are that, within this notion of patriarchy there resides power. All men do not benefit equally from these institutions of patriarchy. Some forms of masculinity are culturally elevated

above others in certain places and times. This notion of dominant and subordinate (marginalised) masculinities is used to reflect the power dimensions that exist in gender relations. Hegemonic masculinity is that notion of masculinity that is elevated to the dominant status, above other forms of masculinity. The discussions that follow re-examine this notion of hegemonic masculinity, questioning the existence of patriarchy as hegemonic masculinity and offering other possible solutions to this idea of hegemonic masculinity. A further endeavour is to highlight masculinities that have been marginalised within the South African context, and, within those marginalised masculinities, to unpack representations that exist within them.

1.2.1 Digging, digging...the truth reveals itself

There are different masculinities operating in the South African context. Within these masculinities there exist tension, and dominance. Racial identity plays a role in the performance of masculinity by a man²⁷. (Morrell, 1998 (a)).

In the past, the South African government separated people according to the colour of their skin. The masculine roles that developed were governed by the systems of power that were in place. Often the dominant hegemonic masculinity was prescribed to those belonging to or abiding by a particular power system. In South Africa, it was widely accepted that the 'white, heterosexual, settler identity' was the dominant masculinity in South Africa (Morrell, 2001). This dominance created a racial superiority.²⁸ The hegemonic form of masculinity is, often, not the most common form of masculinity (Connell, 2000:11). The hegemonic form of masculinity was also not necessarily the form that was most performed. It was prescribed on the basis of its acceptability; it was the normative practice. The white, settler identity was not the most common of gender identities; however, the racial laws of apartheid afforded that form of gender identity the status of hegemonic masculine practice. The gendered masculine hierarchy that was influential during the apartheid regime needs to be deconstructed and measures need to be taken to ensure that racial politics do not compound gender construction. The post-1994 period in South Africa has seen an increase in theatrical forms, like stand-up comedy and self-standing monologues, that identify unequal practices within the apartheid system, and seek to ensure that those unequal practices are not repeated.

Hegemonic masculinity was based on acceptable practices and behaviours, such as those mentioned by Morrell (2001 (a)). Challenges to hegemonic masculinities ensure that marginalisation, of any kind, is limited. It is important to ensure that

²⁷ Robert Morrell (1998), a writer on masculinities in the South African context, reiterates the concept of masculinities as constructed.

²⁸ This notion that the 'white-settler' masculinity as the hegemonic masculinity is evident in the history of the apartheid regime.

marginalisation is not repeated in a context that aims to create equal opportunity, in all its myriad forms, for all South Africans. This practice is becoming increasingly evident, with more men living in a state of tension or opposition to the hegemonic masculinity. This opposition enables marginalised masculinities to exist alongside hegemonic masculine practices, thus creating a context in which diversity can exist in all aspects of its definition. This diversity includes the diversity of gender roles that are practiced and performed, which are then re-performed for the stage.

Gendered identity is amendable; it is not a fixed entity. Therefore, the different values that are instilled in boys and girls, for example, in order to construct a gendered identity can shift and be reshaped (Gilmore²⁹, 1990). A child's upbringing forms part of a social construct, and as such this upbringing needs to be open to myriad options from which gendered identities can draw on and be shaped by. Therefore, a re-focus on acceptable and non-acceptable gender behaviour will allow for gender roles to be constructed in alternative manners. The paradigm shift that post apartheid South Africa produced, has constructed a culture that encourages diversity. This shift has sparked a ripple effect in the construction of masculine identities (Connell, 2000). There are additional effects that impact on theatre. Theatrical forms rely on the cultural context in which they are situated, to construct performances that reflect on and represent behavioural patterns that coincide with that society. For theatre to truly reflect that society, the paradigm shifts that occur need to be transmitted into theatrical forms and practices. Theatre, in many ways, is able to reveal this reflection of societal practices and norms, and is itself often placed within a hierarchical system.

1.3 Performative performance of identities

There are certain activities that are seen in conventional social terms as less 'masculine'. There exists a hierarchy of masculine institutions, and theatre and drama is placed at the bottom of that hierarchy (Mangan, 2003). For example, within the South African context, sport, more specifically rugby, is placed at the top of masculine activity, and theatre at the bottom. There is, however, a need to recognise the forms of masculinity that have been marginalised. Theatre is often seen as a feminine arena, for various reasons. Use of costumes, make-up and make believe illusions, seem to provide some of the reasoning for this positioning, as these are viewed as feminine qualities (Burt, 1995).

Theatre explores a wide array of subjects and uses many methodologies to deal with this constructed world. Performance is construed as a broad spectrum of human actions including ritual, play, sports, popular entertainment, the performing arts, and everyday life (Schechner, 2002). Richard Schechner (2002) suggests that everyday life performances may involve the enactment of social,

²⁹ David Gilmore is an American writer analysing the construction of masculine identities.

professional, gender, race and class roles. From these roles, certain aspects may be extracted and rehearsed for performance on stage. The character that is created is extrapolated from the identity of the actor, an identity that is shaped by cultural practices. In certain theatre practices, the character that is created is derived from the practices and lived experiences of the actor.

Theatre, in many ways, may be viewed as cultural practice (Degenaar, 1991). Theatre provides its own codes and meanings that create a medium in which culture can exist. These meanings and codes are shared by a group of people and practiced to create a lived experience. Theatre has the potential to recreate contexts and examine constructs that appear within contexts, on stage. This ability of theatre creates a medium that can critically engage with the social context within which it operates. Therefore, the context becomes an important component of theatre and in the construction of identities. The post-apartheid era has seen a shift in the cultural practices of South Africa; these shifts transcend into theatrical representations. Theatre has the ability to examine every cultural representation (Pavis, 1992). Theatre, as a performance medium, has within it a set of codes, that are mediated through the context in which they are situated (Pavis, 1992). Culture and theatre are premised as being similar: they both involve codification of sorts and each medium requires the performer to understand and perform these representations (Pavis, 1992). Some of the codes that may be found in theatre can be likened to the codes that are representative of the codes that are evident in the construction of gendered identities. Butler supports this idea when she writes:

Gender, rather than merely constructed, is performative, that it inevitably unfolds as a series of 'performed' operations that render complex meaning about normative standards that we cannot escape, the choice we make and the meanings by which we represent both. (Butler, 1993)

Gender, like 'acting' (or vice versa) is performative. Discussions arise through an investigation of the construction of an imagined masculine identity, created for fictional presentation. Theatre is representational/presentational in nature; presentation is the imagination realised in actuality (Beckerman, 1990). Whatever its medium, the common variant in theatre is the human being. The presentation of theatre takes place in the present. The presentation is an icon, a semblance, of actuality (Beckerman, 1990). The suggestion is that often (though not always or in every genre) theatre is a mirror image, a reflection of certain aspects of life, which is placed on stage. This notion is further supported by Antonin Artaud³⁰ (1974) who argues that theatre is a social construct that is able to mirror social activities. The performance inheres in the performer and is expressed through the performer; therefore, the 'actor' inherently determines the act of performance. Although the performer is closely related to the identity of the character that is created, he or she is not identical to it. It remains a fictional construction that is shaped by the context of the performer. This would imply that the male actor is

³⁰ Antonin Artaud is a theatre practitioner and director whose use of theatre emphasised the use of mechanisms that provoked the audience to become socially active.

two things at once, himself and the character that he has layered onto himself. The character is created for the purposes of theatre; the actor makes use of his own life experiences, as well as the text that is provided, in order to create a fictional being that breathes life on stage.

Theatre is also representational; it involves changing conventions that allow us to read the relationship between theatre and everyday life (Mangan, 2003). Representation on stage, and gendered representation, are closely linked. Identities that are constructed for theatre are often based on real life constructions. Theatre is in itself a social activity. Social performativity and theatrical performances of gender may be congruent or related, and they may resemble each other; but they are *not* identical. It is this dual representation that is investigated through Fynn and Pillay's performance works.

In many ways the performance of gender is an act and we are able to link the concept of gender construction with that of stage performance. Shakespeare's *As you like it*, suggests that "all the world's a stage and all the men and women merely players...and one man in his time plays many parts..." (Act II, vii. 139-143). Butler explores this concept further in *Gender Trouble*:

As in other ritual social dramas, the action of gender requires a performance that is repeated. This re-enactment and re-experiencing of a set of meanings already socially established... Gender ought not to be constructed as a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts follow; rather gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a stylized repetition of acts. (1997:140)

Theatre itself is a social activity and the performers in it resemble everyday life. The performance incorporates constructed identities that are repeated and re-enacted. These constructions are based on representations from society. Every individual is in a state of constant flux of creation and recreation in terms of identity. Our identities are constructed through our repeated actions, and it is this repetition that is further explored in theatre. Performers develop character identities that are, in effect, often part of their own lived experiences. The representations that evolve are based on cultural representations that are located in the lived cultural context. The cultural representations that emerge are reflective of the identity that is constructed through interaction with cultural practices and then are further represented in the performed, staged identity/character. Aspects of cultural discourse are highlighted and shaped to create an identity that is rehearsed and moulded for the theatre. The repeated actions of the fictional character are performed on stage, to represent 'real' three-dimensional identities.

Performativity is not a singular or deliberate 'act', but rather, a reiterative and citational practice by which discourse produces the effect that it names (Butler, 1993). To expand on this notion then, theatre would reconstruct performativity in relation to its own discursive nature. Performance is constructed on the notion that everything that is performed on stage has been done before, even by the

individual that is performing that sound or gesture (Schechner, 2002). Theatre and performance arts frame their representations, underlying the fact that the represented identity is not done for the first time on stage. The character's identity has been constructed and rehearsed. The performance is enacted by trained persons who take time to prepare and rehearse, and may include highly stylised behaviour or everyday behaviour, or both. The constructed gender would be imposed on the surface of the matter. The internal experience of one's self would be one that we anticipate and produce through certain bodily acts (Butler, 1999). The layered on persona that is created for stage performance is separate from the gendered identity that is constructed through daily representations and practices. This staged, constructed identity is representative of one's self, but is at the same time separate.

The act that is reconstructed for theatre is performative in a sense because it brings something into existence. Performance is a symbolic form of culture/artistic expressivity in which a medium is created and through which distinctions can be drawn from the performer and what or whom s/he is representing (Friedman in Schechner, 2002). The performance then becomes a re-presentation. Repetition is central to cultural and intercultural identities, and it is this same notion of repetition on which theatre thrives. Identity is an effect of discourse, not the creator of it. Butler explains that "identity reiterates norms or a set of norms and happens in the present" (Butler, 1993). Theatre has similar connotations; it exists in the present. Although Butler says that we do not wake in the morning and don an identity (Butler, 1999), theatre, to some extent, does allow for one to choose an identity for a few hours or a day.

The medium of theatre carries with it its own set of politics. In the past, one of the uses of theatre was to protest against the apartheid government. An example of this form of protest is evident in the play *Woza Albert!* (Ngema, Mtwana & Simon, 1983). This is an example of how theatre may be seen to offer a space in which dominant ideologies may be critiqued, and alternatives offered. Post-apartheid South Africa has seen the rise of stand-up comedy and the self-standing monologue form as tools to negotiate hegemonic discourse.

1.4 Confronting the demons by yourself

Theatre is able to reflect the society in which it operates (Beckerman, 1990). The apartheid era introduced theatre practices that spoke of the time, which challenged the hegemonic ideology and reflected the need for change. The shift in paradigm is once again being reflected through theatre. Pieter Dirk Uys, a South African actor, writer and director, is known for his one-man shows that reflect on and challenge the hegemonic norms of the current and past South African contexts. Through plays like *God's forgotten* (1974) and *Adapt or Dye* (1981/2), Uys used satirical theatre revues critically to analyse the apartheid

government's actions (Uys, 2002). Post 1994, with the democratic government in place, Uys utilised theatre for a new cause, to educate the people of South Africa about the plight of HIV/AIDS.

There are various other artists, within the South African context, that have used theatre as a means to challenge the notion of 'normative'³¹ practices. Athol Fugard, a white South African man, writer and director used the monologue form to challenge the racial politics of apartheid South Africa. Through plays like *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead* (1974) and *The Island* (1978), Fugard used monologues to express his concern for the plight of black people living in the apartheid South African context. In the play *The Island* (1978), two political, black prisoners share their experiences as Black men fighting for the struggle against apartheid. The theatrical form of monologue speaking is used in order to inform and enlighten audiences as to the plight of political prisoners on Robben Island³², with the aim of challenging the political power systems that were in place during apartheid.

There have been female writers that have used theatre, post-1994, to speak of and challenge the construction of identity in this current South African context. Luen Conning, a South African, Coloured woman and writer; deconstructs notions of female Coloured identities through a theatrical medium through her writing of *A Coloured Place* (1996). In this play Conning brings to the forefront the politics that are attached to Coloured identities, particularly female ones, and the need to re-negotiate these mentioned politics. One of the main aims of the play was to claim a rightful place for Coloured people in this South African context (Conning, 1996). Furthermore, there was a space created in which the construction of Coloured identities, and a challenge to the stereotypes of Coloured identities, could be negotiated.

There have been examples of white men and Coloured women who have used theatre as a medium for political agendas and political challenges. Discussions that follow examine specifically the link between performance and performativity through the performance works of Fynn and Pillay, *Walking like an African* (2004) and *My Cousin brother* (2003) respectively. These performers engage in theatre forms that have emerged strongly post-1994, including stand-up comedy and the monologue form. These two male performers, Fynn and Pillay, speak specifically about the politics impacting on their identities as Coloured and Indian males respectively, creating performance works in this post-apartheid South African context. The forms of stand-up comedy and self-standing monologues are employed as mechanisms to challenge hegemonic discourses.

³¹ The term Normative is used to speak of racial, gendered and class politics. It is not limited to previously mentioned identity politics.

³² Robben Island, just off the west coast of South Africa, was infamous for housing political prisoners during the apartheid era. The writer acknowledges that political prisoners were not the only prisoners sent to Robben Island.

South Africa's history limited the freedom of personal space and the liberty of individuals. Stand-up comedy is well suited to the 'new' South Africa because it promotes freedom of speech and individual expression (McMurtry³³, 1993 & Parker³⁴, 2002). Previously marginalised groups are given a platform from which their experiences can be articulated. This articulation can take place without fear of censorship. Parker says that "the post-1990s saw the rise of political correctness, which led to the fear, in many South Africans, of criticising each other" (2002:10). Stand-up comedy follows a structure that is devoid of the boundaries of political correctness, thus offering a medium in which directly to address issues that are pertinent to society. In effect, this form of theatre becomes the new form of 'protest theatre'³⁵ (Parker, 2002). Stand-up comedy accurately reflects and challenges the social world. It is an interactive form of theatre that changes from performer to performer, and is an inexpensive form to maintain. "Stand-up comedy is concerned with the identity politics of the performer" (Parker, 2002:9). The performer draws material for the performance from lived experience, and this lived experience is reflected upon through humour. The use of humour created an environment of ease, in which people may laugh at and reflect upon shared experiences. Pillay is responsible for doing just that. He employs this form of theatre critically to question his own sense of what it means to be an Indian man, living in this changing South African context.

Character monologues might also be interpreted as a means of constructing masked comedic personae, although not in as direct a form as stand-up comedy. The self-standing monologue offers a character identity behind which the actor may hide (Parker, 2002). The monologue form takes shape in the first-person persona (McMurtry, 1993). A monologue is self-contained, providing the necessary facts to the listener, through a presentational form (McMurtry, 1993). This form of theatre is a polemic one, offering a particular standpoint on an issue/s. There is generally a specific objective that needs to be attained by the persona. Monologues are characterised by the first person persona 'I' (McMurtry, 1993). "The personae of the monologues tended to focus their disclosure inward or outward, on themselves or the audience" (McMurtry, 1993:338). The latter is a more direct approach, in terms of focusing the audience on a specific point. Fynn, through his use of monologues in performance, focuses the audience on the constructed notions of being a Coloured man, living in this South African context. Through the monologue form, he aims to confront these representations of 'Coloured', and ask the audience to do the same.

³³ Professor ME McMurtry was the head of department of the Drama and Performance Studies Programme at the University of Kwa Zulu-Natal whose expertise include set designing, acting and directing.

³⁴ Zoë Parker is an actress, stand-up comedian and Masters graduate of the University of Natal whose dissertation was based on stand-up comedy as a theatrical medium in South Africa.

³⁵ Protest theatre was a form of theatre that developed during apartheid South Africa (Kerr, 1995). It was and is a vehicle for protest, promoting social change.

1.5 Conclusion

The construction of identities, and masculine identities in particular, draws on cultural practices of society for construction and embodiment. These culturally constructed masculine identities are examined in the performance works of Quincy Fynn and Kaseran Pillay (*Walking like an African* (2004) and *My Cousin brother* (2003) respectively), in chapters two and three. Fynn explores the monologue form in order to construct a critical engagement around constructed notions of Coloured masculine identities, while Pillay utilises the stand-up comedy format to engage constructions of masculine Indian identities. This chapter has established the processes and factors involved in the construction of an identity, the construction of gendered (masculine) identities specifically, and the representation of those identities on stage. Identities and specifically gendered identities, are shaped and influenced by a myriad of factors. The performance of identities is negotiated through repeated actions (Butler, 1999). This notion of repeated actions is central to many forms of theatrical performances. Theatre, as a tool, may be used to shift perceptions and challenge social norms. The two performers whose works form the basis of discussion in this dissertation are men that use theatre to challenge and question notions of masculine identities. They employ, specifically, the theatrical forms of stand-up comedy and self-standing monologues to offer a space in which to critique, question and offer alternatives to dominant ideologies.

Chapter two:

The Coloured man: colour rhymes that slam hegemony via monologues

Introduction

This chapter explores the relationship between the Coloured performer, Quincy Fynn, and the construction of Coloured masculine identities as they are performed or constructed on stage. Focus is placed on the construction of masculinities and the challenges to hegemonic masculinities via self-standing monologue forms of performance. This chapter will provide, firstly, a very brief history of the Coloured race groups in South Africa, looking specifically at the settlements that developed in the Wentworth, South Durban region. This study of Wentworth is important because it is within this context that Quincy Fynn grew up. In order to provide a located history of Coloured people, several writers will be examined: Sheldon Rankin (1982), from the Institute of Social and Economic Research in Durban; Professor S.P Cilliers (1971), former head of the department of Sociology at the University of Stellenbosch along with Zimtry Erasmus (2001), writing on the plight of Coloured people post 1994. These writers offer in-depth discussions around the development of Coloured communities and the problems that arise within these constructed settlements. Rodney Jones (1998) offers insight into the development of Coloured communities in and around Wentworth specifically. There is an overarching relationship between context and identity construction (Hall, 1996 (b)). The analysis offered by these writers provides the basis of discussion for this chapter.

Secondly, the above historical and conceptual enquiry will link to the work of performer Quincy Fynn, a Coloured performer living and working in Wentworth in the South Basin area of Durban, who has used and continues to use, self-standing performance monologues as a means to challenge the stereotypes that exist within the Coloured communities, specifically stereotypes that exist around Coloured masculine identities. An appendix³⁶ of his working experience is offered along with a biography, to create a context from which analytical discussions will arise. Fynn's performance working methodology, self-standing monologues³⁷, and their impact with regard to the challenges and questions posed to the racial and gendered stereotypes that he analyses, will be integrated in discussions that lead to a textual analysis of monologues that he has performed (2004).

³⁶ Appendix A, an interview with Fynn, offers the starting point for discussions that arise within this chapter.

³⁷ The writer acknowledges that Fynn utilises many performance styles and forms, but reference is made to self-standing monologues only, for discussions that follow in this dissertation.

Finally, there will be an analysis of performance work, as performed by Fynn (one of three actors) in *They have not wept, the men of my country* (2004). The bodies of work that are offered for analysis include monologues that were performed in the season of physical theatre called *Walking like an African* (2004). It is through these monologues that notions around race and gender constructions are critiqued. Jones (1998) explains that space or place and identity construction are relational. Shifts in context, such as those brought about through democracy, are paralleled by a shift in identity development or construction. Through a textual analysis of Fynn's performance in *Walking like an African* (2004), the relationship between context and identity construction will be explored.

2.1 Coloured lines that demarcated social conditions: looking at boundaries within South Africa's borders

The Group Areas Act of 1956 designated specific areas of habitation for different race groups. Hall (1996 (a & b)) notes that identities are shaped by institutions, positions, social circumstances, context and history. Drawing on this argument, the boundaries that were created by the Apartheid government played an important role in the construction of identities within this context. It is through this division and segregation, according to racial characteristics, that identities were determined and constructed; and it is in this regard that Foucault's (1976; 1984) concepts around the construction of identity, through social and political power relations, is assessed. *Who we are*, represents knowledge that surrounds us. During apartheid the identities that developed were reflective of the unequal race laws. This relationship between context or place, and identity construction, allows for discussion to arise.

Coloured history in South Africa is shadowed by numerous inequalities and indifferences. Racial classifications were determined by certain distinguishable physical features (Rankin, 1982). There are problems that arise with regard to this classification. The term Coloured was used by apartheid governments to describe persons that fell under one of the following categories: Cape Coloured, Malay, Griqua, Chinese, Indian, Other Asiatic or Other 'Coloured' (Rankin, 1982)³⁸. Problems occur with the use of physical traits as a means of distinguishing racial characteristics. There are many physical features that distinguish the above mentioned groups, and this makes definite classification difficult; one would be creating a stereotype by using physical features to determine identities or classify people. Stereotypes are created, according to Hall (1997), through cultural traits that are common, but these stereotypes limit the process of developing an individuated identity. Race and culture cannot be used

³⁸ For the purposes of this dissertation, Chinese, Indian and Other Asiatic are excluded from the definition of Coloured.

interchangeably as tools to define groups. Cultural practises that influence the construction of identity do not automatically arise from racial differentiation.

Jones confirms that “the Coloured population originated as a result of White settlement in the Cape more than three hundred years ago” (1998:23). The race group emerged as a result of biological and cultural assimilation between slaves, aborigines, and whites, and social differentiation on the basis of colour (Cilliers, 1971). Coloured people arose from a mixing of traits, primarily between white and black. This dissertation refers to Coloured as a race that developed in the space between black and white, a group that did not fit the established categories of classification. Coloured people occupy a marginal position within the South African population. This marginalisation is not limited in its definition by numerical value. The term also denotes marginalisation in terms of hierarchical status³⁹. It is this notion of marginalisation, ‘in-betweenness’, that may be re-situated, through performance, within post-apartheid South Africa.

The Coloured race group experiences clashes, in terms of culture, with other race groups within South Africa; but often there existed a culture clash within the Coloured group itself. The mixing of cultural practices, white and black, created a space in which clashes and hierarchies could be set up. Within a multicultural context there exists a hierarchy between the different cultural practices and within each cultural practice (Schechner, 1991 & Pavis, 1996). This hierarchy leads to the institution of hegemonic ideology. In South Africa, white, western social characteristics emerged as the dominant practice (Rankin, 1982)⁴⁰. These practices include notions of dominance, religion, language and traditional values. During apartheid, although many Coloured people identified with their ‘white’ heritage, there was no hope that they would be classed as ‘white’. Apartheid laws did not allow for such a classification. Nonetheless, white ‘European’ cultural practices impacted greatly on the early development of Coloured cultural practices (Rankin, 1982). The dichotomy in the cultural practices that make up the Coloured identity has created a clash that echoes the broader racial struggle of our country:

Coloured identities are formed in the context of racialised relations of power and privilege. They are not ‘merely different’ but are formed in hierarchical relation to both white and black African identities; they are experienced and constructed as less than white and better than black. (Erasmus, 2001:24)

On one level, being Coloured entails the notion that there is a certain level of domination, in contrast to the black African ‘other’. This mixed race, Coloured, created a hybrid cultural group, but still remained a product of apartheid and the racial laws that governed the country. The Coloured race group was seen as ‘not pure’, unlike the other race groups inhabiting South Africa. In view of this, the

³⁹ Notions of Hierarchy are discussed in chapter one. The use of the term is discussed in relation to notions around Multiculturalism (Pavis, 1996).

⁴⁰ Fynn (2005) acknowledges that his identity is influenced, post-1994, by many western practices. This statement will be analysed in relation to his performance work.

Coloured race became marginalised. Coloured identities have tended to be shaped by these notions of marginalisation, and domination. It is through the development of racial boundaries, white dominance, and colour differentiation, that identities were nurtured. The Population Registration Act of 1950 categorised Coloured as that which was 'not'; Coloured was seen as that which was not 'white' or 'black'. Accordingly, Coloured was classed as any mixture of races, the in-betweeners (Jones, 1998). The challenge is to alter these perceptions in this post-apartheid South Africa. The shift in spatial laws calls for a re-evaluation of the shift in identity development. This notion of identities as being fluid and being able to shift in relation to context is encouraged by the writings of Hall (1996 (a)). The division of race groups, and the allocation of race groups into specific locations, needs to be re-examined and eradicated, in order for identity construction to be re-evaluated.

Coloured people were characterised during apartheid as an industrial, working class group. The alliance of Coloureds has been determined in relation to their affiliation, either to 'black' or 'white' practices. Erasmus (2001) notes that Coloured identities have not been identified as identities in their own right. It is through their affiliation with either black or white cultural practice, or alliances, that they are determined. It is through marginalisation that the Coloured voice has been silenced and neglected. Throughout its development, Coloured as a race group has undergone shifts and adaptations. These shifts have been caused, partly, through spatial relationships. Coloured is not a homogenous term. Within South Africa, there are many locations and communities of Coloured groups. Jones (1998) supports the argument that Coloured people are not physically homogenous; neither are they culturally homogenous. Cultural practices arise out of shared characteristics by a group of people (Hall, 1997):

Groups provide individuals with frameworks within which their memories are localised... We situate what we recollect within the mental spaces provided by the group. No collective memory can exist without reference to a socially specific spatial framework. We conserve our recollections by referencing them to a material milieu that surrounds us... (Erasmus, 2001: 100)

The context around us plays a vital role in the construction of identities. During apartheid, the distinctions in classification, in terms of race groups, created separate areas of habitation. In KwaZulu-Natal, the Coloured race group was located in several areas. There are five key Coloured group areas in the greater Durban area: these include Wentworth/Austerville/Treasure Beach, Sparks Estate, Greenwood Park, Newlands East, and Mariannridge (Rankin, 1982 and Cilliers, 1971)⁴¹. The demarcated areas for the Coloured race group provide unfavourable conditions for living, the subsequent result of which is still evident in these areas today. Due to the marginalisation of Coloured people, resulting from inequality, the resources that were available to Coloured people were limited.

⁴¹ In this dissertation, specific focus is placed on the Wentworth area, as cite for identity development, and gender construction, since that is the area inhabited by the subject Fynn.

Opportunities for development were stifled by segregation laws and, in certain areas, continue to be limited.

Cultural practices that evolved within these isolated communities bled into the identities of individuals that inhabited these places and belonged to these groups. The masculine identities that emerged out of these networks reflect the power struggles that are present in those communities. The male gender roles are shaped by society, the context in which they are formed (Connell, 2000); and along with cultural practices, racial identity plays a role in the performance of masculine identities. Gendered identities, like the identities that are constructed in a specific context, are located in the cultural practices of that context (Butler, 1999). There are stereotypes of identity roles that have emerged within Wentworth; these include identities that are governed by patriarchal beliefs, violence, crime, and poverty. Fynn (Appendix A, 2005) affirms that many Coloured masculine identities that are evident in Wentworth are directly relational to stereotypes that emerged around Coloured groups. These stereotypes of Coloured masculine identities are often generated and constructed by other race groups (Hall⁴², 1997). Stereotypes are those aspects of behaviour that are commonly seen or believed, but are not necessarily the dominant practice. These represented, stereotyped⁴³ identities need to be unpacked in this post-apartheid South African context. Coloured identities, specifically the Coloured masculine identities that have evolved in Wentworth, need to be relocated in this new context, a context that does not award unjust privileges according to race. Identities, as Hall (1996 (a)) explains, are always in a process of becoming. They are changeable, in relation to the context in which they are located; and as such, new representations of masculine identities that emerge within the South African Coloured race need to be proposed. One such person that aims to do so is Quincy Fynn. Through his use of theatrical forms (self-standing monologues), Fynn offers one moment of resistance amongst many others.

Theatre and performance are used, by Fynn, as tools to challenge and question notions of the self and constructions of Coloured masculine identities. This use of theatre to conscientise is not an uncommon practice in South Africa. Partly, the history of theatre in this country reveals various strategic uses of this form of social interaction. Theatre and performance can be used as a means to educate, challenge and widen people's experiences. It is on this notion of widening experiences and challenging that South Africa's Protest Theatre was based. It was through performances of plays like *The Island* by Athol Fugard (1973) that the experience of political prisoners on Robben Island was highlighted and questioned. Theatre, with its myriad uses, is capable of altering the self. It is through theatrical practices that Fynn re-situates the self and emerging Coloured masculine identities in this post-apartheid framework.

⁴² Hall's writings on stereotypes, although not aimed specifically at Coloured identities, can be likened to these identities or stereotypes.

⁴³ The concept of stereotypes is discussed in chapter one, with reference to suggestions made by Stuart Hall (1996).

2.2 Discovering the colour of the man inside

Quincy Fynn, who turned twenty seven in 2006, is a Coloured man, living in Wentworth, Durban. He is a freelance artist and performer, who has been performing for most of his life. His professional career began in 1998. Since then, he has performed many styles and forms of performance, including slam poetry, self-standing monologues, singing in a band, and acting. Culture, in all its complex and myriad manifestations, is a strong component in identity construction (Hall, 1997). This is a point that Fynn shares. Fynn (2005:1) admits that "My family, personal relationships, friends, my worldview and socio-economic circumstances that I live in", are all factors that build identity. His perceptions around masculinity are based on notions of providing for family, being a father himself, and strength. These notions of masculine behaviour are derived from gender roles that were observed while growing up; but there are other, conflicting roles that are also influential in developing an identity:

We are faced with a lot of stereotypes as Coloured males. People's immediate perceptions of us is one that they see in the media, which is like when you see a documentary on crime, gangsterism, prison... it's Coloureds who are dominant in these documentaries, so I think that a lot of the way that we see Coloured males is shaped by that. So we are expected to be kind of violent, raw, loud, rude and dangerous as Coloured males. (Appendix A, 2005:1)

These stereotypes, as listed by Fynn, that are offered as representations of Coloured identities, are aspects that drive Fynn to challenge and question the place of Coloured people in South Africa today, specifically the role of the Coloured man in this society. More specifically, he challenges the impact that these stereotypes have within his context, Wentworth. Fynn challenges a type of homogenous action, the stereotypes that he lists, in order to eradicate their effect within his present context:

The South African Coloured man; there is a lot of difference. Even the stereotypes do exist, but at the same time there are a lot of different forms that people represent. A lot of the time we tend to piggyback on the culture that appeals to us. There are Coloured men who are more African (black) in their identity and there are those that are more European (white) and they kind of cling to that part of their ancestry. (Appendix A, 2005:2)

Firstly, Fynn taps into a point that needs unpacking. The problem with 'piggybacking' is that Coloured as a race group is a separate entity to black or white. The cultural practices that shape Coloured identities should be practices that are neither black nor white. Coloured should be recognised as a race group on its own; Coloured should not be defined only in relation to black and white. Coloured needs to be defined by what it is, not by what it is not. The mixture of race groups and cultures (mainly black and white), which makes up 'Coloured', provides this clash between cultures. This cultural clash, argued by Erasmus (2001), adds to factors that shape identities. Secondly, Fynn reiterates the belief

that there are stereotypes of Coloured identities that exist, and at the same time, there are myriad forms of masculinities⁴⁴. These various forms are determined by choice and by our surroundings, points that both Butler (1993) and Hall (1996 (b)) support:

I resent a lot of the stereotypes, especially because in my immediate surroundings I'm surrounded by a lot of positive representations that gets very little acknowledgement from the media. And when I do see a positive representation of the Coloured male on television or the media, they usually don't sound or talk like me. They usually don't sound like a Coloured at all. They have a very 'private school' accent. They never grew up where we grew up. And I know that there are people who grew up in the same community, in the Coloured townships who have done positive things. (Appendix A, 2005:2/3)

It is these stereotypes that Fynn challenges, in performance through his use of self-standing monologues⁴⁵. One reason that Fynn provides for his use of theatre as a means to shift and challenge societal views around him is offered here:

Well, funnily enough, the South African context, pre and post apartheid hasn't shifted what it is to be a Coloured man. During apartheid, you hear this a lot, we weren't white enough, and now we aren't black enough. And as much as I disagree with people who use that as an excuse for not advancing or succeeding in the world, I have to admit that it is a bit true. The apartheid regime embraced us (Coloured people) slightly, in order to create that difference between Coloured and black but it still didn't mean that we were equal. So it was like a struggling younger brother trying to climb up to the position of the older brother. I know for me, as an artist, as a dancer as a child...segregation was always there. We weren't allowed in the dressing rooms as the other dancers and all that 'shit'. So it did kind of give you an inferiority complex. To a certain degree you wondered if you weren't good enough, but you tried your hardest and you became better, better than them because you worked harder. Post apartheid, we are still kind of in limbo, middle ground somewhere. But I don't know now if the desire is there to push harder, to achieve more and to be better so that you could fight that type of stereotype. (Appendix A, 2005:3)

Apartheid created a complex web of power struggles that thrived on distinctions based on race. Identities were constructed in relation to these power struggles. Schechner (1991) and Pavis (1996) affirm that multicultural societies, like South Africa, often place race groups in a hierarchical system. The hierarchical positions that race groups occupied filtered through into the construction of cultural practices. Coloured people occupied a position that was categorised as 'middle ground'. Post-apartheid, this sandwiching of Coloured people is being re-examined. The position that the Coloured race occupies in the hierarchical structure is being re-evaluated through performance. The notion of a 'limbo' that Fynn speaks about may be readdressed in post-apartheid South Africa through theatrical forms. This repositioning of Coloured people will ultimately impact on the re-construction of Coloured identities.

Along with this idea of a sandwiching effect on Coloured people, Fynn highlights a need to examine other forms of masculine behaviour. It is through a re-

⁴⁴ These notions of multiplicity of masculinities are supported by Connell (2000) and Morrell (1998).

⁴⁵ The theatrical form of self-standing monologues will be defined in the following section.

evaluation of Coloured cultural practices that we can begin to re-evaluate the gender roles that emerge within those cultural practices (Butler, 1993). The sexual hierarchy which places patriarchal practices at the peak, explained by Connell (2000) and Morrell (1998), are re-examined by Fynn, through theatrical performances. Sexual hierarchy is the placement of various gender roles in hierarchical order, often the dominant role being patriarchal, as provider and, often, characterised as violent.

2.3 Bodies of work that shift the mind, creating realignment

In the changing scenarios one aspect is certain, South Africa will never return to its former structure; moreover, the new sets and props offer multiplicity and reflect the diversity and richness of all the peoples of the Nation... Cultural practices and rituals that are represented [in theatre] render the multicultural socius; they also challenge all South Africans to move beyond awe and engage in dialogue from an altered perspective freed from the stranglehold of decades of official separation... . (Blumberg In Berger, Wallis & Watson, 1995:56)

Theatre practices in South Africa have begun to change since 1994, after the birth of democracy. Theatre has mirrored the shift in socio-political paradigm. New or adapted forms of theatre have emerged, as means to represent the cultural practices that are in place in this post-apartheid South African context. 'One person' shows seems to be one such form that, although not new, have increased in practice. These one person performances spoke about and critiqued the changes that were taking place. During apartheid, there were many different forms of theatre that were utilised as means to protest against discriminatory practices. One such form was Protest Theatre and workshopped plays like *Woza Albert* by Barney Simon, Bongeni Ngema and Percy Mtwa (1983), and *Cincinnati: scenes from city life* by Barney Simon (1984) are offered as examples of theatrical devices and texts that have been used to speak against the discriminatory practices of apartheid. *Cincinnati* (1984) used monologues as a device to voice the experiences of individuals, people who were living through the turmoil of apartheid. The monologues were representative of people of different races, histories and genders. The monologue form was explored as a means to highlight the plight of different people and experiences that were lived in an isolated context during apartheid:

It is necessary to have a point of view about the world which surrounds you, the society in which you live...to rebel or revolt against the status quo is in the very nature of an artist. A point of view can result from the desire to change the social scene...the political life...Rebellion or revolt does not necessarily find its expression in violence. (Uta Hagen, in Ca tron, 2000:1)

The monologue, although it may be found in many plays, is a way for one person to express a single point of view with the aim of changing the status quo. The monologue is a dramatic, long speech which is sometimes delivered

directly to the audience (Alterman, 1999). Shakespeare used soliloquies (monologues spoken alone on stage) to communicate the inner thoughts of a character to the audience. It is from these roots that self-standing monologues grew. The theatrical form of one person monologue theatre is not a new concept. The one person show made numerous contributions to theatre (Catron, 2000), even as far back as ancient Greece. "Earlier than formal theatre in Greece, solo performers called rhapsodists (oral readers) present legends and history" (Catron, 2000:5). In Africa, the origins of theatre are thought to lie in Storytelling (Schechner, 2002). As part of the storytelling form of theatre, a single person would perform for the rest of a tribe. Through their performance, the history of the tribe would be passed on (Catron, 2000).

One person performances, specifically monologues, may contain social commentary, and this social commentary is often delivered through a polemic, one sided, view. The use of monologues in the history of South African theatre has been quite effective; however, its use has mainly been in the form of plays in which there have been more than one performer. There have been several plays that have used monologues, extensively, as a means to create awareness around South African life. Barney Simon's *Born in the RSA* (1994) and Phyllis Klotz's *You Strike the Women, You Strike the Rock* (1986), both employ monologues to analyse and represent events that occurred during apartheid. The use of monologues allowed for the individual voice to be heard, more strongly than that of the collective. By doing so, the events become more human, polemic and are directed at the audience, who are no longer able to ignore what is shown, as so often occurs in 'real' life.

Within this post-apartheid context, theatre remains a useful mechanism, through which social, political and personal issues and concerns may be highlighted and negotiated. One such form that has emerged is that of self-standing monologues. This form of theatre builds on forms such as workshop theatre and protest theatre. It is a form that uses a polemic view, to highlight a specific issue or topic (McMurtry, 1993). Self-standing monologues differ to monologues within a play, in that often they are presented as entities on their own. This form is most commonly used as one person performance theatre:

[...] But unless questioning and challenging is the aim I mean, that's what we do, but the aim is to inspire thought. To inspire an introspection kind of thing. The aim is more to change than to question and challenge. I suppose that through questioning and challenging you aim to change. Or to at least effect a change. (Appendix A, 2005:5)

This self-contained form of performance is able to offer a particular stand point directly to the audience. McMurtry (1993) explains that this form of theatre allows for the audience to focus on one specific point, thus heightening the impact that this form may have on an audience. The individual's voice becomes less dehumanised and is more effective. Accordingly, Fynn explores this form of theatre to maximise the impact that he desires the audience to experience.

2.4 Slamming hegemony through self reflection and theatrical devices

Fynn notes that in his construction of characters for the stage, much of the construction is influenced by 'real' life:

All of it [what is created for performance], everything [is shaped by who I am and my societal views]. Art is more than a metaphor for life; it's a reflection of that. In drama, my first year teacher pointed out that, everybody plays a role in life. In teaching in schooling, you're putting on those clothes; you are playing that role. (Appendix A, 2005:4/5)

Theatrical performance, according to Mangan (2003) is no different to 'real life', in terms of the playing of a role and the putting on of a character for a specific context and reason. The role that is created for theatre, however, is greatly mediated and structured. Using the self-standing monologues style of performance, Fynn is able to reflect the codes and stereotypes of representations around Coloured identities present in this South African context. It is through this form that he challenges and critiques constructed stereotypes. The two monologues that follow are taken from the show *Walking like an African: they have not wept, the men of my country* (2004). The performance showcased physical theatre and monologues that represented aspects of South African male life. The monologues that were used were mediated through the artistic director and choreographer Liane Loots⁴⁶, and through the concept attached to the show, namely the struggle that people, including men of colour, faced as a result of apartheid laws. The views of three men, including Fynn's, were performed as representations of constructed perceptions of identities found in this post-apartheid context. The performed texts had in them codes that represented the respective race groups of the performers that spoke them. The monologues presented by Fynn were performed alongside two other spoken texts, one performed by Iain Robinson and the other by Musa Hlatswayo⁴⁷. All three performers delivered their monologues within the context of a 'play' that challenged certain aspects around the history of men in South Africa. They presented events that spoke about political aspects in relation to their particular race groups and their own personal political experiences within the frame of an apartheid history. Fynn represented elements that focused on constructed Coloured, stereotyped, masculine identities. The monologues are placed in the body of this dissertation, to allow the reader prior understanding of them, creating an awareness of the context from which analysis takes place. It is important that the monologues form part of the body of contents; they form part of the reading material, and not just an attachment.

⁴⁶ Liane Loots is a lecturer at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, choreographer and performer, and Artistic Director of Flatfoot Dance Company since 1998.

⁴⁷ Iain Robinson is a white slam poet, actor and writer, while Musa Hlatswayo is a black dancer, choreographer and actor.

Monologue 1⁴⁸ is about a Coloured man facing a jail sentence because of charges filed after a violent encounter outside a Night Club.

Hey ekse⁴⁹. No it's my fault. The phone was on the table and I never hear it ring or vibrate. No I only keep my phone on vibrate you check. No, no you look like a fool you check. Just say you standing next to the ou⁵⁰ that you stole the phone from. And the phone starts to ring. You can't answer it coz the ou is standing right in front of you. And if you answer it, you buggered. You check. That's why I just leave it on vibrate once. No this phone is mine; my old lady bought it for me. But I'm just saying...Ekse my bru⁵¹; do you know me to be bang⁵² ekse? The case got remanded again my bru. The 26th. How's that number there. That's why me, I'm busting it up one way till that time. I'm smoking, vying to the joll⁵³ every week, shot shot bru. You see I got Shaba Dean as my lawyer. Ou Vern Shaba Dean. That oues a madar⁵⁴ lawyer bru. That ou got my cousie⁵⁵ off for moord⁵⁶. Remember my cousie that dullard that ou outside Zanadoo⁵⁷, of course there were witnesses my bru, they dullard⁵⁸ the ou right in front of the joll. There was yella⁵⁹ people outside. This bulie⁶⁰ here, he got no witnesses. It's his word against our word. We got him fucked ekse. Hey ekse, my stekkie⁶¹ made me laugh the other day. My stekkie tjooned⁶² she's going to dulla⁶³ this bulie's daughter. Coz why? My stekkie vies to the same school that this bulies daughter vies to you check. So now she tjooned she's gonna fuck this bulies daughter up in school and all that there. I tjooned, hey baby

⁴⁸ The punctuation that appears in the monologues is the punctuation used by Fynn. The writer acknowledges that this punctuation might not appear to be grammatically correct. Certain words that are used colloquially in the monologue and in daily speech, by Coloured people in Wentworth, derives from the Afrikaans language.

⁴⁹ "Ekse" is a term used to refer to another person. "Ek sé" is an Afrikaans term that means "I say", but it is more commonly used to call someone to attention.

⁵⁰ The word "Ou" refers to a "person", usually a "male friend".

⁵¹ "Bru" refer to "brother", and is used in a similar manner to ou.

⁵² "Bang" is an Afrikaans word that when translated into English, means to be "scared".

⁵³ A "Joll" is colloquial for a "party".

⁵⁴ "Madar" is an expletive.

⁵⁵ "Cousie" is shortened form the word "cousin". A blood tie that extends to close friends or members of a gang.

⁵⁶ "Moord" is Afrikaans for "murder".

⁵⁷ "Zanadoo" is a night club in Durban that is frequented by, largely, a Coloured audience.

⁵⁸ "Dullard" is a term used to mean fight or hit.

⁵⁹ "Yella" denotes "many", yella people means many or a lot of people.

⁶⁰ "Bulies" is means of recognising "a person, male, that is older or old".

⁶¹ A "stekkie" is a "girl" or "ones girlfriend".

⁶² "Tjoon" or "tjooned" means to "tell someone" or to "talk about something".

⁶³ To "dulla", means to "interfere with" or to fight with someone.

relax. Now my stekkie isn't really the fighting type, you check. I said, hey baby, you just vi⁶⁴ to school lucker⁶⁵, like nothings wrong, you know what I mean. Coz I know now, quick and fast, they'll scoop her out the school, you check. Plus too now, they'll just use that whole incident against me now, you check. So I tjooned, hey baby, you go to school lucker, tjoon with people, you act like nothings wrong, you check. Maybe even better now, you start to tjoon with this child here. See if you can find out what's her bulies plan, coz what we learn is that now, he's tjooning the kerrels⁶⁶ other things. He's telling them that there was five six of us. Each ou was carrying a iron, one ou was carrying a pump action⁶⁷, [a]nother ou was packing a AK47, plus too then one ou shoved the gun into his mouth. But that's lies bru, lies. Plain down lies, I swear. Now we gonna catch him out with his lies. Ou Shaba Dean tjooned the mag⁶⁸, Yes your majesty, ja⁶⁹ it's a known fact that in the sergeants statement he said that the only weapons found on the suspects were 3 old kopies, biltong knives, and one broken 38mm pistol, with no ammunition. Plus too, further more, forthwith and henceforth your honour, the victim in his statement said that there, quote, were five or maybe possibly six gun men, which cast a doubt of shadow on as to why these suspects were apprehended, on that basis, because there was three of them walking near the scene, hey. How's ou Shaba Dean? That charrou⁷⁰ can tjoon ekse. I'll only ever use a charrou. A wit⁷¹ ou will never tjoon for a bruin ou⁷². I vied to one of those oues before I vied to Shaba Dean. This wit ou want to come tjoon me, um... Mr Robinson, what we'll do is, we'll start off with you telling me the truth. I said look at this ou. Right, I tjooned him, detail for detail for detail. He said okay... Mr Robinson, what we'll have to do is, um... you'll have to plead guilty on a lesser charge, perhaps maybe possibly you'll only serve perhaps 8 or 9 years. Wa wa wa, blah blah blah. I said what? I only heard 8 or 9 years. I said listen here. You telling your clients to send themselves to jail. He said to me No. maybe this wit ou here is getting

⁶⁴ "Vi" means to "go after".

⁶⁵ "Lucker" is appropriated from the Afrikaans word "lekker", which means "nice".

⁶⁶ "Kerrels" makes reference to the "police".

⁶⁷ A "pump action" is a "shot gun".

⁶⁸ "Mag" is the abbreviated form of the word "Magistrate".

⁶⁹ "Ja" is Afrikaans for "yes".

⁷⁰ "Charrou" is a racial term that refers to an "Indian".

⁷¹ "Wit" is an Afrikaans word referring to "white".

⁷² "Bruin Ou" is an Afrikaans term for "Coloured man".

crown⁷³ for every ou that they send to Westville, you check. I tjooned him fuck off. After that I went to one bruin ou... useless. This bruin ou tjooned, what we'll do Mr Robinson is we'll plead temporary insanity. Under the influence of buttons or Mandrax⁷⁴, and our friends pressurized you into committing this heinous crime. I said... are you under the influence of rock or something? How can I comba⁷⁵ my own bras. He said No Mr Robinson, what you will do is turn crown witness. The state will protect you. I said why don't you witness this crown going back into my pocket. I'll only ever use a charr lawyer.

Monologue 2 happens, in terms of a time frame, after a prison sentence has been served and there has been time to reflect on past events.

Hey, my lightie⁷⁶ is growing up so fast bru. I didn't know that lightiesgrew so fast. The other day I went to his old ladies pozie⁷⁷. I vied to give her the maintenance marche⁷⁸, you check. I got to the pozie, the lightie comes running from the other side of the pozie, and he's shouting daddy, daddy. He comes in front of me and he tjoones, daddy check here... [singing] hops your 26, hops your young destroyer⁷⁹. I started laughing. He's only three years old and he's picking up numbers and all that. And his mother is standing behind him, and she's laughing too. And everyone's laughing and something just jiggard⁸⁰, you know something clicks and the hand brake gets pulled up. I gave him a backhand in the mouth. He got a shock. He said, daddy why you hitting me for. I said what you know about all those things there. What you know about K9 trucks and young destroyers and all that there. He said no daddy how, I know about it. Uncle Terribles was telling me about it and all that there. I said, Uncle Terribles, ask him where he spent the last 15 years. You want to end up like that there...Uncle Terribles. My cousin you check. Terrible Travis, but you can't call him Travis to his face. He always used to do despicable things to people. It doesn't matter who you were, whether you were a gangster, outie⁸¹, bulie,

⁷³ "Crown" refers to "money".

⁷⁴ "Mandrax", "bottons", and "rocks" are a colloquial term for a hallucinogenic drug.

⁷⁵ "Comba" is a reference made to "spying on someone" or "leaking information".

⁷⁶ "Lighties" is makes reference to "young persons", "children".

⁷⁷ A "Pozie" is a "house", residence where person resides.

⁷⁸ "Marche" is the equivalent of the word "money".

⁷⁹ "26", "K9 trucks" and "young destroyers" are gangs that operate in the Coloured communities.

⁸⁰ "Jiggard" means to "happen".

⁸¹ "Outie" refers to a "boyfriend" or "male friend".

stekkie, granny or grandpa, who ever you were he would dulla you, you check. Coz you see this ou, he would he would only do these things in Wentworth, to bruin oues. Till the one time, he caught this wit bulie there by Jacobs, there by the prozies⁸². They caught this bulie, robbed him and gave him one two what whats, and left him alive you check. That time they never used to take the whole car and all that there. Anyway, they vied pozie. Next day the kerrels came. All of them got bopard⁸³, him and his bras. The ou spent 15 years for a crime he didn't commit. And we all know he didn't commit the crime because we all know who vied back and mapped⁸⁴ this bulie you check. Anyway my point is this, how come after all these years of doing wrong things to bruin oues, they get bopard less than 12 hours after dullaring a wit bulie. That night the truth of it is, I said guys, lets not dulla this bulie over here. But the guys didn't want to listen. I said guys, just relax. There will be a bruin ou coming just now. Or a darkie ou you check. They didn't want to listen. I said, guys maybe just now a charrou will come. You check charroues are the easiest to rob. But they didn't want to listen you check. You can't just rob a wit ou, especially a larnie⁸⁵.

The two monologues are used to analyse notions of marginalised, Coloured gendered identity, the construction of identity, and stereotyped representations that are attached to Coloured masculine identities. The two self-standing monologues will be analysed conceptually in relation to the theory that has been discussed.⁸⁶

[The Coloured and Indian race groups, specifically masculinity, have been sandwiched between the binary of black and white. And now need to be spoken of!] 'Hell Ya.' The Indian community is doing well already, they have a radio station, and segments on TV. Coloureds are still lagging a bit. There is a need for stronger presence. We need more access to existing media. Coloureds need to broaden their views. There is definitely a need for more exposure. (Appendix A, 2005:5)

As a marginalised race group Coloured performers⁸⁷, like Fynn, are beginning to explore ways in which further marginalisation of Coloured people, in post-apartheid South Africa, may be eradicated. Fynn, through his performance of

⁸² "Prozies" refers to "Prostitutes".

⁸³ To "bopar" is to "arrest" or to "catch".

⁸⁴ "Mapped" meaning to "hit".

⁸⁵ "Larnie" refers to "someone wealthy", higher status in terms of class structures, or a boss.

⁸⁶ The writer acknowledges that the analysis of the monologues is my reading and understanding of them. They might not have been written in relation to the discussions that have risen. This point is also true for the stand-up comedy routine that is analysed in Chapter three.

⁸⁷ Other examples of Coloured performers that are challenging the marginalisation of Coloured people are Lueen Connings and Tracy Rose.

self-standing monologues, begins to assess the position that Coloured people hold in a democratically governed South Africa. His performances assess the hierarchical structures, discussed by Schechner (1991) and Pavis (1996), that were previously set in place. Identities that emerge out of race classification and racial power struggles, like those that were developed during apartheid, cannot represent identical identities in a space that has changed (Hall, 1996 (a)). Identities are not fixed. Fynn further assesses the hierarchical positioning of Coloured masculine identities in this new democratic space, and evaluates previously established representations of Coloured masculine identities. He challenges, through theatre, what Foucault (1984) calls systems of social and political power:

I make reference to the Coloured man as a victim of crime, not the perpetrator of it. I spoke from a point that wanted to find empathy from the audience. Everyone can see himself or herself in the character. I don't use imitation of accent; he is still a low class Coloured person. I want people to relate to the emotions. [...] We are faced with a lot of stereotypes as Coloured males. People's immediate perceptions of us is one that they see in the media, which is like when you see a documentary on crime, gangsterism, prison... its Coloureds who are dominant in these documentaries, so I think that a lot of the way that we see Coloured males is shaped by that. So we are expected to be kind of violent, raw, loud, rude and dangerous as coloured males. (Appendix A, 2005:6)

These are some of the stereotypes that plague the perceptions around Coloured masculine identities in South Africa, and it is these representations that are challenged by Fynn through his constructed stage persona. These stereotypes are constructed by individuals or groups that do not belong to the Coloured race group. This notion of stereotyping of the 'other' is noted by Hall (1997). The first given monologue depicts a Coloured man who is talking about stereotypes of Coloured men who are thieves, belonging to gangs, and standing trial for crimes that are not committed by these men. The language used is derivative of the language that is present in many Coloured communities. The 'street style', colloquial slang is representative of language that is associated with identities in the Coloured communities. This 'street slang' developed in Wentworth, and is specific to this area. The style of speech is common amongst members of the community, and recognisable within, and outside, the Coloured community of Wentworth. It has become part of the community, or rather become associated with Wentworth and the Coloured people that live there. There is an appropriation, of and an amalgamation with words from the English language, Afrikaans, and street slang. These combined represent the language that is used in Coloured communities⁸⁸. The choice of language is important in that, although a form of stereotype, it is recognisable to many, and through this recognition, understanding may be acquired. Audience members are able to

⁸⁸ The writer acknowledges that this style of dialect is not representative of all members belonging to the Coloured race group, but that it is a common sound that is heard amongst many individuals in those built-up Coloured communities, like Wentworth. The Coloured communities across South Africa, have different sound patterns and styles of speaking. The style of speech becomes part of that which builds or adds to the notion of culture, that cultures are tied together by common practices (Hall, 1996).

relate to the stereotype, and create meaning through that understanding. The choice of language is, not merely a cause for laughter, but rather creates a challenge by what is being said. Popular terminology, such as *ou*, *stekkie*, *bulie*, *tjooon*, *bra* and so forth, help the audience members to make direct references to the context that is being depicted or represented on stage.

Fynn (2005) notes that Coloured people are often race victims of crime and not necessarily always the perpetrators of crime, as the stereotype so often describes. The inequalities present in the history of South Africa resulted in crimes committed against Coloured people. These crimes, like many of those committed during apartheid, were based on racial difference. The inequalities that resulted from discriminatory practices, impacted greatly on the social circumstances that developed within segregated communities. One such community is Wentworth. Fynn attributes the current violence and high levels of crime to the inequalities suffered by the people of that community. The violence that Fynn speaks about is the product of the unjust actions of the apartheid regime. The lack of privilege that Coloured people experienced was tantamount to criminal action, and it may be argued that it is through this lack through this lacking that criminal behaviour is born in Wentworth.

Both monologues are directed at audience members directly; there is a breaking down of the 'fourth wall'⁸⁹. In this manner, the monologue spoken by Fynn is able to have direct impact on the audience that is watching. Antonin Artaud (1974), a French performance theorist, believed that it is through the abandonment of the fourth wall that the audience becomes active participants in the theatrical event, and not merely passive viewers. The level of engagement is demonstrably greater. It is through this active participation that critical thinking arises. It is through this abandonment of the fourth wall that Fynn engages audiences critically, or at least hopes to make them mindful of the representations that depict Coloured masculine identities. It is through the direct approach that this form of theatre employs, and the desired impact by the performer, that change may be prompted.

One of the issues that Fynn raises in his performance is the plight of the Coloured man. He examines a representation of the Coloured man as being a criminal and a gangster. While this may be true for a select few, this is not the case for all Coloured men, and should not be the only masculine representation of Coloured men. Stereotypes, as noted by Hall (1997), are not a true reflection of all individuals to which they are attached. There is a hierarchy set in place within Coloured masculine identities. Fynn (2005) indicates that, at the peak of this hierarchy, one would find masculine identities that represented patriarchy, violent behaviour and gangsterism. Through his performances, Fynn unpacks these representations, illustrates the dangers that are attached to them, and

⁸⁹ The term fourth wall was discussed in chapter one. It is an imaginary wall that separates the action on stage and the audience (Beckerman, 1990). It usually pertains to realistic theatre practices.

offers alternatives to these representations. Other forms of masculinity need to be removed from marginalised positions and replace masculine behaviour that might be destructive and harmful to the community and individuals.

Through this first monologues, Fynn critiques a Coloured masculine identity that is developed through gangsterism and violence. He offers input into the lives of gangsters and makes reference to other Coloured masculinities that are affected by the hegemonic masculine notions that are rife. He wishes for audience members to be critically aware of the current plight of Coloured men, and the consequences of being associated with gangs and gang related violence. Morrell (1998) argues that racial identity plays an important role in the performance of masculine identities. This argument is highlighted by Fynn through his performance of a specific Coloured masculine identity on stage. Coloured masculine identities are shaped by racial power struggles and cultural practices. Fynn provides opposition to these practices, through theatrical performances, operating from a desire to cause shifts to occur. Gendered identities are amendable (Butler, 1993) and, through his performance, Fynn aims to begin the process of amending Coloured masculine identities, or at least, representations thereof.

Fynn's character makes mention of the fact that he will only use an Indian lawyer. South African Indians, aside from being another marginalised race group, are often stereotyped as being good lawyers. Fynn confirms the stereotype that Indians follow one of three professions: doctors, lawyers or teachers. He further notes that it is another marginalised race group that defends a Coloured man. He highlights a point that there are racially discriminatory practices that are still in existence in our country. There is tension that exists between race groups, and misconceptions that arise out of these estranged relationships.

The second monologue appears to be in contrast to the first. While the first monologue reflects the representations of a tough gangster stereotype, the second aims to represent the softer, more sensitive masculine identity, one that has reformed and wishes to represent a different side to the Coloured masculine identity. Fynn aims, through the second monologue, to reveal that there are other forms of masculine identities that are and can be represented, also showing that the potential for change does exist. This is highlighted through the fact that the character text is spoken by the same person who has undergone a shift in the way in which his identity is represented, in accordance with the shift in context.

This second monologue, although spoken in a post-apartheid context, is written retrospectively against the violent past of our country. It looks specifically at inter-racial violence, and the relationship between racial politics and gender construction. Apartheid South Africa saw the rise of many racial battles. Different race groups were pitted against each other in the struggle for power.

The dominant race group was the white race; Fynn (2004) points out that any violence directed at them was dealt with more severely than other inter-racial violence. Gender roles that developed within this context were influenced by these racial struggles, by these notions of domination and oppression.

2.5 Conclusion

Coloured history in South Africa has travelled the path of a trying journey. The history of Coloured people, specifically those located in Wentworth KwaZulu-Natal, has been governed by the racial politics of apartheid South Africa. Identities, like those that developed in and around Wentworth, were constructed in relation to segregation laws and notions of boundaries. Space and place became important factors in the processes of identity construction (Jones, 1998). The shift in paradigm that South Africa experienced in 1994 – the institution of democracy - has allowed for space and place laws to be re-determined. Drawing on arguments posed by both Hall (1996 (a & b)) and Erasmus (2001), these shifts in place and spatial laws allows for identities residing within them to undergo evolution and change.

Accordingly, changes will be made to the development of Coloured identities, with particular focus on masculine identities. Coloured history cannot be changed, but we are able to adapt identities that evolved within that history. Cultural clashes that existed between Coloured and other race groups, and clashes that existed within Coloured race groups are reconsidered. Through performances of self-standing monologues by Fynn, the marginalisation of Coloured people and the effects of the hierarchical structures set up during apartheid, are challenged. Coloured is set up as a race group unto itself rather than one constructed in relation to black and white, and in relation to discriminatory racial practices. Through his performances, Fynn aims to begin to change perceptions of stereotyped of Coloured identities, specifically Coloured masculine identities, within his immediate context, Wentworth. Fynn challenges notions of hierarchy in terms of both race relations and gender construction. These challenges to racial and masculine stereotypes aim to eradicate the notion that Coloured as a race is marginalised and sandwiched between other race groups. He further challenges, through theatrical performance, stereotypes and dominant forms of Coloured masculine identities.

The form that Fynn employs, self-standing monologues, is a useful form of theatre in terms of bringing about awareness, through a polemic viewpoint, thus allowing for processes of change to begin. It is through an exploration of this form of theatre that Fynn hopes that concepts of marginalisation, domination and stereotypes attached to Coloured people will dissipate. Fynn aims to create this change within Coloured communities within KwaZulu-Natal, specifically the Coloured community of Wentworth. Theatre as a form of cultural practice and

representative of cultural practices (Mangan, 2003) is fully capable of beginning this process of change, change that Fynn (2005) confirms as a necessity.

Chapter three:

The Diasporic Indian performer: re-discovering a masculine Indian identity through actively 'standing up'

Introduction

This chapter examines the relationship between the South African Diasporic⁹⁰ Indian performer, Kaseran Pillay, and the construction of Indian masculine identities as they are performed or reconstructed for the stage. The focal area under examination is the renegotiation and critique of the construction of dominant Indian masculine 'types' that exist within South Africa and in Durban in particular. This renegotiation and critique is offered through the theatrical form of stand-up comedy. This chapter provides, firstly, a very brief history of Indian descent in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. It is important to locate the research in KwaZulu-Natal, since it is the home of the largest population of Indians in South Africa (Burrows, 1943). To aid in providing a historical overview of the Indian descent the writings of several analysts and researchers will be referenced. The writings of Ashwin Desai (1996), Bridglal Pachai (1971), and Anand Singh (2005) provide a general overview of the history of Indians, from their arrival to their roles in post-apartheid South Africa. H.R. Burrows (1943), former Professor of Economics at the University of Natal, offers insight into the early economic status and work experiences of Indians in KwaZulu-Natal. Dr. Y.M. Dadoo, former President of the Transvaal Indian Congress and leader of the Passive Resistance Council in the Province, provides further assistance in relation to the Ghetto Act⁹¹.

Secondly, the history discussed will lead to an evaluation of the development of an individual identity that has emerged out of this history, more specifically, the development of Kaseran Pillay's identity. Pillay is a South African Indian stand-up comedian and actor, who engages stand-up comedy as a means to critique the context around him. This discussion will culminate in an analysis of his use of the specific form of one person theatre, stand-up comedy, as a means to challenge gender stereotypes surrounding Indian people and, more specifically,

⁹⁰ Diasporic, as explained by Rustom Bharucha (1996), is the relocation of a group or race in another context or country. The Indian race group that is found in South Africa is representative of this relocation. Pillay, an Indian male, embodies some of the meaning that may be found in the word Diasporic.

⁹¹ The Ghetto Act was the name given to the segregation laws that were passed by the apartheid government in 1946, stipulating that Indians were only allowed to reside in certain areas of South Africa. These laws were called the Asiatic Land Tenure of 1946 and Indian Representation Bill of 1946.

stereotypes around Indian masculine identities within the specific context of KwaZulu-Natal.

Finally, there will be an analysis of performance work, as performed by Pillay in *My Cousin brother* (2003) and other stand-up comedy pieces that he has performed for live television⁹². The works that are offered for analysis allow one to examine a theatrical critique of the construction of stereotypes that are attached to race and gender. Pillay⁹³, through his performance, looks more specifically at the stereotypes that are attached to Indian masculine identities. Through the analysis of these performance works, the usefulness of stand-up comedy as a tool of criticism, will be analysed; along with this analysis, there will be a deconstruction of the stereotypes attached to Indian masculine identities or a deconstruction of dominant Indian masculine types. This analysis is offered in line with the shifts that have occurred, and that are occurring, in this post-apartheid South African climate.

3.1 Planting the roots that blossomed into fields of existence: the arrival and struggle of Indian people in Natal, South Africa

The history of the Indians in South Africa is myriad and complex but, for the purposes of this dissertation, only a few moments will be highlighted. The selected historical moments assist in creating a cultural background from which Pillay draws his theatrical comic challenge. Pillay, like Fynn, draws on his cultural background in order to construct a challenge (through theatrical practices) to gendered stereotypes that have emerged. The history of theatre amongst South African Indians has been extensively documented by practitioners like Ronnie Govender⁹⁴ (1996) and is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Instead, this dissertation offers a history of some of the cultural practices that have existed amongst South African Indians. It is from this cultural history that Pillay draws in order to construct a masculine identity (as will be discussed later in this chapter) and to reflect on that history through stand-up comedy. Indians arrived in Natal in 1860. Palmer notes that:

The coming of the Indians to Natal was no spontaneous uncontrolled movement of adventurous individuals seeking a better livelihood than their home country gave them. It was part of an elaborate system organised and controlled by the government of Great Britain and India. (Dr. Mabel Palmer, in Pachai, 1971:1)

⁹² The live stand-up routine was performed for MNET at a comedy festival that showcased South African comedians. Pillay was the only Indian performer on the show.

⁹³ An interview conducted with Pillay is attached as Appendix B. This appendix outlines his thoughts on the construction of masculine identities within the South African context, amongst other things.

⁹⁴ Ronnie Govender is a South African Indian performer, director and writer.

The great majority of the Indian population found in South Africa today can be traced back to 1860, when Indians were shipped over on the *Truro* to Natal as part of a triangular pact between Natal, India and Great Britain. The Indians were brought over as indentured labourers to work in the sugarcane fields of Natal, now known as KwaZulu-Natal. As part of the agreement, the Natal government promised to help them settle as permanent residents of the country and guaranteed them citizenship after their period of indenture was completed (Dadoo, 1993). The population of Indians in Natal, and their socio-economical status, grew (Burrows, 1943; Desai, 1996). Along with this growth, the population spread along the main transport routes from Durban to the inland towns. As a result, the sugarcane farmers began to branch out into other areas of Natal, South Africa, and other economical developments began to be established. Through their industry and efforts, the Indians have greatly contributed to the wealth and progress of Natal (Dadoo, 1993). The vast numbers of Indian labourers were employed in secondary industry; in the mining, railway, and manufacturing industries and even in local government. Indians created many opportunities for themselves in the worlds of commerce and finance (Burrows, 1943).

Hindus still had some resemblance to a caste system⁹⁵ which was brought with them from India. Along with the idea of castes, Hindus brought along a strong belief in culture and cultural practices, which has formed the basis of cultural practices that may be found amongst Indians today. Culture is one of the important components in the construction of an identity (Hall, 1996 (b)), and it is this strong sense of cultural practice found amongst Hindus (and other groups of Indians) that shapes the construction of identities, specifically masculine identities.

The poverty of the early indentured Indians extended to their educational and cultural practices (Burrows, 1943). The early Indians had a small educational background. They were unaware of the advantages that came with a formal education. For many years, the only schools available to Indian children were run by Missionaries. South African laws of 1910 and 1919 regulated that schooling and education were compulsory and free for European and Coloured children. Despite the fact that Indian children made up one third of the schooling population, schooling was not made free or compulsory for them (Burrows, 1943; Pachai, 1971). The syllabus that was taught was the same throughout the country, but the language in which education was taught was in English or Afrikaans. Teaching was not carried out in a vernacular that was a mother tongue for any Indian group. The hegemonic cultural practice was appropriated (Grossberg, 1996). Thus the Indians had to be taught in a language that was new to them and more difficult to grapple with. This teaching in a second language led to the development of accents amongst Indian people. The accent that

⁹⁵ The caste system is a system that distinguishes between economic wealth and economic class distinctions (Burrows, 1943). There are different castes that originate in the North and South regions of India. The North, generally, produces groups belonging to higher castes.

developed has led to the construction of a stereotype. Stereotypes are not true for all members that belong to a group (Hall, 1997). The accent that has emerged may not be spoken by all Indians living in South Africa, but has become a means of representing Indians, creating an 'othering' effect. By 1934 the education system had changed. There was more funding being channelled into the teaching and schooling of Indian children. There were many changes that, supposedly, took place, specifically after their terms of indenture were over. Pachai argues that:

Time-expired Indians are, as regards the general law of the Colony, in all respects free men, with all rights and privileges not inferior to those of any class of the Queen's subjects in the Colony. (Pachai, 1971:9)

After their terms as indentured labourers were over, Indians were legally declared free citizens, with equal rights to those of the white colonisers. This, however, was not a true reflection on the lived circumstances. Within a multicultural context, there is a hierarchy that develops (Schechner, 1991 & Pavis 1996). The Indian race was seen as inferior to the white race. Indian people have a tradition of strong cultural heritage. Indians have not willingly submitted to laws of inferior practices (Dadoo, 1993). Despite the laws that declared Indians to be free citizens in South Africa, Indians have been discriminated against in many ways. Apart from the Ghetto Act⁹⁶, there are 65 different laws restricting the rights of Indians in one way or another (Dadoo, 1993; Desai, 1996). These laws discriminated against Indians on the basis of race, restricting their access to land, monitoring and restricting their movement throughout the country, and limiting the role that they played in Parliament. Under the Ghetto Act, Indians were placed in segregated areas. Often these areas were overcrowded and congested. "The segregation laws aimed to drag down yet another section of the people to the economic level of the Africans" (Dadoo, 1993: 11). The segregation laws of South Africa created a context in which the white race group was seen as superior and afforded more privilege than other race groups. As was the case with Coloured people in South Africa, Indians were placed in specific areas.

In Natal, the main areas that the Indians occupied were Phoenix, Chatsworth, Reservoir Hills, Merebank, Clare Estate, Asherville, Overport, Tongaat, Stanger and Umkomaas (Singh, 2005). These areas were overpopulated and the living conditions were underdeveloped. Indians had to contend with lifestyles that were seen as inferior to those of the white race group but above those of the black race group. The placement of Indians above the black race group, in terms of privilege, created friction between the two race groups.

There were many wars that were fought in South Africa; many of these were based on racial indifference, marginalisation, and notions of privilege. The Riots of 1949 saw black South Africans and Indian South Africans fighting each other

⁹⁶ The Ghetto Act is the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act of 1946. The Act took away the fundamental rights of Indians to own and occupy land (Desai, 1996).

over jobs and the labour market (Desai, 1996). The passive resistance policies that were set out by Mohandas K. Gandhi⁹⁷ were not enough to weather the conflict that had arisen in South Africa. The Smuts Government of the 1940s, introducing segregation laws and laws that allowed for white supremacy, created racial strife within the borders of South Africa:

Standing now at the cross-roads of South African History and surveying, in retrospect, the changes of varying fortune and vicissitudes of the Indian in this country, one might say with Tennyson: "Perhaps evil is even sometimes the way to good...", for in the continuous struggle has come strength. (Dhanee Bramdaw, in Pachai, 1971: 73)

Throughout the decades leading up to democracy, Indians had endured many struggles. As with all South Africans, the Group Areas Act of 1956 limited the spaces which Indians could occupy. This limitation restricted living and working areas (Desai, 1996). This limitation is mentioned by van Vuuren:

We make no apologies for the Group Areas Act and for its application. And if 600 000 Indians and Coloureds are affected by the implementation of that Act, we do not apologise for that either. I think that the world must just accept it" (P.Z.J van Vuuren, in Desai, 1996: 38).

The apartheid government had created a context that afforded only a select few advantages. The Indians, like the Coloureds, were sandwiched in the middle of the struggle between the black and the white race groups. It is this sandwiching that both Pillay and Fynn analyse through their respective theatrical forms:

The 'New South Africa' would recognise the reality of the need for people and communities to remain themselves and to be able to preserve the values that are precious to them – so that each ... could feel secure in their distinctiveness. (Desai, 1996:115)

The post apartheid era has given birth to the phrase 'The Rainbow Nation', introduced in 1994 by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, as a means to describe the multiracial nature of the country. The idea of the Rainbow is a metaphor for the joining of all the different race groups in South Africa; to join and become one united band. The celebration of Nationhood became the core basis for the 'Rainbow'. This idea of a Rainbow is in support of Anderson's (1996) notions of Nationalism and nation building. Cultures that emerge within the Nation, idea of the Rainbow, are shaped by the concepts embedded within it. There were many changes that began with the dawning of democracy, but the placement of the South African Indian within this 'Rainbow' is yet to be defined. It is this search for a place in the 'Rainbow' that sparks the challenge that Pillay aims to achieve through theatrical devices, more specifically stand-up comedy. Pillay, through his analysis of Indian culture in South Africa and Indian gendered (masculine)

⁹⁷ Mohandas K. Gandhi was a lawyer from India who used passive resistance as a way to fight against oppression and violence. This form of resistance is a nonviolent way of fighting back. Links can be drawn between passive resistance and Stand-up comedy as a means to fight back. These links will be crystallised in the section 3.3.

identities via stand-up comedy, creates a place for Indians in this 'Rainbow'⁹⁸. It is this Indian cultural history in South Africa that influences Pillay and the material that he chooses to speak about in his Stand-up comedy.

3.2 Peeling away the layers to reveal the man behind the microphone

Within the theatre form that has been chosen for analysis, stand-up comedy, the identity of the performer is vital, because it is the performer's identity that is the character⁹⁹ (McMurtry, 1993). Pillay is a thirty year old Indian man working as a freelance Stand-up comedian and actor. He spent the first twelve years of his life growing up in Chatsworth, then entered boarding school and eventually moved to Johannesburg. He has, since, moved back to KwaZulu-Natal and resides in Musgrave, Durban. He does not confess to following any religious practices. He has three years of study at the University of Durban Westville and has been working professionally as a performer since 1996. Pillay has written shows for theatre and has recently hosted a local television travel show on SABC 3, *Going Nowhere Slowly* (2005).

As has been argued, the construction of identities is compounded by the notion that identities are always in a process of becoming, changing with shifting history (Hall, 1997). Identities are, themselves, not fixed entities; rather, they are co-relational to the history in which they are located at any specific time. Pillay adds support to this notion by admitting that:

There are different things that shape different times in my life. Shaped the way that I think and the way that I see things. So my way of thinking when I was at boarding school would be way different than my twenties, my varsity years. (Appendix B, 2004:1).

Identities are constructed by means of recognition of common elements that may be found in other individuals or a group of individuals (Hall, 1997). We are able to create an identity, both by identifying with, and rejecting, certain traits that one finds in other people. By either associating with certain traits or rejecting them, one is able to construct identities that are shaped by the representations of identities that are found in a society in which identities are constructed. Pillay affirms that this association can be made with either male or female identities:

The masculine sort of idol, not idol, idol is wrong, but the masculine symbols out there I don't define with at all but yet they are considered to be ultra masculine. I don't identify with this, so does this mean that I am not masculine? Um if I identified with the way... a woman

⁹⁸ This point will be further unpacked in the section that follows, in which the usefulness of stand-up comedy as a theatrical form is analysed.

⁹⁹ Unlike other forms of theatre, such as realist drama, characters for stand-up comedy are created or are based on the performer and the performers' personal experiences. This code, as well as others that define stand-up comedy, will be discussed in the next section of this chapter.

out there [behaves and], that I might admire. If I identified with her in a certain way, does that make me more feminine than masculine? It all depends on where you are taking it from and where you are taking it. Well I am a man, therefore I must be in some way, some how I must be masculine. Other people define who you are in terms of masculinity and femininity, but myself, personally I don't feel the need to define myself in a masculine context. (Appendix B, 2004:2)

Pillay concurs that his identity has been shaped by anomalies such as patriarchy. He also admits to rejecting certain traits that he observes in others and at the same time develops his identity in relation to what he comes into contact with in other individuals. He uses theatrical performance, like that of stand-up comedy, in order to negotiate this method of identity construction. Pillay acknowledges that his identity has partly been shaped by his rejection of masculine symbols and stereotypes with which he has come into contact; by doing so, he simultaneously acknowledges the existence of dominant forms of masculinity. Pillay concurs with Morrell (2001 (a)) and Connell (2000) with the notion that there exists a hierarchy within different forms of masculinities and that the dominant form is prescribed to others. It is this prescription of dominant forms of masculinity that Pillay chooses to avoid in the process of constructing his own masculine identity; thus concurring with Hall's (1996) notions of constructing identities in relation to binary opposites. Like many others, Pillay conflates gender and sex: "I am a man, and therefore I must be in some way masculine" (Appendix B, 2004: 2). It is important to reiterate, that biology does not determine one's gendered identity (Berger, Wallis and Watson, 1995 & Butler, 1999). Rather, it is shaped by a variety of positions, institutions, social circumstances, languages, context and history. One of the dominant stereotypes that has emerged out of this context, and that Pillay makes mention of in South Africa, is a macho type of masculinity:

I think that the South African man is very macho. It's like um ... It is very proudly South African, which is something that I've noticed, always. And it hasn't changed from the apartheid South Africa to the new South Africa. So what makes you a man is that you think of yourself as all powerful, all conquering being, you like to watch your sport and you love your country. [...] And it is influenced by your economic standing. So you will definitely have a hierarchy of strong Indian males within different brackets of upper class, middle class, and lower class, and socially as well. (Appendix B, 2004:2)

Pillay, when mentioning that the "South Africa man is very macho", omits the attachment of race to this definition. He allows for the conclusion that men of all race groups share a similar history and strive towards a similar identity, or that patriarchy operates across race, which may not be the case for all. Pillay, like Connell (1987), does acknowledge the placement of the patriarchal masculine figure at the top of this hierarchical structure, and it is through stand-up comedy that he challenges this hierarchical structure. He, while challenging, offers alternatives to the patriarchal form of masculinity.

Dominant masculinities are further shaped by the idea of Nationalism or Nationality (Anderson, 1996). The context in which a culture develops shapes the

identity that emerges out of that culture. Pillay makes mention of Nationalism as a means of guiding one's identity. This idea of belonging is often shared by various cultures within a nation. Masculine identities are also a product of class and economic status. The power struggles that exist between class structures is one of the factors that impacts on the construction of an identity. Being an Indian man, there are various other factors that help to shape the construction of Pillay's identity:

My race influences my identity every second of the day, because, unfortunately I grew up and witnessed things that happened and affected you because of your race... I'm not saying that there is a parallel power, I'm trying to. I know that the way that I look, does tend to alter people's perceptions either in a good way or a bad way. So I would attribute that to the time that I grew up in. But it [race] does [matter] to me because I also hold certain things as a benchmark, as an Indian man that I need to achieve in the entertainment industry. This is sad I feel that the benchmark should be the best work, not the best Indian work. But it is not consciously, it is almost subconsciously fact when you reach a milestone that no one else has achieved, you say that I'm the first ... whatever. (Appendix B, 2004:2)

One's race and cultural practice plays an important role in the construction of one's identity (Hall, 1997). Pillay questions the construction of his own identity, having grown up in a time when race played a major role in the lives of all South Africans. Within a multicultural society, like South Africa today, there are numerous power struggles that are in place (hooks, 1989). Identities are further constructed in relation to these power struggles. As an Indian man, Pillay recognises the need not only to offer alternatives to the dominant types of masculinities, but also to renegotiate the placement of Indian identities (specifically Indian masculine identities) within the notion of a hierarchical structure that Connell (1995) speaks about. Pillay aims to use theatre, specifically stand-up comedy, as a means to begin this shift or change. He aims to be, and to some extent is, one of the pioneers that places South African Indians and Indian identities at the forefront of political debate.

Amongst these debates, Pillay seeks to renegotiate stereotypes that have been attached to the construction of Indian identities, more specifically Indian masculine identities. "Often the representations that emerge within an identity are reconstructions of cultural stereotypes" (Hall, 1997:25). These stereotypes are often assumptions that become attached to individual identities by means of association, most commonly racial associations. Stereotypes that exist in relation to South African Indian identities include the idea that Indian men are aggressive, patriarchal, masculine figures who are thrifty business men, enjoy eating curry and samoosas, and are very fashion conscious¹⁰⁰. By analysing these stereotypes in performance, Pillay aims to deconstruct the impact that they have

¹⁰⁰ These stereotypes were gathered while speaking to Drama students, who belong to race groups other than Indian, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus. The six students interviewed in the Drama department found common elements in their perceptions of Indian men. These were some of their commonalities.

in relation to the construction of Indian masculine identities and challenge the creation of these stereotypes by others¹⁰¹:

How do I relate to them [stereotypes]? I don't identify with anything from those stereotypes. So it doesn't affect me. I might hate a stereotype or two, but I try to not let it affect me. [In performance] Obviously your situation, your surroundings will influence you in some way. But it is fiction, made up. And that is the thing it depends on how creative you are. How creative you are in accessing the information that is given to you, so the reason that one character may be better than the other is because maybe the character is more developed ... because that person can access more things from being human... I don't know. It's all speculation. (Appendix B, 2004:4)

Although Pillay denies identifying with stereotypes, constructed stereotypes do still affect him in one way or another; whether he wants this to happen or not. As a South African Indian man, stereotypes are attached to him, by others, on the basis of his race (Hall, 1997 & Morrell, 1998). This attachment is something that Pillay cannot avoid. He can, however, use these same stereotypes as a way to deconstruct or destroy that very same stereotype. Part of the creative process that is involved when creating believable characters on stage includes the construction of characters that are layered and detailed and not merely based on stereotypes¹⁰². There are, however, instances when a stereotype is used in performance. Pillay does so deliberately in order to acknowledge that the stereotype exists and then begins a process of deconstructing that stereotype. This renegotiation of cultural and gendered stereotypes that Pillay undertakes is achieved through careful understanding of that stereotype and manipulation of it in a particular context and manner. This manipulation comes in the form of stand-up comedy.

3.3 One Man, one voice, standing alone and facing the crowd: stand-up comedy as a way of challenge and revolution

Comedy has always been a big part of South African theatre history. Liz Meiring¹⁰³ (2004), a stand-up comedian¹⁰⁴, suggest that comedy is a way to get your mind off the apartheid history. Stand-up comedy is more than merely a means to forget; though it offers an insightful way in which the history of South Africa may also be critiqued and analysed. The history of comedy as a performance medium stretches far back to the 1950s. Annabel Linder (2004), a

¹⁰¹ Grossberg (1996) explains that stereotypes are often labeled by those that do not share in a certain cultural practice, thus creating an 'othering' effect.

¹⁰² The writer acknowledges that there are different creative processes in play, when characters are created for stage. This is merely one of the processes available, and might not be the same for all genres of performance.

¹⁰³ References that are made to Meiring, Linder, Fiore and Blacher are taken from the television documentary directed by Vogelmann (2004) titled *Celebrating South African Comedians*.

¹⁰⁴ The writer acknowledges that the female form of a comedian is "comedienne"; however, "comedian" is used generically.

comedian speaking on the history of South African comedy, mentions that after World War two, between the 50s and 70s, South Africa made use of radio comedy shows to offer insight and critique. Pieter-Dirk Uys made use of comedy throughout the 1980s and 90s, and is still using it today, as a tool to criticise, educate and inform South African people on social issues. During the 1980s and 90s he used stand-up comedy as a means to challenge the apartheid government; today he uses it as a means to inform and educate people on the issues surrounding HIV/AIDS.

Stand-up comedy is well suited to the 'new' South Africa because it promotes freedom of speech and individual expression (McMurtry, 1993 & Parker, 2002). Like self-standing monologues, it is a form of theatre that creates a polemic view which is delivered through a constructed performed identity, able to challenge the status quo. The previously marginalised groups have a platform from which their experiences can be articulated. As mentioned before: "The post-1990s saw the rise of political correctness, which lead to the fear, in many South Africans, of criticising each other" (Parker, 2002:10). Similar to self-standing monologues, stand-up comedy follows a structure that is void of the boundaries of political correctness, thus offering a medium by which directly to address issues that are pertinent to society. In effect, this form of theatre became the new form of 'protest theatre' (Parker, 2002). Stand-up comedy is an interactive form of theatre that changes from performer to performer, and it is an inexpensive form to maintain. There are many similarities that may be found between the theatrical forms of stand-up comedy and self-standing monologues. 'Stand-up comedy is concerned with the identity politics of the performer' (Parker, 2002:9). This is echoed when Kaseran Pillay says:

...that character cannot make any decisions without you. So obviously that character is going to be influenced by the choices that you make. So a character is not different from you at all. No matter what anyone says, there is always some inkling of you there which can be noticed... you cannot divorce yourself from the character. (Appendix B, 2004:5)

In both theatrical forms (stand-up comedy and self-standing monologues), the performer draws material for the performance from lived experience and interactions with society, and this lived experience is reflected upon through humour. The use of humour creates an environment of ease, in which people may laugh at and reflect upon shared experiences. South African comedian Posie Fiore (2004) adds that when you do stand-up, it is your persona that you are performing. There is no 'character' for the comedian to hide behind, but one could argue that the stand-up persona is a construction because of the constructed medium through which it is presented. Pillay is responsible for doing just that. He employs this form of theatre in order to critically question his own sense of what it means to be an Indian man, living in this changing South African context.

Pillay, like Fynn does through self-standing monologues, notes that he often uses stand-up comedy as a means to question constructs of masculinities. He makes

mention of different forms of masculinity that are beginning to emerge out of the shadows of this notion of a hierarchical system of masculinities. One of Pillay's routines makes mention of the following:

...there are a lot of people coming out of the closet. The whites are coming out, the Indians are coming out. And my question is that, why when an Indian man comes out of the closet, he comes out as a white woman, and not an Indian bra, why not. Little things like that pop up, but I don't try and... I don't do it intentionally; these are just my observations of society. (Appendix B, 2004:4)

Through his observations of the society around him, Pillay questions the construction of homosexual masculine identities, more specifically, Indian homosexual masculine identities. Through this critique, he simultaneously acknowledges the emergence of alternative forms of masculinities and the link between race and gender construction.¹⁰⁵

Gilda Blacher (2004), a female South African stand-up comedian, notes that the history of stand-up comedy in our country is vast. The comedy that we have access to today is not new and dangerous; rather, it is based on work that has been performed since the mid 1980s. Meiring (2004) draws attention to Paul Slabolepszy¹⁰⁶ as one of the pioneering stand-up comedians in theatre. Stand-up comedy is a way of letting people experience your world, allowing people to share in your world views. Stand-up comedy is the latest form of comedy; it is cheap and easy and all that is needed is the comedian and their voice or view on their surroundings. As a theatre form, it is capable of questioning politics and addressing social issues. It provides a social position that is derived from the environment in which the comedian experiences life and social issues. By addressing social issues, this form of theatre is able to stimulate change.

3.4 The works of a single mind: out the mouth and into the ears stimulating non-violent change

In order to reveal the challenge that Pillay embarks on, two of his performance works are offered up for discussion. The one is a stand-up comedy routine that he performed for television and the other is a play, *My Cousin brother* (2003), that Pillay workshoped with fellow actor, stand-up comedian and writer Aaron McIlroy. *My Cousin brother* (2003) was about two brothers, one white (Shaan) and one Indian (Devan). The white brother Shaan had been adopted into an Indian family. The character of Devan, played by Pillay, will be analysed as a

¹⁰⁵ The writer does acknowledge that the construction of gender that is mentioned by Pillay is not fully interrogated. There are many different facets that have a role to play in the construction of gendered identities. This example is offered as an example of an alternative form of masculinity and a link that could be found between race and gender.

¹⁰⁶ Paul Slabolepszy (1999) is one of South Africa's leading actors, playwrights, screenwriters and comedians.

reconstruction of an Indian masculine identity. Pillay, although performing in a two person show, used interludes of stand-up comedy in order to address certain issues:

Devan represents every Indian man. No, that is wrong. He represents the stereotype of an Indian man trying to make it yet failing. But also he is trying to fit in. I know when we first did the show, he came on speaking very proper English. And he was like this because there were white people around. But as soon as he got home, the accent changed. And what it was trying to say about fitting in is that you should just be yourself. But it also spoke about family and how you should deal with family. They accept you and you should accept them. Don't tease your family if you have money. (Appendix B, 2004: 8)

There are many issues that are touched on in the above words by Pillay. Firstly, he tries to question the stereotype that is attached to many Indian masculine identities; this being the stereotype of a masculine identity that is constructed on the basis of success and economic wealth, and a type of aggression that develops as a result of failure. The need to be successful is what drives the type of identity that is constructed. The type that develops has a need to always dress well and look presentable. There is a need to be more than what you are. Through his analysis, Pillay deconstructs this stereotype by placing greater emphasis on the qualities that represent this 'type'. By over emphasising the qualities of the stereotype one starts to question the construction of such a stereotype and the accuracy of this representation. Through this form of critique, one may find that the stereotype seldom matches the reality of the constructed masculine identities of individuals. The aim then would be to highlight and acknowledge the existence of a stereotype and, thereafter, begin to decode that stereotype and examine the use of that stereotype. This examination is prompted by Pillay and his use of stand-up comedy:

I don't think that the Indian man should ever try to fit in. Immediately when you try to fit in, you are going to make yourself feel uncomfortable, and make the people around you feel uncomfortable. What I think it is that he needs to be more confident in his abilities. And understand that he has things that he can offer, that he is as strong as any other man out there is, or woman. We shouldn't think of ourselves as second class citizens or first class. Firstly decide on who you are and then go out there, and don't try to fit. (Appendix B, 2004:7)

Secondly, Pillay makes mention of the stereotype that Indians speak differently in different contexts. This could be likened to Hall's (1996 (b)) writings on the impact that context may have on the construction of identity. Pillay uses this notion to examine the idea that Indian masculine identities are driven by a need to fit in to a 'white' world. This is evident in the way in which the identity chooses to speak. The Indian accent that one generally speaks with in the company of other Indians, often erodes in the company of white people. If Indians, and masculine forms of Indian identities, are truly to claim a space in the 'rainbow nation', in line with this notion of separate bodies living equal, then this desire to conform in order to 'fit in' is unnecessary. One's accent is an element that develops through interaction within a specific race

and culture. Accent should not become a means through which stereotypes are constructed; although, within the South African context this is a very common occurrence. The individual masculine identity, although developed through various factors such as culture and context, needs to locate itself in this new South African context. Any form of hierarchy, as mentioned by Connell (2000) and Morrell (2001 (a)), in terms of masculinity types, that was previously constructed, needs to shift or even erode co-relationally with the shift that has occurred in the creation of this 'rainbow nation'. These shifts do not merely apply to different race groups existing side by side, but should include different forms of masculinities being afforded equal opportunity and status.

The stand-up piece performed by Pillay elaborates on some of these issues. The stand-up comedy piece has been included in the body of the dissertation. This has been done in order to create a sense of inclusion and to allow the reader an easy reading path and direct link to the analysis that follows. The stand-up piece was performed on television for a show called *It's a funny country* (1997).

(Bows as he enters) I'm sorry, it's just that when I see so many posh people I feel that I'm at the British Royal Variety Concert and I have the urge to bow to Royalty. Are there any Queens out there tonight? (Reference to Gay men.) I just like to take the opportunity to thank MNET for giving me the opportunity to appear on this show. By the way, do you see that we have an Indian Miss South Africa now? Viva Miss new South Africa. I suppose we can say that the rainbow is finally complete. I'd also like to thank MNET for having the initiative of having an Indian representative on this show. Not only am I being paid for this gig but I'm making a killing backstage selling samoosas to the rest of the guys. But if you are looking for some real comedy, you should actually go to the Truth and Reconciliation hearings [TRC¹⁰⁷]. The truth and reconciliation, what a misnomer! If the Dutchmen really tell the truth about what they have been doing to our country for the last fifty years, how can we get to the reconciliation part? But that's a big farce. Let me tell you. They were down in Durban a few weeks ago and some guys broke into their offices and stole their computers. Then two days later, returned them and applied for amnesty. Ah, they got it. But I feel that we should have more guys like this working for us in government. Hold on a second, we already have. And I also feel that we have the wrong person chairing the TRC. We have Desmond, just call me

¹⁰⁷ The Truth and Reconciliation Committee (TRC) was set up in 1997 as a means to shed light on unsolved, violent criminal acts that took place during apartheid. There was a platform created on which political figures and citizens could speak freely about their criminal acts.

Arch, Tutu. He's got a shirt that actually says that. I feel that we should have Dr. Allan Boesak chairing the hearing; who could have made some money on the side. He would have made a killing man. Oh, forgive the pun. I feel that the TRC is lacking one last ingredient that most probably would catapult it into primetime viewing, the greatest comedian of them all, Amichand Rajbansi. You remember what a great source of entertainment he was after Eugene, watch out I'll kick your arse, Terreblanche stepped in and smacked him on the back of his head and his wig took off on its solo flight across the boardroom. And do you realise that he is considered a role model for the Indian youth. But then again, what sort of role models have you people given me? Saira Essa, enough said. Ja, I grew up having very few role models. But I used to love super heroes and Spiderman was my favourite. I used to think that I was Spiderman actually. Imagine one web-slinging down Sandton Square. [Web action] Potatoes, tomatoes, onions get them while they fresh at your one stop Spiderman shop. I mean come on, I'm Indian, I gotta sell something. But then I would imagine myself during the dark days of apartheid. Imagine me now web-slinging through Benoni; it's the 80s. Suddenly I'm surrounded by cops. There's a crackle on the blow horn. "WILL the coolie on the webs please come down? You are invading white air spaces; you are invading white air spaces." But of course, being a super hero would have its perks of course. With those web-shooters, imagine yourself at a wedding and you are dying for those last samoosas across the room. [Action of grabbing them with webs.] And imagine Spiderman in the bedroom. Spiderman getting his groove on, using his Barry White voice. "Hi baby, I see you and I know that you looking at me." [Action of web-slinging her hand.] "Oh Spiderman, I get so hot and sticky when I'm with you; [action of slinging the other hand] Oh Spiderman, show me your..." "You people are filthy. You just want me to carry on with this little sexual fantasy, don't you? Ah, you dirty man. I won't use any sexual jokes in this routine. I refuse, none at all, because I'm not getting any. Hey, it's not funny. Do you know how hard it is to get laid in the new South Africa today? Firstly, all the white women want the black guys; all the black women want the white women; all the Indian women want the white guys and all you white guys want us Indian guys. Thank you very much.

This stand-up comedy routine offers one many points for discussion. The first comment made by Pillay reflects on the extent of the marginalisation of South

African Indians when he notes that there was an Indian Miss South Africa. In 1997, the first Indian Miss South Africa was crowned. In the history of the pageant, and the history of the Indians in South Africa, there had never been an Indian winner. Pillay jests and says that "the Rainbow is finally complete". For the Indian population of South Africa, this was a great achievement. There was a sense of belonging that was brought about by this moment. There was a sense that Indians were finally, after more than 130 years of living in this country, finding a place within this new context. South African Indians have endured a long history in this country. Apartheid laws placed many restrictions on the Indian race group. These restrictive laws created a context in which Indians were seen as 'other' or less than, thus having an exclusionary effect. Pillay seeks, through his use of theatre, to eliminate this exclusion that Indian people experienced prior to the birth of democracy. He places the Indian race, culture and identities at the centre of debate in order to create awareness and bring about change:

Be happy and proud of who you are as an individual, a human being, before you start questioning people to accept you as an Indian man, and accepting the Indian culture into society. (Appendix B, 2004:3)

Pillay comments that Indians should first accept their own identities and cultural practices before asking the rest of South Africa to accept them. Change begins from within. Pillay was the only Indian comedian that performed on the show. There have not been many opportunities for Indian performers. Pillay thanks MNET¹⁰⁸ for 'taking the initiative'; he remarks on the fact that systems of power have not, and now need to provide more opportunities for equitable development. Indians also need to be placed at the centre of this equitable development so that the notions of 'Simunye'¹⁰⁹ and 'rainbow' include all race groups and constructed representations of different genders:

It's true, [Indians have been sandwiched between black and white] but we cannot really dwell on things like that. We have been sandwiched but let's move on. But there are performers out there that are challenging these things that say that "I am Indian, so what!" (Appendix B, 2004:5)

South African Indians have been placed between the racial politics that segregated the blacks and the whites; however, Pillay (through his use of stand-up comedy) highlights the existence of Indian masculine identities and claims a place for those identities in this new context in South Africa. Indian masculine identities are no longer seen as something either inferior or superior, but rather, as an entity that exists on its own. The various forms of masculinity that exist should not lead to the construction of a hierarchical structure. Connell (1995) and Morrell (1998) mention that within the construction of masculine identities there is a hierarchy that evolves. This type of hierarchical structure allows for

¹⁰⁸ MNET is a television station on South African television. Unlike the SABC or ETV channels, one has to subscribe to MNET, creating a form of elitism.

¹⁰⁹ "Simunye" is a term that is used to denote a sense of togetherness or 'oneness'. It is a term that has been used in South Africa to signify the coming together, or equality shared by the different race groups after the birth of democracy.

marginalisation to occur. It is this marginalisation that Pillay challenges through performance. Through his challenge, he questions the validity of any hierarchical structure that may exist and examines the existence of such a structure in this new era. By doing so he begins to create a space, via performance, through which change may be sparked. This self standing identity that one develops is able to co-exist with other forms of masculinity, and should not be ignored; this is the type of reasoning that is promoted through his performance:

What I wanted to show is that, you notice how different people treat you if you have an accent. It doesn't matter if you are stupid or intelligent. That people do judge you on the way that you speak, that is an unfortunate thing. One of my favourite lines from a movie is "I may speak with an accent, but I don't think with one". And I think that this is very true and appropriate for our society today. I mean the stuff that we did in *My Cousin brother*, myself and other performers is stuff that has been done for years. But it doesn't get the respect that it deserves, why? Because it is done by 'Indians', who 'speak funny'. But what I tried to do is narrow things down. So why all of this is being done, is because we are here, take note. (Appendix B, 2004:6)

The accent with which most Indians speak is something that often distinguishes someone as a South African Indian, or of Indian descent. There are stereotypes attached to Indians based on the accent with which they speak. The preconception that this stereotype suggests, is often far removed from actuality. English is a learnt language that is spoken by Indians in South Africa; it is not one of the languages that were spoken by the Indians who arrived on the Truro. Indians were made to learn English at school. An accent developed because English was not a mother tongue and the accent remained and developed within the segregated areas that housed Indians in South Africa. This accent has become a way of distinguishing Indians in different parts of South Africa. It is often used as a stereotype and this stereotype is often left unquestioned. The stereotyped accent is not the same for all Indians living in South Africa. Therefore, it should not be used as a distinguishing feature of representation. Often the accent is used to represent an Indian with low levels of education; this assumption is incorrect, as Pillay mentions "I might speak with an accent, but I don't think with one". He goes on to examine the role models that are available to the Indian youth, commenting that Amichand Rajbansi¹¹⁰ is not a likely role model. Rajbansi has been accused of abandoning his allegiance to Indians, in favour of an alliance with the African National Congress (ANC)¹¹¹. Pillay criticises Rajbansi's lack of alliance to Indians. As an Indian, it is expected that Rajbansi will favour his own race group over another. This notion of favouring one's own race is as a by-product of apartheid, where it was seen as traitorous to oppose the people fighting on the same side as you. This siding with the ANC also reflects negatively in relation to the violent history that is shared between the Indians and the blacks.

¹¹⁰ Amichand Rajbansi is a political figure who is the President of The Minority Front.

¹¹¹ The ANC is the governing Party of South Africa, holding the Presidential office since 1994.

The final analysis that is offered by Pillay is around the role model of Spiderman¹¹². Through his analogy of an Indian Spiderman, Pillay makes reference to the stereotype that Indians are thrifty, business-minded people, who generate an economic income through the sale of vegetables. This stereotype emerged when Indians arrived in South Africa and began exploring their skills as farmers on these shores. Pillay critiques this stereotype in order to create a space for other Indian traits and skills to be recognised. The Indian identity is capable of more than merely farming and Indians are capable of generating incomes through other, high income bracket, economic avenues. This idea of an Indian masculinity as a tradesman and seller is also mentioned when Pillay says that he sold samoosas¹¹³ to the performers backstage. Once again, the stereotype of the Indian figure as a trader is brought into play and questioned. Pillay affords the Indian Spiderman the power of a hero, but, although there is an awarding of a different masculine form, the stereotype of an Indian tradesman still lingers. In this new context that our country faces, the unjust stereotypes of the past need to be forgotten. If we carry these representations forward, then there will be no growth and change.

3.5 Conclusion

In conclusion this chapter has offered a brief history of the Indian race group in South Africa, including the arrival of the Indians in 1860 and some of the struggles that Indians had to face. It is via this history that one begins to understand the context in which South African Indian identities were developed. Indians were brought over to South Africa as indentured labourers, with low levels of education, and were trained as farmers and traders. These qualities have become stereotypes or representations that have become synonymous with Indian people. Indians brought with them a strong sense of culture and cultural practice on their arrival to Natal, and it is this strong sense of culture that has helped to shape the identities that follow this cultural practice. The cultural practices of Indians have evolved and shifted over the years, but the influence that culture has in shaping an identity remains that same.

Pillay admits that his identity has been shaped by numerous factors. South African Indian culture, as it has evolved over the decades, is merely one aspect that has influenced his identity. The notion of a 'rainbow nation' as a unified South African cultural practice further compounds the construction of Pillay's identity. His identity has shifted or changed through different phases of his life and through different contexts in which he has lived. As has been discussed, Pillay avoids using stereotypes as a means to construct his identity. He is aware that there are different forms of masculinities and it is through this awareness

¹¹² Spiderman is a fictional comic book hero with spider-like abilities.

¹¹³ Samoosas are a triangular shaped pastry that can be filled with meat or vegetables and then deep-fried in oil. It is a food that is commonly associated with Indian cuisine.

that he challenges the dominant masculine types that might be prescribed to all forms of masculinity or privileged over another. Pillay's constructed identity, like Fynn's, is then used as a basis for a character that is presented in stand-up comedy.

Stand-up comedy, like the genre of self-standing monologues, is a relatively new and interesting form of theatre through which social issues can be challenged and critiqued. It proves to be a formidable tool to engage personal issues. Through the use of stand-up comedy, Pillay examines the issues that affect him in his personal life as well as issues that affect the environment around him. Stand-up comedy, although young in its existence as a form of challenge, provides a cheap and effective means to create awareness and challenge dominant discourses. Pillay proves that this form of theatre is able to protest against the injustices, on both a personal level and a social level. It is through the use of stand-up comedy; specifically the two works offered for discussion, that an awareness of the struggle of Indian people in South Africa is highlighted. There is further examination of the stereotypes that are manifested within this South African context and the negative impact that this manifestation has on the construction of Indian masculine identities. Through his performance, Pillay is able to situate Indians, and different forms of Indian masculine identities, within the current South African context. He allows for the individual identity to acquire a sense of belonging. The boundaries that created exclusion of Indian people in South Africa have been lifted. These boundaries have made way for a 'rainbow nation' and in order for this rainbow to be complete, it must include South African Indians and there must be equal opportunity available for all.

Chapter four:

Conclusion

This dissertation began with an interrogation of the construction of masculine identities in South Africa, KwaZulu-Natal, and the potential to reconstruct or deconstruct these identities through theatrical devices. Specific focus was placed on the construction of marginalised masculine identities, namely Coloured and Indian masculine identities and the relationship that these constructed masculinities have with the post-apartheid context. What has emerged out of this study is evidence that a challenge to hegemonic masculinity may be achieved through the use of theatre. The works of Quincy Fynn and Kaseran Pillay provide ample support for the argument that theatrical forms, specifically self-standing monologues and stand-up comedy, are sufficient tools to tackle a renegotiation of representations of identities. Morrell says that:

Fathers should encourage their sons to play non-aggressive sports or involve themselves in recreational extra-curricular activities and share the household tasks with their sisters and mothers (Morrell, 1998:12).

The above quote, suggests that there is a need to renegotiate the construction of masculine identities. Adding to this concept, the construction of masculine identities should form in correlation to the new South African context in which it is formed. The concept of an identity, who we are or who we think we are, has myriad aspects and positions that shape it. One of the most important features of identity construction is the notion that identities are always in a process of becoming (Hall, 1997). Identities are not fixed; this coupled with the thought that identities are also shaped by context (Hall, 1997), allows for the belief that identities are capable of change. This dissertation examined how theatre may be a stimulus for this change.

Within the South African context, the power struggles of apartheid created a context in which race became a basis on which separation and segregation was premised. The 'othering' that occurred within this context, through racial practices, was as a result of racial politics. The identities, specifically masculine identities that emerged out of this context are directly relational to the racial power struggles brought about through apartheid. Apartheid laws helped to create a hierarchical structure amongst the race groups in South Africa. The notion of white dominance, as explained by Morrell (2001 (a & b)), also seeped into the construction of masculine identities. One of the hegemonic forms of masculinities that were prescribed or revered in South Africa was the patriarchal, white colonial form of masculinity (Morrell, 2001 (b)). This form of masculinity has been challenged by both Fynn and Pillay through theatrical forms, and they have offered other, previously marginalised examples, as tools for comparison and challenge.

There are various forms of masculinities within the South African context (Morrell 1998 & Connell, 1997). These myriad forms of masculinities, like cultural practices and race groups, need to exist side by side in post-apartheid South Africa. There cannot be one form of masculinity that exists as superior to others. Masculine identities that have been marginalised in South Africa's history can no longer remain marginalised. When there is equal existence of each race group and cultural practice, the masculine identities that are constructed within each cultural practice will benefit from this equality. Context is an important factor in the construction of identities, and apartheid played an important role in the shaping of identities. Hall (1997) supports the notion that out of context emerge representations or cultural stereotypes. These stereotypes are assumptions that are made about identities based on racial and cultural representations. Both Fynn and Pillay, in their respective forms of theatre, and as has been argued, unpack these stereotypes. They challenge the construction of these gendered and racial stereotypes and challenge the validity of cultural assumptions made in relation to individual identities, specifically masculine identities.

These assumptions and representations of identities are successfully critiqued and questioned through theatrical forms. Theatre has proven to be a good mechanism through which the world around it may be deconstructed. Through its re-enactment of everyday life (Schechner, 2002), theatre represents social constructions and has the ability to re-present these social constructions in ways that promote or encourage change. Theatre, because of its representational nature (Mangan, 2003), allows us to read the relationship between theatre and everyday life. It is via this reading that change is suggested, different representations being offered as though they were everyday life. Theatre reconstructs performativity in relation to its own discursive nature (Butler, 1993). It is, therefore, understood that the representations that are placed on stage are constructed in relation everyday life. This leaves room for suggestions for change to be made.

The representations of masculine identities were challenged, via this dissertation, through two forms of one person theatrical endeavours; namely self-standing monologues and stand-up comedy. These two young, one person performance techniques have proven to be very successful modes of challenge and critique. There have been many forms of theatre that have been engaged in order to challenge the status quo in South Africa, particularly during the apartheid history. Self-standing monologues and stand-up comedy can be added to the list of theatrical forms that are able to inform, speak about politics affecting the individual, and challenge status quo.

Masculine identities, as all constructed identities, are constructed in relation to the context in which they are situated (Hall, 1996 (a)). Within these constructed masculinities and, indeed, within the construct of patriarchy, there exists a hierarchy of maleness (Connell, 1995). Post-apartheid South Africa has provided

a space in which alternative masculinities are able to exist equally and to question hegemonic (dominant) masculinity.

Fynn, through self-standing monologues, and Pillay, via stand-up comedy, have used theatre as a form of weapon in order to bring about awareness and change. Although Fynn (through his work in *Walking like an African* (2004)) and Pillay (through his performance in *My Cousin brother* (2003) and various other stand-up performances) engage in different theatrical forms, they are both able to bring about similar, if not the same, results.

Fynn utilised self-standing monologues, as evident in *Walking like an African* (2004), to challenge the marginalised Coloured history in South Africa, Durban and begins to construct a new history, one that follows the principles of post-apartheid South Africa and democracy. Along with this new history, Fynn offers examples of different forms of Coloured masculine identities. These different forms of masculinities are offered in order to replace the representations that emerged through racial and cultural stereotyping. Fynn, through his theatrical representation of masculinities, declares that previous perceptions of Coloured masculine identities, namely of patriarchal violence and gangsterism, are no longer the hegemonic forms of Coloured masculinity. He claims space for different forms of masculinities. He acknowledges that there is some truth to the stereotypes that exist but that these are not absolute truths (Fynn, 2005). Fynn, through performance, has placed Coloured identities at the focal point of discussion, not only for those within his community but for those who access theatre in general. Through his investigation of Coloured practices we begin to re-evaluate the gender roles that emerge out of those cultural practices.

Pillay, like Fynn, uses theatre, as evident in *My Cousin brother* (2003), to create or stimulate conscientisation. While Fynn employs self-standing monologues to renegotiate constructions of Coloured masculine identities, Pillay engages in a different form of one person theatre (stand-up comedy) to renegotiate constructions of Indian masculine identities. The context and history out of which South African Indian masculinities have emerged is vast and shrouded in political strife. Labels that have been attached to South African Indians are unpacked by Pillay in performance and alternatives are set in place. The offering of alternatives creates a space in which the current South African context is able to influence the construction of identities. Pillay, like Anderson (1996), links the construction of masculine identities to the concept of Nationalism, where identities are constructed in line with a notion of belonging to a Nation. The construction of identities is shaped by both a cultural practice and the Nation in which that culture is practiced. The South African Indian culture, although displaced, has found a place in this South African context. This placement is of equal footing to any other race and cultural practice. The Indian masculine identities that evolve within this context need to be placed on equal footing to that of any other constructed masculine, or other, identity. Through his use of stand-up comedy, Pillay is able to show that stereotypes of masculine identities and

cultural representations can be examined and deconstructed. Pillay proves that stand-up comedy is able to protest against injustices on both a personal and social level.

The challenges that are examined via this dissertation may not be conscious challenges that are made by Fynn and Pillay through their performances, but they may be understood and read by academic discourse in this manner. This dissertation has offered analysis on the construction of identities, specifically masculine identities, and the relationship that the South African context, both pre and post apartheid, has had on the construction of these identities. This analysis of identity construction, performance of identities, and reconstruction of identities, has been mediated through theatre. In this post-apartheid context, theatre remains a useful mechanism through which social, political and personal issues and concerns may be highlighted and negotiated. The two forms of theatre that were offered for analysis can be equated to Protest Theatre, and may be called the new form of protest in this post-apartheid context. Theatre, as a form of cultural practice and representative of cultural practices (Mangan, 2003), is fully capable of beginning a challenge to the status quo and hegemonic practices, a challenge that both Fynn and Pillay promote through their respective uses of theatre. Both these forms of theatre, self-standing monologues and stand-up comedy, although young in their existence, are formidable tools through which social issues can be challenged. Fynn and Pillay have used theatre to remove their respective race groups and masculine identities from a place of marginalisation. By bringing these issues to the forefront of negotiations, change can take place. It is important to create a space in which notions around marginalisation are able to be voiced. There is a gap in written material in terms of the issues discussed and the relationship that theatre shares with the construction of masculine identities. This dissertation aims to fill that gap and open up an area of theatre (self-standing monologues and stand-up comedy) where ideas around marginalised masculine identities may be critiqued and discussed. This dissertation serves as a stepping stone, within this post-apartheid context, from which other kinds of discussions may arise, discussions related to the present South African context (democracy), the construction of identities, the role that theatre plays within this context, and the use of theatre as a tool to negotiate and renegotiate the construction of identities.

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Appendix A

Coloured identities through the smog

This is a non-professional transcript of an interview that was recorded on a Dictaphone.

Interview: Quincy Fynn 23 May 2005, at his home in Wentworth.

1) Rowin: Name?

Quincy: Quincy Fynn (Mo Money).

2) R: Age?

Q: 26 years.

3) R: Race?

Q: Coloured (African man).

4) R: Place of birth?

Q: Durban.

5) R: Where did you grow up?

Q: Wentworth.

6) R: Profession?

Q: Freelance artist.

7) R: Qualifications?

Q: None.

8) R: How long have you been performing?

Q: For about 20 years, but professionally since 1998. (7 years)

9) R: What do you feel have been the factors that shaped your identity?

Q: My family, personal relationships, friends, my worldview, socio-economic circumstances that I live in [class].

10) R: How would you define masculinity? Are you aware that there are many masculinities?

Q: Yes, I am very much aware that there are different forms of masculinities. It is very hard to define. I would define masculinity as, in general, strength, ...bravado. These things load the notions of masculinity.

11) R: There are many facets of masculinity, how would you define your masculine identity?

Q: My perceptions are based on providing for family, also it's hard because some of the perceptions that I kind perpetuate sometimes are perceptions that I reject sometimes because sometimes women tend to be stronger. But in general what is portrayed ...sensitive, not really...what's the Greek word... Doric.

12) R: What do you think it means to be a Coloured man? How has your race influenced your identity?

Q: We are faced with a lot of stereotypes as Coloured males. People's immediate perceptions of us is one that they see in the media, which is like when you see a documentary on crime, gangsterism, prison... it's Coloureds who are dominant in these documentaries, so I think that a lot of the way that we see Coloured males is shaped by that. So we are expected to be kind of violent, raw, loud, rude and dangerous as coloured males.

13) R: Is there such a thing as the South African Man? If so, how would you define that notion?

Q: I don't think that there is one South African man. I think that we like to aspire to ideals like Madiba. But there is like an Italian man, or an English man or Spanish man... within those contexts, but I really don't think that there is a South African man.

14) R: How do you view the South African Indian/Coloured man?

Q: The South African Coloured man; there is a lot of difference. Even the stereotypes do exist, but at the same time there are a lot of different forms that people represent. A lot of the time we tend to piggyback on the culture that appeals to us. There are Coloured men who are more African (black) in their identity and there are those that are more European (white) and they kind of cling to that part of their ancestry.

15) R: What do you think, is/are the representations of coloured identities (male)? Listed earlier in the interview.

16) R: How do you relate to these stereotypes or representations?

Q: I resent a lot of the negative ones, especially because in my immediate surroundings I'm surrounded by a lot of positive representations that gets very little acknowledgement from the media. And when I do see a positive representation of the Coloured male on television or the media, they usually don't sound or talk like me. They usually don't sound like a Coloured at all. They have a very 'private school' accent. They never grew up where we grew up. And I know that there are people who grew up in the same community, in the Coloured townships who have done positive things.

17) R: How do you deal with these representations /stereotypes when you create a fictional masculine characters? (*Walking like an African*)

Q: Generally you try not to show the resentment, so you try to embrace it. But you also try to show that it's much more complex, that a person is not just one dimensional. So even if I portray a gangster I try to show the circumstances that lead to the creation of that personality, I try to show that there is more depth to that person or in that personality. For example, if it is a gangster... they have families, things that they care about, people that they care about. But it is just their situation within their society that makes them deal with problems and things the way they do. It is not necessarily a lifestyle that they choose.

18) R: How has this South African context, pre and post apartheid context, influenced and shifted your understanding of what it means to be an Indian/Coloured man?

Q: Well, funnily enough, it hasn't shifted much. During apartheid, you hear this a lot, we weren't white enough, and now we aren't black enough. And as much as I disagree with people who use that as an excuse for not advancing or succeeding in the world, I have to admit that it is a bit true. The apartheid regime embraced us (Coloured people) slightly, in order create that difference between Coloured and black but it still didn't mean that we were equal. So it was like a struggling younger brother trying to climb up to the position of the older brother. I know for me, as an artist, as a dancer as a child...segregation was always there. We weren't allowed in the dressing rooms as the other dancers and all that 'shit'. So it did kind of give you an inferiority complex. To a certain degree you wondered if you weren't good enough, but you tried your hardest and you became better, better than them because you worked harder.

Post apartheid, we are still kind of in limbo, middle ground somewhere. But I don't know now if the desire is there to push harder, to achieve more and to be better so that you could fight that type of stereotype.

19) R: How has society shaped the man that you are today?

Q: I've traveled a lot so I've lived in lots of different societies. From Wentworth, Durban to Johannesburg Hillbrow, New York...lived in a lot of tough areas. Wentworth is also a tough area to grow up in, so it does kind of give you a thicker skin, and makes you more resilient. You try to fight pessimism to a kind of resolute optimism, but not naïve optimism. You look at reality and try to be positive, because of all the negativity that surrounds you in society.

20) R: What do you understand to be the hegemonic masculine identity/lies, if any? How do you challenge this notion, through the performance medium of self-standing monologues?

Q: It is very much bravado, especially in film now where you see a lot of gladiator figures, fighters and I think that the best way to challenge it is to portray the softer sides. Reflect the more sensitive nature of man. I think that generally that there is a taboo for men to talk about their feelings etc. So when I write I try to tap into that a lot.

21) R: How do you go about creating and writing a character?

Q: I think I just start with conversation. With kind of an internal conversation, in the mind. And then imagine conversations with people around the character, how they would relate to different people. Then draw out the character from there. Sometimes words are just words but you can get a lot from there, from simple dialogue.

22) R: How much of that creation/representation is shaped by who you are, and your societal views?

Q: All of it, everything. Art is more than a metaphor for life; it's a reflection of that. In drama, my first year teacher pointed out that everybody plays a role in life. In teaching, in schooling, you're putting on those clothes; you are playing that role.

23) R: What do you aim to achieve through the characters that you create? Do you wish to question and challenge societal (hegemonic) views?

Q: Yes, all of the above. But unless questioning and challenging is the aim I mean, that's what we do, but the aim is to inspire thought. To inspire an introspection kind of thing. The aim is more to change than to question and challenge. I suppose that through questioning and challenging you aim to change. Or to at least affect a change.

24) R: When working on/creating a character, do you allow your background to influence character choices? If so, how?

Q: Very much so! I'll give you an example, I was offered a role in *Coolie Odyssey* [Written by Rajesh Gopie, performed at the Playhouse theatre 2005] and the role

was to play Hanuman, the monkey God and also to play an Indian character. And in my background, that didn't work. The Coloured actors are always the clowns/fools. At this point it is not what I want to show, I want to reflect the 'other'.

25) R: How do you respond to the statement that 'The coloured and Indian race groups, specifically masculinity, have been sandwiched between the binary of black and white. And now need to be spoken of!'

Q: 'Hell Ya.' The Indian community is doing well already, they have a radio station, and segments on TV. Coloureds are still lagging a bit. There is a need for stronger presence. We need more access to existing media. Coloureds need to broaden their views. There is definitely a need for more exposure.

26) R: Where do you see the Coloured masculine identities fitting into South Africa today?

Q: I see them as the 'Go between', the middle ground, and a common factor. Coloureds are the first genuine product of South Africa, we need to keep people aware of that. From a masculinities point of view, we need to show the dangers that arise from socialisation, I refer to the apartheid representations of coloured men. These representations need to be examined.

27) R: Performance of *Walking like an African*, tell me about the concept, the process, the aim, motivations etc.

Q: The process was difficult. [Refer to video for the rest, did not want to answer.] Reference to *Acts of Love under a Southern Moon...the Mecca within*.

28) R: In relation to what we have discussed, how did you represent this character, masculine identity? Why?

Q: I make reference to the coloured man as a victim of crime, not the perpetrator of it. I spoke from a point that wanted to find empathy from the audience. Everyone can see himself or herself in the character. I don't use imitation of

accent; he is still a low class Coloured person. I want people to relate to the emotions.

29) R: Is it possible to get a copy of the performance script?

Q: Yes, Clare Craighead has a copy of the poems.

30) R: Can we chat again at a later stage?

Q: Yes.

31) R: What do you think about self-standing monologues as a performance form, and its emergence post 1994? How do you employ it?

Q: I don't like self-standing monologues, needs to be and can be used in a context, like in a play. I prefer ensemble, human relationships and interaction. Don't really enjoy it. Kind of a cop-out. But can be powerful within context.

Appendix B

Mixed Masala

This is a non-professional transcript of an interview that was recorded on a Dictaphone.

Interview: Kaseran Pillay, 10 June 2004 at his home in Musgrave.

Rowin: Name?

Kaseran: Interview with Kaseran Pillay.

R: Race?

K: Indian man.

R: Profession?

K: A working freelance actor.

R: Where are you from?

K: From Jo'burg.

R: Where did you grow up?

K: Grew up in Chatsworth till the age of twelve, then moved to boarding school.

R: What qualifications do you possess?

K: I have third year qualifications from the University of Durban Westville.

R: How long have you been working professionally?

K: I have been performing professionally since 1996, nearly ten years.

R: What do you feel are the factors that have shaped your identity?

K: Um... that is a very broad question. There are different things that shape different times in my life. Shaped the way that I think and the way that I see things. So my way of thinking when I was at boarding school would be way different than my twenties, my varsity years which are mostly a blur... mostly.

R: How would you define masculinity, and are you aware that there are different forms of masculinities?

K: You want me to define masculinity, my idea of masculinity? Well I am a man, therefore I must be in some way, somehow I must be masculine. I don't think that I can define it. Other people define who you are in terms of masculinity and femininity, but myself personally I don't feel the need to define myself in a masculine context. But it is good to get chicks if you do... I'm a man check here; check the size of my rod.

R: So you wouldn't define your own masculinity?

K: Well I can't, because to be quite honest, the masculine sort of idol, not idol, idol is wrong, but the masculine symbols out there I don't define with at all but yet they are considered to be ultra masculine. I don't identify with this, so does this mean that I am not masculine? Um if I identified with the way... a woman out there, that I might admire. If I identified with her in a certain way, does that make me more feminine than masculine? It all depends on where you are taking it from and where you are taking it.

R: What do you think it means to be an Indian man, how has your race influenced your identity?

K: (laughs) My race influences my identity every second of the day, because, unfortunately I grew up and witness things that happened and affected you because of your race. So at every second of the day, I am aware of my race but I am trying to, I'm trying, it is a constant battle. I'm not saying that there is a parallel power, I'm trying to. I know that the way that I look, does tend to alter people's perceptions either in a good way or a bad way. So I would attribute that to the time that I grew up in. I think that if I were ten years on, I would be in a different place, because, I'm twenty nine now, I do see that in performers between 22 and 26, race doesn't matter. But it does to me because I also hold certain things as a benchmark, as an Indian man that I need to achieve in the entertainment industry. Which is sad I feel that the benchmark should be the best work, not the best Indian work. But it is not consciously, it is almost

subconsciously fact when you reach a milestone that no one else has achieved, you say that I'm the first ... whatever.

R: Is there such a thing as the South African man? If so how would you define that notion?

K: Ja, I think that the South African man is very macho. It's like um ... It is very proudly South African, which is something that I've noticed, always. And it hasn't changed from the apartheid South Africa to the new South Africa. So what makes you a man is that you think of yourself as all powerful, all conquering being, you like to watch your sport and you love your country.

R: How then do you define the South African Indian man in general, in view of the above?

K: Um... I can only speak about it from my context. And the thing is that my context is influenced by my past. So I can't talk about the South African Indian man in general, and I never want to be quoted that Indian men are blar blar blar. I can only speak for myself. How do I see this in relation to that? It's difficult, because you are trying to establish yourself as a South African man yet if you waver from the Indian path then you are seen as a sell out. Even though the path that we used to take is the wrong path, we couldn't take that path to isolation, and it seems as though that is what our communities seem to want to do. And we label it as cultural or keeping the community together but it's not that, it's a ... I can't even explain it but it's ... I actually can't explain it. I can't find the words.

R: OK, what do you think is/are the representations of Indian masculinities? What are the different types that you see?

K: What are we talking about? Are we talking media, TV or people?

R: Just people. How do you see/view the different types of masculinities?

K: I think that it has a lot to do with your social standings. And it is influenced by your economic standing. So you will definitely have a hierarchy of strong Indian

males within different brackets of upper class, middle class, and lower class and socially as well. Um... myself, you also have strong dominant Indian males within the language groups, Tamil, Gujarat, and Telugu. Those men don't behave the same way. Even though their communities are so small it's like they are almost a different species.

R: So then, how do you relate to these stereotypes or representations?

K: How do I relate to them? I don't identify with anything from those stereotypes. So it doesn't affect me. I might hate a stereotype or two, but I try to not let it affect me.

R: How do you deal with these representations when you create fictional masculine identities?

K: You never take from one portion of society. You never isolate a section and say that you are going to take exclusively from that. Obviously your situation, your surroundings will influence you in some way. But it is fiction, made up. And that is the thing it depends on how creative you are. How creative you are in accessing the information that is given to you, so the reason that one character may be better than the other is because maybe the character is more developed ... because that person can access more things from being human... I don't know. It's all speculation.

R: How does this South African context, pre and post apartheid, influence your idea of what it means to be an Indian man?

K: Firstly, pre apartheid, pre 1994 and post 1994, I believe that for this country to go forward, and I am very passionately South African, and very passionate about our country going forward means that I need to loosen the shackles of being an Indian man and stop viewing myself, period, as an Indian man. This is because I am Indian only because my parents are Indian, and that their parents were Indian. Their parents were Indian. I am a freak of nature; we all are, I believe personally, because we hold no ties to that Indian culture. We all sitting in our

cars and drinking from our boots our culture. That is not our culture. The sooner that we realise that we need to assimilate into the South African identity, [the sooner we begin to appreciate who we are]. This could apply to Coloured people also. You are from everywhere, so just be happy about it. Be happy about your identity as an individual. Be happy and proud of who you are as an individual, a human being, before you start questioning people to accept you as an Indian man, and accepting the Indian culture into society. Fine I understand that there are certain people out there who want to promote the culture, but don't tell me that I am Indian when I don't feel Indian at all.

R: How do you go about representing, developing a character, and writing about it?

K: A lot of brainstorming, a lot of hit and misses before you can come up with a character. Um ... and once you have a character you sort of know. You know that this will be a fun character no matter what you do with them. All you ever need is the right context to put that character in, because if you know that a character is funny that he's funny. But if you cannot put him in the right context where all his talents can blossom, you know all his skills can come to the fore, then he is just going to be another out of tune character. I think that the key to making the character good is finding the right place where he can be comfortable or uncomfortable as the case may be.

R: How much of that representation is shaped by who you are?

K: A lot, because ... that character cannot make any decisions without you. So obviously that character is going to be influenced by the choices that you make. So a character is not different from you at all. No matter what anyone says, there is always some inkling of you there which can be noticed. That is the reason, I'm just going to show off a bit, Laurence Olivier never worked without prosthesis on stage. When he did King Lear in the 50s, he did, but had to cancel the show because he couldn't go on without prosthesis. Why is this the case if you can divorce yourself from the character.

R: What do you hope to achieve through the characters that you create? Do you wish to question and challenge societal/hegemonic views?

K: Well you always want to. As much as we always say that we can change the world, we can change society, we can change the way that theatre is done in South Africa what pisses me off performance dudes is that I love their enthusiasm, the fire in the belly. I love that they look down their noses at pantomimes, cabarets and kiddies shows. It's ridiculous, because those guys that are carrying theatre through in the country are the ones that are doing cabarets, because they are constantly working. Challenging audiences to pay money to come and see it. So it's not that bad. Sorry I might have gone off the question. Could you repeat the question ... Mostly the reason that I got into this business was that I didn't like a lot of work. But that's just a joke about theatre that you don't do a lot of work. It's probably more work than if I went and did a BCom degree. Which is what it was originally going to do. But more than that, all I want to do is entertain. That is what our entire business is about. That is how it started out. And because it was so popular, people decided to push a message in it because they have an audience. That is what drama students need to realise that it never started off as political platforms. It never started off as a soapbox to shout at people. It started off as entertainment, and if you are good enough, you can slip in a few messages. Look at "Green Mamba" for instance. You sit there and go, oh that's a bit insulting or stereotypical. But if you take a step back and take an overview, the characters also seem to have a message. And after speaking to Ben and John, it is not only about entertainment, they are trying to be cutting edge. They are trying to change society. But I don't think that that should be your biggest motivation for putting on a show. You must entertain first and foremost.

R: How do you respond to the following statement: 'the current Indian race group, specifically masculinity, has been sandwiched between the binary

of black and white, and now need to be spoken of'. How do you respond to that statement?

K: It's true, but we cannot really dwell on things like that. We have been sandwiched but let's move on. And I'm just hoping myself, because I know that there are a lot of new Indian performers out there. I am always keeping an eye out, in fact all the Indian theatre people, TV personalities keep a very close eye on what's happening in the South African Indian performance community. Everyone knows everyone, it's that small a community. And that is why you cannot shni people, because it gets back to you. But there are performers out there that are challenging these things, that say that "I am Indian, so what!" Why can't I play Hamlet, why can't I play Othello, or Macbeth? It's all a state of make believe, isn't it?

R: Where do you see the Indian Masculinity fitting in today?

K: I don't think that the Indian man per se, should ever try to fit in. Immediately when you try to fit in, you are going to make yourself feel uncomfortable, and make the people around you feel uncomfortable. What I think it is, is that he needs to be more confident in his abilities. And understand that he has things that he can offer. That he is as strong as any other man out there is, or woman. I'm talking about women also. We shouldn't think of ourselves as second class citizens or first class. I know people out there who think that way. It won't make a difference, it won't make yourself or the country move forward. You pass those feelings on to your offspring; your kids will feel like that. And I have seen kids of the parents who are like that, because of their family. Firstly decide on who you and then go out there, and don't try to fit.

R: OK, now let's move on to "My Cousin brother". Tell me about the concept, the processes, and the characters. What are the character names?

K: Shaan and Devan.

R: Who did you play?

K: Devan, and Aaron played Shaan.

R: What did you want to speak about, through that performance, this play?

K: We never tried to speak about anything. We didn't start that way. What we did want to show in some way, this is just between Aaron and myself we never tried to fit in any subtext or anything, but what I wanted to show is that, you notice how different people treat you if you have an accent. It doesn't matter if you are stupid or intelligent. That people do judge you on the way that you speak. That is an unfortunate thing. One of my favourite lines from a movie is "I may speak with an accent, but I don't think with one". And I think that this is very true and appropriate for our society today. I also wanted to show that humour is universal. I mean the stuff that we did in *My Cousin Brother*, myself and Dereshan, and other performers is stuff that has been done for years. In *Chatsworth*, in *Phoenix*, I mean it is stuff that the white people can only dream of. But I don't mean to make it white and Indian thing. But it doesn't get the respect that it deserves, why? Because, the audience is Indian, it is done by 'Indians', who 'speak funny'. But what I tried to do is narrow things down. So why all of this is being done, is because we are here, take note.

R: So, what does Devan represent, in terms of an Indian masculine identity?

K: Devan represents every Indian man. No that is wrong. He represents the stereotype of an Indian man trying to make it yet failing. But also he is trying to fit in. I know when we first did the show; he came on speaking very proper English. And he was like this because there were white people around. But as soon as he got home, the accent changed. And what it was trying to say about fitting in, is that you should just be yourself. But it also spoke about family and how you should deal with family. They accept you and you should accept them. Don't tease your family if you have money. But there were a lot of things that crept in. and these things were important to us the actors, Kaseran and Aaron. And what we feel influences the psychology, the plot. I'm not close with my family, but I am

trying to re-establish ties. Aaron is very close to his family. So somehow, what we were experiencing in life, seem to come together. But I can only talk about this now, in hindsight.

R: Do you deal with representations of masculinity when doing stand-up comedy?

K: Yes I do.

R: How?

K: Well I have a joke that I do about what is happening in the community at the moment. It is that everyone is accepting, there is a lot of people coming out of the closet. The whites are coming out, the Indians are coming out. And my question is that, why when an Indian man comes out of the closet, he comes out as a white woman, and not an Indian bra, why not. Little things like that pop up, but I don't try and... I don't do it intentionally; these are just my observations of society. I'm not going out there to harass gay people; this is just what I noticed unfortunately.

R: Do you have access to written text that could be analysed?

K: OK, let me tell you about *My Cousin brother*. It was workshopped in a car on the way to Grahamstown.