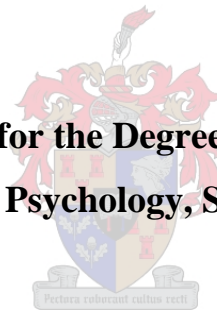


**CONSTRUCTIONS OF MASCULINITY,
SEXUALITY AND RISKY SEXUAL PRACTICES
OF MALE SOLDIERS**

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in the Department of Psychology, Stellenbosch University**



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Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted at any university for a degree.

Signature: Manj Date: 24/01/06

Abstract

The spread of HIV/AIDS in South Africa has continued in spite of initiatives by government and numerous concerned community-based and non-governmental organisations to contain the pandemic. Hegemonic masculinity and traditional male sexual practices associated with such identities have only recently been identified as a key area of challenge in the HIV/AIDS pandemic and more broadly in addressing issues of gender inequality. Practices such as non-negotiation in heterosexual relationships as well as other manifestations of gender inequality remain rife. Not surprisingly, this has led to a proliferation of research on men and boys in South Africa. Yet, while critical men's studies foreground the centrality of context in the construction of masculinities, the role of particular institutions long associated with the construction of hegemonic masculinity has not been well documented in the light of the HIV/AIDS challenge. Given that HIV infection ratios are higher among soldiers than civilians, and the masculinist culture that prevails in military settings, it is clear that soldiers are particularly vulnerable to HIV infection.

This study seeks to understand how men in the military draw on notions of masculinity and heterosexuality in constructing their identity and heterosexual practices. I conducted in-depth interviews with a diverse group of 14 male soldiers aged 23 to 33. All participants were officers pursuing a career in the military who were enrolled in a tertiary institution. The interviews were audio-taped and then transcribed. All the interviews were analysed using discourse analysis, with interpretation being informed by a social constructionist theoretical framework in order to address the intersecting issues of gender, sexuality and masculinity. The discourse analysis carried out on the transcripts highlights the centrality of dominant constructions of (hetero)sexual masculinity. Key here is the 'male sexual drive discourse' which has been identified elsewhere in South Africa and internationally, usually coupled with traditional expectations of women's sexuality as submissive and responsive to that of men. There is, furthermore, a prevailing notion of 'double standards' which reward men for risky sexual practices while condemning women for the same practices and for resisting their traditional feminine and sexual roles.

The study also found that the military as a macho/masculinist institution plays a key role in exaggerating traditional identities and sexual practices for men, in particular notions of masculinity as equated with physical strength and prowess and traditional constructs of male sexuality as urgent and aggressive. These are exacerbated by the military context in which soldiers, due to the nature of their task, have socio-economic and political power over (female) members of local communities. Long periods of isolation from partners during deployment and courses could also facilitate unsafe sexual practices.

The study further points to the salience of social identities such as race and class intersecting with gender in the subjective representations of masculinity and sexuality, with neither of these representations manifested as fixed or unitary. The study foregrounds how male sexual risk-taking facilitates the reproduction of hegemonic discourses on male and female sexuality that continue to repress women's rights to sexual desire and pleasure, while legitimating hegemonic male sexual practices.

The study concludes that tackling HIV in the military demands critical examination of multiple constructions of masculinity: those common to broader groups of men and those peculiar to the context of the military. It is thus argued that the development of effective intervention programmes on the one hand requires an unpacking of broader discourses on masculinity and male sexuality and on the other a specific targeting within the context of military imperatives and conditions.

Opsomming

In Suid-Afrika duur die MIV/Vigs-pandemie voort ten spyte van inisiatiewe deur die regering en verskeie besorgde gemeenskapsgebaseerde en nieregerigsorganisasies om dit in toom te hou. Redelik onlangs is hegemoniese manlikheid en tradisionele manlike seksuele gewoontes wat vereenselwig word met sodanige identiteite, geïdentifiseer as 'n sleuteluitdaging in die MIV/Vigs-pandemie en op 'n breër front in die aanspreek van aangeleenthede rakende geslagongelykhede. Gebruike soos onderhandelingsloosheid in heteroseksuele verhoudings, sowel as ander manifestasies van geslagsongelykheid, is steeds algemeen. Dit is dus nie vreemd nie dat hierdie aangeleenthede in Suid-Afrika tot toenemende navorsing onder mans, jonk en oud, gelei het. Alhoewel kritiese studies van manlikheid die belangrikheid van konteks in die konstruksies van manlikheid op die voorgrond stel, is die rol van bepaalde instellings wat lank reeds met die konstruksie van hegemoniese manlikheid verbind word, tot dusver nog nie in die lig van die MIV/Vigs-uitdaging deeglik beskryf nie. Gegewe dat die verhouding van MIV-infektering hoër onder soldate as siviele persone is, en dat 'n sterk manlike kultuur in die militêre omgewing heers, is dit duidelik dat soldate besonder kwesbaar vir MIV is.

Hierdie studie is daarop gemik om vas te stel hoe en waarop baser 'n bepaalde groep mans in die militêre omgewing hulle begrippe van en idees rondom manlikheid en heteroseksualiteit in die konstruering van hul eie manlike identiteit en vasstelling van heteroseksuele praktyke. Ek het diepgaande onderhoude met 'n diverse groep van 14 manlike soldate tussen die ouderdom van 22 en 33 jaar gevoer. Al die deelnemers was offisiere wat 'n militêre loopbaan volg en ingeskrewe studente by 'n tersiêre instelling is. Die onderhoude is op band opgeneem en daarna getranskribeer. Al die onderhoude is volgens 'n diskoers-analise ontleed, ondersteun deur 'n interpretasie vanuit 'n sosiaal-konstruktiewe teoretiese raamwerk in 'n poging om die raakpunte met geslag, seksualiteit en manlikheid aan te spreek. Die diskoers-analise wat uitgevoer is op die transkripsies het die belangrikheid van die dominante konstrakte van (hetero)seksuele manlikheid uitgelig. Die sogenaamde 'manlike seksuele drang diskoers' wat alreeds elders in Suid-Afrika sowel as internasionaal geïdentifiseer is, is ook hier 'n kernaspek. Hierdie

diskoers gaan gewoonlik gepaard met die tradisionele verwagting dat vroulike seksualiteit onderdanig is aan en reageer op dié van die man. Daar is ook die heersende idee van 'dubbele standaarde' waar mans beloon word vir riskante seksuele praktyke terwyl vroue daarvoor en vir hul weerstand teen hul tradisionele vroulike en seksuele rolle veroordeel word.

Die studie het ook bevind dat die militêr as 'n macho/manlike instelling 'n sleutelrol in die oordrywing van tradisionele identiteite en seksuele praktyke vir mans speel, veral in die idee dat manlikheid gelykgestel word aan fisiese krag en manhaftigheid, en tradisionele konstruksies van manlike seksualiteit wat as dringend en aggressief beskou word. Hierdie aspekte word verder verskerp deur die militêre konteks waar soldate uit die aard van hulle taak en posisie dikwels 'n sosio-ekonomiese en politieke mag oor lede (vroue) van plaaslike gemeenskappe het. Lang periodes van isolasie van lewensmaats veral tydens ontplooiing en kursusse fasiliteer dikwels onveilige seksuele praktyke.

Die studie dui ook op die opvallende rol van sosiale identiteite soos ras en klas in die raakpunt met geslag deur die subjektiewe weergawes van manlikheid en seksualiteit waar geen van hierdie weergawes as vas of eenvormig manifesteer nie. Die studie bring ook na vore hoe manlike seksuele waaghalsigheid bepalend is vir hegemoniese diskoerse oor manlike en vroulike seksualiteit wat voortgaan om vroue se reg tot seksuele begeerte en plesier te onderdruk, terwyl hegemoniese manlike seksuele praktyke gewettig word.

Die slotsom van hierdie studie is dat die aanspreek van MIV/Vigs in die militêre omgewing 'n kritiese ondersoek van die veelvoudige konstruksies van manlikheid wat algemeen in die breë manlike gemeenskap voorkom, vereis, maar veral van dié binne die militêre konteks. Daar word dus geargumenteer dat die ontwikkeling van effektiewe intervensieprogramme enersyds die analisering van wyer diskoerse oor manlikheid en manlike seksualiteit vereis en andersyds 'n spesifieke gerigtheid op die konteks van militêre verpligtinge en omstandighede vra.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION

1.1 Introduction

Gender has been identified as a key conceptual tool for understanding the increasing rate of Human Immune Virus (HIV) and/or the Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) globally. Heterosexual men are now understood as being key role players in driving the epidemic (Foreman, 1999; Lindegger & Maxwell, 2005). They are reportedly the sexual initiators and generally tend to have more sexual partners than women. Yet the burden of carrying responsibility for safe sex is located firmly with women (Lindegger & Maxwell, 2005). One way of describing HIV/AIDS through gender is to distinguish between the rates of infection of men and women (Dowsett, 2003; Lindegger & Maxwell, 2005). Dowsett (2003) deems this important because women are infected at a faster rate than men in most countries due to their biological make-up. The faster rate is also attributed to structural causes such as women's low socio-economic status and their subordinate position to men (Hamblin & Reid, 1991; McFadden, 1992; Schoepf, 1992; Seidel, 1993). The structure of relations between men and women is central in explaining HIV infection. It is this understanding that underpins most of the epidemiological models used in describing HIV/AIDS (Dowsett, 2003).

In Dowsett's (2003) opinion, this approach to HIV is based on epidemiological models and at a reproductive health level should not focus on gender alone. Issues of masculinity, sexuality and factors including race, culture, economic status and age or generation also need to be examined. Young people, for example, are reported as at high risk (Dowsett, 2003; Heinecken, 2003; Shisana & Simbayi, 2002; UNAIDS, 1998). Even if young women are known to be more at risk, young men too have enhanced HIV risk (Dowsett, 2003). Moreover, while overt, active sexual practices are socially accepted and even rewarded in men, the same behaviour by women is frowned upon. The social or cultural expectation is that women do not display overt sexual desires. Yet the same high-risk sexual practices by men are said to confirm and enact masculinity (Lloyd, 1995; Primary Health Care Group, 1996; Strebel, 1993). Several authors have argued that there

is a close link between dominant constructions of masculinity and male sexual practices (Foreman, 1999; Lindegger & Durrheim, 2001; Lindegger & Maxwell, 2005; Pleck, Sonenstein, & Ku, 1993; Shefer & Ruiters, 1998). This underlines that the HIV pandemic cannot be tackled without examining issues of masculine identity and sexuality.

Dowsett (2003) argues that a complete examination of current HIV/AIDS interventions also implies that we interrogate constructions of masculinity and sexuality in regard to the connections and dysfunctions of male identity, sexual identity, hierarchy within cultures and other social factors such as age, race and ethnicity. In this study I will explore the articulation of these factors in the military milieu. Given the masculinist, macho culture that prevails in military settings, a study of men in this sub-culture can offer a unique understanding of hegemonic male sexual practices.

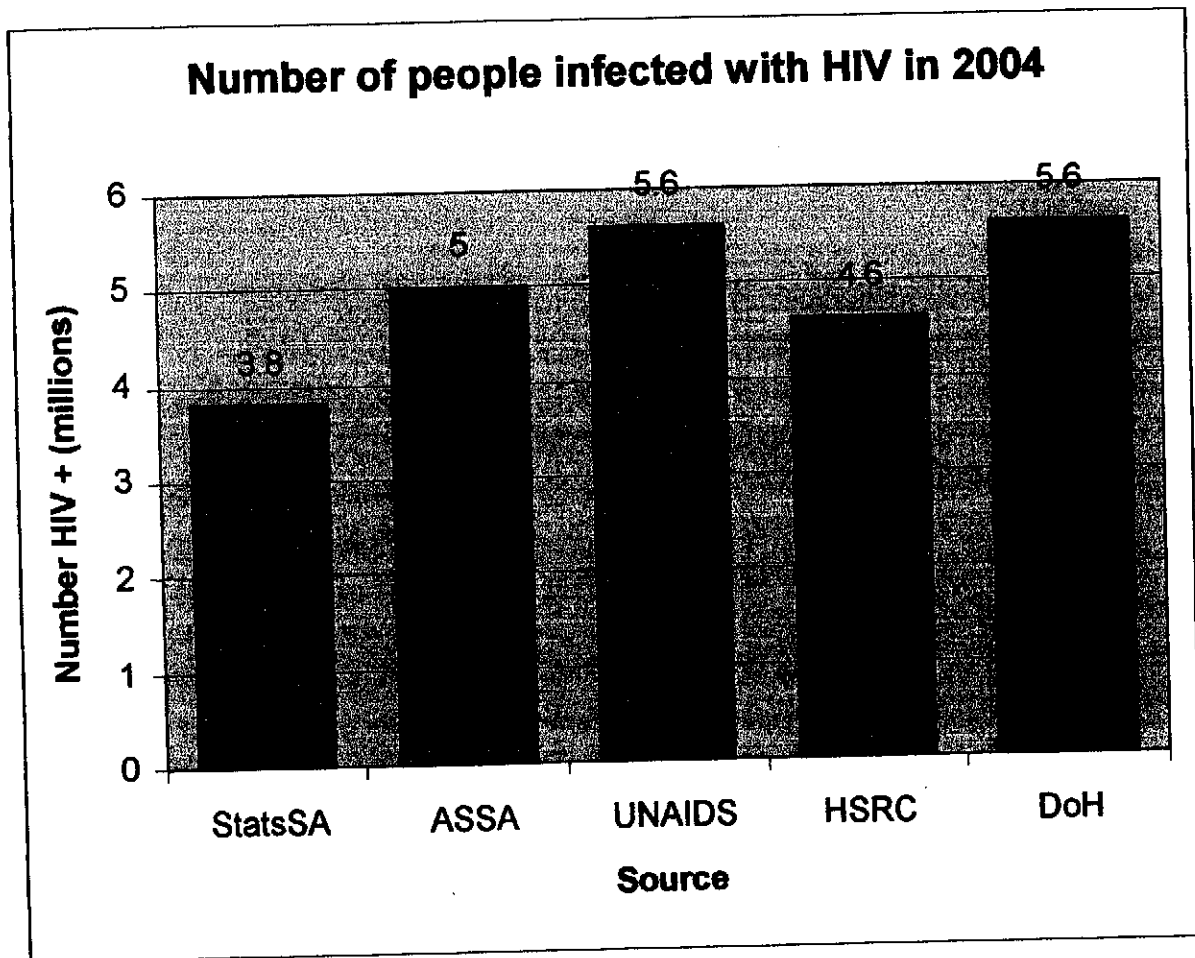
1.2 HIV/AIDS in Africa

I am conducting this study at a time in South Africa when the discourse surrounding the HIV pandemic is in turmoil. Since first being identified 20 years ago, HIV/AIDS has become a worldwide pandemic. It is estimated that more than 60 million people worldwide have contracted HIV/AIDS since the start of the epidemic (Shisana & Simbayi, 2002). In 2003 alone, it is estimated that 2.9 million adults and children died as a result of AIDS-related illnesses (World Population Data Sheet, 2004). However, globally, Sub-Saharan Africa is the most severely affected (Block & Dehaeck, 1987; Pham-Kanter, Stenberg, & Ballard, 1996; Shisana & Simbayi, 2002; UNAIDS, 2000). In the Southern Africa Development Countries (SADC) region estimates of the number of people living with HIV vary from nine million to 29 million (<http://www.avert.org/aafrica.htm>). During the launch of the United Nation's Global Media AIDS Initiative, secretary general Kofi Annan reported that during 2003 alone about five million people in Africa were infected by HIV (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2004).

This high AIDS prevalence in Africa is also attributed to regional and ethnic conflicts which have contributed to a breakdown in family structure. For example, wars in Sierra Leone and the Sudan, or ongoing genocide in Rwanda and Burundi, have led to a high prevalence of orphans and widows. Women and children in these situations are vulnerable and at risk of being exploited and of resorting to sexual behaviour in an attempt to survive (Heinecken, 2000). Children may engage in criminal behaviour while women might trade sexual favours to obtain money, food or safety. In some countries, including Rwanda, soldiers rape women, especially those supporting enemy forces (Heinecken, 2000). Migration from rural to urban areas is another indirect HIV vector in that it causes family instability. In Botswana and South Africa, for example, men leave their families and partners to work in mines in urban areas. A study of mineworkers has established that loneliness directly impacts on mine workers' sexual practices (Campbell, 2001). Also contributing to the spread of HIV/AIDS are entrenched cultural practices and beliefs based on power relations where the sexuality of women is controlled by men. Popularised myths, such as the dangerous belief that engaging in sex with virgins and babies can cure AIDS, have exacerbated the epidemic (Whiteside & Sunter, 2000).

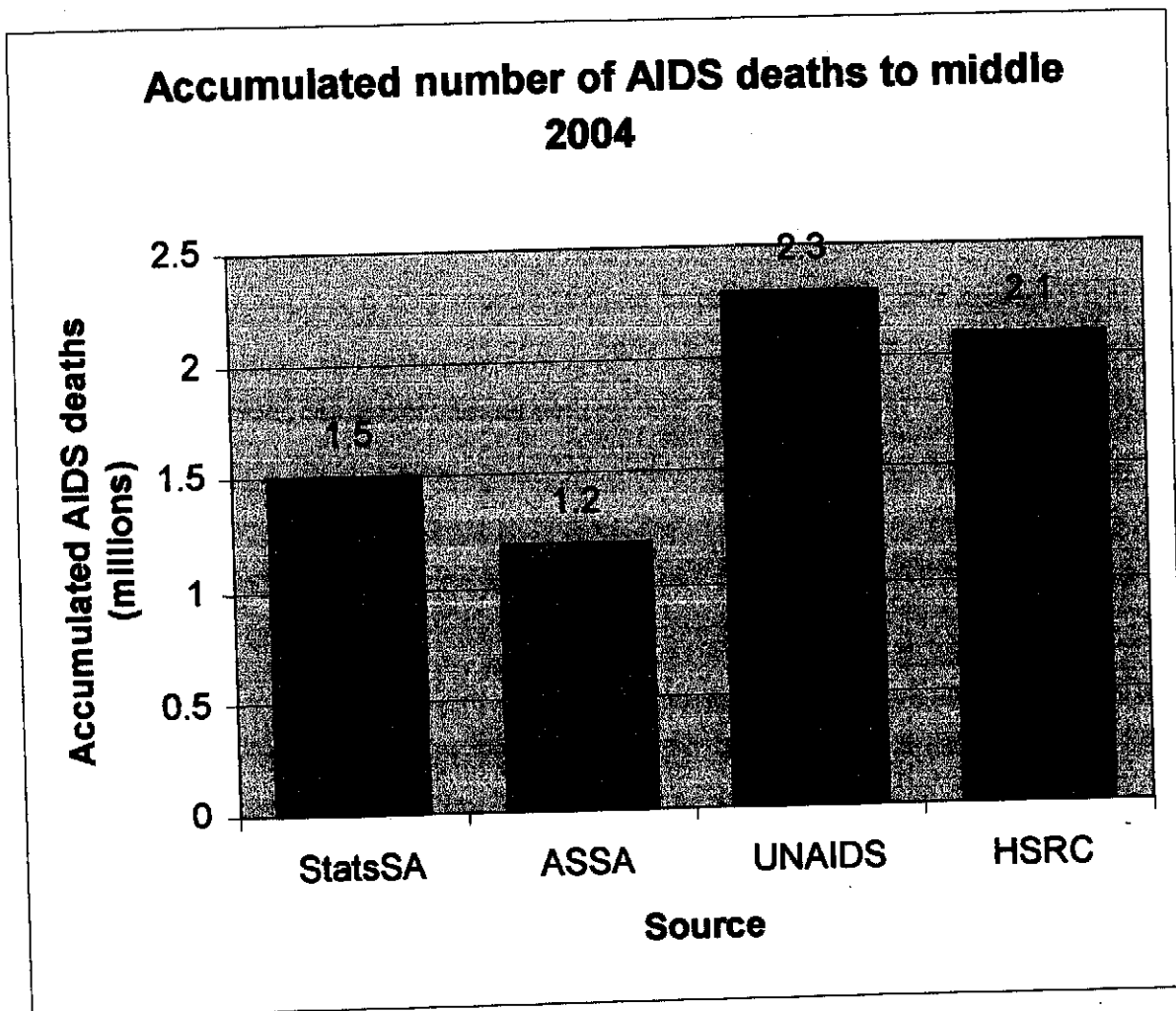
The graph below shows the current HIV statistics in South Africa as reported respectively by UNAIDS, the Actuarial Society of South Africa (ASSA), the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), the Department of Health, and Statistics South Africa (StatsSA) (Doyle & Nicolay, 2005).

Table 1: Range of HIV estimates for South Africa



These estimates of HIV prevalence in South Africa range from 3.8 million to 5.6 million people.

Table 2: Range of AIDS death estimates for South Africa



As in Table 1, the graph above shows similar variance in the number of people who have died as a result of AIDS, with estimates ranging from 1.2 million to 2.3 million. Even though there is a big difference between the various information sources, indications are that South Africa has to contend with an HIV/AIDS epidemic. Doyle and Nicolay (2005) suggest that fighting the epidemic is a key task for researchers in the HIV/AIDS field, and that the accuracy of statistics will not make a fundamental difference to the outcome of tackling the HIV crisis. The relevance of my study therefore lies in exploring factors that might lead to the development of appropriate HIV interventions.

1.3 HIV/AIDS in the military

Given some of the factors outlined above, soldiers serving in their country's defence force are particularly vulnerable to HIV infection and transmission. They are frequently away from their families (Heinecken, 2000), and, as young adults, are often separated from their loved ones, are highly mobile, subject to peer pressures, and operate in risky, disrupted and tense environments (Archery, 2004; Bujra, 2002; Heinecken, 2000; 2002; Kristofferson, 2004). Moreover, during deployment soldiers are paid well and can afford to pay for sex (Bujra, 2002; Heinecken, 2000; 2002).

It was reported by UNAIDS (1998) and at the 14th International AIDS Conference in Barcelona that HIV, like other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), is more rampant among soldiers than civilians (Personal communication with Prof. Tlou, University of Botswana, 2002, 2005, who is currently the Minister of Health). An estimated 40 to 50 percent of Dutch and United States (US) military personnel are reported to have casual sex while on deployment (UNAIDS, 1998). In one survey conducted with the US group 10 percent had contracted STDs. In peacetime the prevalence of STDs is about two to five times higher in the military than in the civilian population; whereas in times of warfare and civil strife, the rates are 100 times higher than that of the civilian population (Foreman, 1999; Mills, 2000).

The table below indicates rates of HIV prevalence in African militaries (Du Plessis, 2001; UNAIDS, 2000; WHO, 1999).

Table 3: Estimated HIV/AIDS prevalence within national armed forces

Country	Size of population (2001)	HIV/AIDS (%) (1999)	Size of forces (2001)	HIV prevalence in armed forces (%)
Angola	10 860 000	2.78	113 000	50 (1999)
Botswana	1 450 000	35.80	7 800	33 (1999)
DRC	50 340 000	6.43	31 100	50 (1999)
Lesotho	20 90 000	23.57	2050	40 (1999)
Malawi	98 40 000	15.96	10 800	50 (1999)
Mozambique	16 700 000	13.22	61 00	Not available
Namibia	18 80 000	19.54	8 100	16 (1996)
South Africa	42 830 000	19.94	90 500	17-21 (2000)
Swaziland	970 000	25.5	3000	48 (1997)
Zambia	10 240 000	19.95	21 500	60 (1998)
Zimbabwe	12 290 000	25.06	36 000	55 (1999)

In the book *AIDS and men* edited by Foreman (1999), the high level of HIV infection in the military is confirmed. For instance, prevalence rates in the Zimbabwean uniformed forces are estimated to be about two to three percent higher than in the general population. When a contingent of that country's officers was sent to China for military training, and subject to a standard test of HIV status, 30% of the group were found to be HIV positive (Rupiya, 2004). No official data has been provided on the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the South African National Defence Force (SANDF). In a collaborative conference between the SANDF and the United States of America held in Richards Bay in August 2004, the high prevalence of AIDS in the SANDF was revealed. Of the 1089 soldiers who volunteered to be tested, an overwhelming number of 947 (89%) were found to be HIV positive (Hosken, 2004).

It is important to note that the data provided above for SANDF infection rates are based on newspaper reporting, and its accuracy is not corroborated in other literature. The South African Defence Minister, Mr. M. Lekota, has disputed that HIV/AIDS is a major crisis within the SANDF and has argued that infection rates parallel other institutions in the country (Hosken, 2004). His view is based on 'Operation Blue Crane' research in March 2000, in which 8 000 to 10 000 SANDF soldiers were tested and a 17% infection rate found, similar in age and regional distribution to that for the civilian population at the time. Figures from StatsSA indicate that the national average is 17%. No other comprehensive data has been gathered on the extent of the HIV/AIDS infection in the SANDF since 2000, though the estimate for 2004 is 23% (Meyer, 2004) and another study is to be conducted shortly (Archery, 2004).

In spite of debates about whether HIV rates in the military constitute a major disaster, one should not disregard research indicating that soldiers operate in high-risk environments that make them particularly susceptible to HIV/AIDS (Heinecken, 2000; Mills, 2000; UNAIDS, 1998). Despite a lack of accurate statistics to reveal the disparity between civilian and military infection rates, in general the implications of the spread of HIV/AIDS are far-reaching. The concern of this study is not how many people HIV has killed in the past but how we can prevent it in future. Hence this study explores constructions of masculinity, sexuality and risky sexual practices which might facilitate the spread of HIV/AIDS. I am attempting to answer a difficult question raised by Campbell (2001), which is: 'Why do people who know about HIV risks, still take such risks?'

The consequences of HIV are disastrous to both the economy and security of African states. Institutions experience a lack of continuity at several hierarchical levels occupied by affected employees, and it is difficult to recruit and train replacements (Mills, 2000). Military personnel undergo a lengthy period of training, development and education relevant to their mastery. During peacetime, "for an average Army Officer to progress to the rank of Captain takes between 5-7 years (age 23-25), to Major 8-11 years (age 25-30),

Lieutenant Colonel (Lt Col), 12-15 years (age 30-35)" (Heinecken, 2002, p.10). These rank levels perform highly skilled management functions, and are the very groups reported as more HIV infected (Heinecken, 2002). It is evident that personnel losses at these levels have a major impact on the operational ability of the military, with serious implications for the stability of a country.

In this regard Maj-Gen. Fischer of the Botswana Defence Force, as quoted in Archery's (2004) presentation, avers:

AIDS in the military is no longer an academic issue; it is a reality that has to be tackled with all the vigour and effort that is commensurate with its ramifications. The military plays a prominent role as guarantors of security, without which society is threatened.

Given the reported current HIV/AIDS rates evident in the military, there are negative consequences for the security of countries (Heinecken, 2001; UNAIDS, 1998). Furthermore, death in the military reduces the level of preparedness expected for combat readiness, internal stability and external security. It is further argued that the morale, discipline and cohesion of the institution also suffer (Heinecken, 2001; Mills, 2000).

1.4 HIV and young men

Given the epidemiology of HIV/AIDS, prevention should be a primary focus especially for young people. Worldwide, among both civilians and soldiers, the age group of 15-24 is referred to as the most sexually active group and is therefore identified as the highest risk group worldwide (Shisana & Simbayi, 2002; UNAIDS, 1998). Lindsay, Smith and Rosenthal (1997) contend that people in this age group make up almost half of the world's AIDS infections. Similarly, Australian researchers also report death from AIDS to be more significant from the age of 15 years old (Moore, Rosenthal, & Mitchell, 1996).

Heinecken (2001) reports that in South Africa, it is the 18- to 32-year-old male military personnel who are regarded as sexually active, and at greatest risk of HIV infection. It should be noted that South African Labour Law states that individuals should only be employed from 18 years old. My assumption is that Heinecken could not provide an age sample below the age of 18, as her study is conducted in a South African military context which is a working environment. In South Africa it is mandatory that recruits are assessed for a range of diseases before they are employed (Heinecken, 2003). In the SANDF the most affected age group has been shown to be between 23 and 33 (DoD, 2000; Heinecken, 2003). It could be that recruits are employed in the window period or become infected in the military, particularly when they start deployment or attend military courses which require them to be away from home. KAP studies show that 80% of soldiers have casual sex during deployment (Heinecken, 2000). Young adulthood is a cohort stage at high risk for Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and HIV, hence this study will specifically target soldiers in the 23- to 33-year-old range.

There has been a lot of focus on adolescent boys and their particular vulnerability to risky sexual practices. This draws on developmental theories of adolescence which deepens the understanding of the particular pressure on adolescents with respect to risk-taking. This study focuses on men in their early adulthood because that is the average age of the participants in the research context and, statistically, they fall in a high risk group. The study acknowledges that there may be particular development contexts related to this age group regarding career, male-female relationships, what it means to be a man, and so on (Erikson, 1968). Given the social constructionist framework, however, the development context was not a major focus in the study. This is also because the focus was less on individual lives and more on the social discourses influencing participants. Given the massive body of literature on masculinity, male sexuality and HIV/AIDS, the literature on development issues was not actively pursued in my literature review. Social constructionist theories also question the notion that there are universal, essential developmental patterns, given that development itself is contextual and therefore may take on multiple forms. Thus, it is asserted that not all men in all contexts necessarily experience early adulthood in the same ways nor face similar, universalised challenges.

1.5 Motivation to do the study on young men in the South African military

The HIV pandemic has long evoked the concern of the South African government, community-based organisations (CBOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Prevention programmes have been developed and implemented and seem to have had an impact on people's knowledge about the disease. Studies have found that compared to other countries in Africa, the level of condom knowledge is relatively high in South Africa (see Blecher, Steinberg, Pick, Hennink, & Duncan, 1995; Mathews, Kuhn, Metcalf, Joubert, & Cameron, 1990; Van Dyk, 1990). The survey by Shisana and Simbayi (2002) also indicates that the South Africa public's knowledge about HIV/AIDS has improved. A range of HIV/AIDS awareness programmes targeting young people has been designed and incorporated in the curricula of some schools (<http://www.aids.org/>).

A number of contemporary studies about knowledge, attitude, behaviour and practice (KAPB) with respect to HIV/AIDS and sexual practices conducted at a national and international level, indicate that little has been achieved in terms of behaviour change (Beaman & Strader, 1989; Faxelid, Ndulo, Ahlberg, & Krantz, 1994; Mathews et al., 1990). Resistance to condom use is still high. For example, in a study conducted in Nigeria, condom awareness is reported to be high, yet 88% of respondents in the military did not use a condom during their last encounter with a sex worker and nearly half reported sexual contacts during operational deployment. To a question designed to assess the self-perception of the risk of contracting HIV, 63% said they were 'not at risk' (Egbewumni, 2004).

There is increasing concern about the limited usefulness of KAPB studies and the need to conduct more qualitative research that explores the complexity of understanding and meaning construction with respect to HIV/AIDS and sexuality more broadly (Shefer et al., 2002). In South Africa the focus has been predominantly on women and adolescents as they are believed to be at high risk for contracting STIs and HIV/AIDS because of their vulnerability (Buga, Amoko, & Ncayiyana, 1996; Harrison, Xaba, Kunene, & Ntuli, 2001; Lesch, 2000; Shefer & Strebel, 2001; Strebel, 1996; Wood & Foster, 1995; Wood,

Maforah, & Jewkes, 1996). Thus, it is within the context of both the lack of success of KAPB studies and the historical focus on women and children that this study attempts to deepen an understanding of local meanings about masculinity and how it is embedded in sexuality. The need to focus on men is not only felt in South Africa alone. For example, Botswana's national HIV/AIDS strategic framework for 2003-2009 emphasised the need for HIV/AIDS interventions for men. As a result, Botswana's government "has developed a male sector response that targets the defence force, police service, immigration and the prison department" (Mookodi, 2004, p. 1). It is argued that an exploration of masculinity and male sexuality will facilitate an examination of the implications of these social constructions for HIV/AIDS interventions.

The issue of behaviour change is of extreme concern. A possible reason for the discrepancy between knowledge and sexual practices change might be due to underlying psychosocial processes that maintain certain behaviours. Processes which enable people to change behaviour might also be implicated (Foreman, 1999). Given that constructions of male sexuality have received relatively sparse attention, this study examines how hegemonic masculinity and traditional/stereotypic male sexuality serve to foster unsafe sexual practices. For example, multiple aspects of hegemonic male sexuality play a role in HIV infection. Men's construction of sexuality hinges about sexual intercourse (White, 1999). Males are typically socialised to dictate how sexual processes occur. Men often dominate women's sexual lives as they dictate the terms of the relationship and negotiate, for example, whether a condom will be used or not (Foreman, 1999; Strebel, 1993). Yet South African research to date has tended to focus more on women, while the sexual practices of men have received relatively little attention. Hence it is crucial to explore male psychosocial dynamics and the structures that frame their identities and drive sexual practices.

Shefer, Ratele, Strebel, and Shabalala (2005) suggest that in the context of HIV/AIDS, young men – across borders of geography, race, culture and class – play a central role in the epidemic. This argument relates to an understanding of how masculinity is constructed in different cultures and the pressure on men and boys to conform to

dominant versions of masculinity, that is, what is approved and disapproved by dominant cultures, and what the cultural rules are. The virtue of examining sexuality as an element of culture is to look at all these factors. For example, many people from Thailand believe that men have strong sexual desires that need to be released (Foreman, 1999). Similarly, South African miners contend that regular sexual intercourse is essential for a man's health (Foreman, 1999). Generally, men's sexual desires are considered to be driven by biological forces beyond their control, which impel them to have sex with as many partners as possible (Hollway, 1989). My assumption is that men who believe that they cannot control their sex drive and buy into this dominant construction of male sexuality are also less likely to abstain from sex or to use condoms.

A male participant in a local qualitative study, for example, demonstrates this biologically determined view and the construction of male sexuality as urgent and uncontrollable:

I am a guy, I have biological needs. I need ... to be satisfied. If a woman comes walking past here now. And just by the look of it she arouses me and I want to be satisfied by her, then I'll go for her... I'll go for her ... to satisfy me... (Shefer, 1999, p. 242).

This construction of male sexuality has been highlighted internationally and named by Hollway (1989) as the "male sexual drive discourse" referring to the notion of male sexuality as biologically driven, impulsive and uncontrollable. A number of qualitative studies in South Africa confirm this dominant construction of male sexuality as overwhelmingly strong, uncontrollable and biologically determined (Miles, 1992; Shefer & Foster, 2001, Shefer & Ruiters, 1998; Strebel, 1993). I discuss this discourse in detail in Chapter 4.

Data concerning sexuality is said to be important in developing HIV/AIDS intervention programmes (Foreman, 1999; Lindegger & Durrheim, 2001; Pleck et al., 1993; Shefer & Ruiters, 1998). Research indicates that psychosocial understanding of human sexuality is

a relatively new area of research in the field of psychology. In South Africa it has only emerged over the last decade (Morrell, 2004). However, there remain gaps in the public understanding of the complexity of male sexuality, particularly that of male soldiers. This study is an attempt to contribute to that knowledge.

The subject of men and masculinities is also under-researched. While there is increased gender sensitivity in South Africa (Lindegger & Durrheim 2001; Morrell, 1998), and “explicit provisions [that] are made in the constitution and in various elements of legislation to improve the position of women, to date there has been very little research or applied work done in the area of masculinity” (Lindegger & Durrheim 2001, p.15). These authors substantiate the concern that not enough has been done to specifically address the agency of men in the HIV/AIDS milieu. The most notable exceptions in the South African research mentioned by Lindegger and Durrheim (2001) are the Campbell, Mzaidume and Williams’ (1998) study of men on South African goldmines, and the Shosholozza AIDS Project targeting men in soccer in KwaZulu-Natal (Makhaye, 1998). Individuals who attended the Barcelona AIDS 2002 conference also confirmed the paucity of this type of research in Southern Africa (Personal communication with Prof Tlou, University of Botswana, 2002, 2005). The studies to date underscore the need to analyse the interface between masculinity and sexuality. This study is informed by a broader focus on men, masculinities and unsafe sexual practices, but addresses men in the military as a particular ‘risk’ group, given the way in which the military represents a highly masculinised cultural context.

Despite the lack of South African research on masculinity and sexuality, it is important to acknowledge that in the past 15 years, a lot more work has been done in the area of masculinity, in some cases including masculinity as a key component of gender (Morrell, 2004).

A literature search of work on masculinity/masculinities using SABINET for the years 1990-2004 revealed the following: In South African periodicals, there were 20 instances, all dating from 1998 or more recently. In the case of theses and

dissertations, there were 13 cases, 6 from the period 1989-1996, the rest from 1997 to the present. The Union catalogue of current and completed research revealed 23 cases, all of which dated from 1997 or later. This is an indication, at least of the flowering of work on men and masculinity in South Africa in the recent period (Morrell, 2004, n.p).

Courses specifically on men and masculinity are now being offered at some South African universities, including the University of the Western Cape and University of KwaZulu-Natal. The University of the Witwatersrand held a conference entitled 'Masculinity and Manhood: Struggles with Change' in 2004 and the University of the Western Cape held 'From Boys to Men: Masculinities and Risk' in 2005. Some of the papers presented at these conferences highlighted the links between masculinity and HIV as an area that needs more focus. I will now discuss the intervention strategies that the SANDF has in place. The purpose will be to identify the limitations and gaps evident with a view to informing recommendations that may arise from the present study.

1.6 HIV intervention programmes in the military

Military forces in Southern Africa have, in most countries, developed HIV/AIDS intervention programmes. In Kenya, it is reported that condom distribution has not been seriously implemented (Kiama, 1999). The same is purported for Malawi, where it has taken more than a decade to address HIV (Nkosi, 1999). The SANDF's HIV management programme was implemented five years after the first case was recognised in 1988 and it was evident HIV had an impact on the ability of personnel to fulfill service obligations. As the epidemic has spread through South Africa, the SANDF has taken care to align its efforts with the national guidelines issued by the Department of Health (Masibambisane Programme, unpublished document).

The SANDF has various programmes and projects addressing HIV/AIDS, one being the Masibambisane awareness campaign in collaboration with the United States military. Soldiers are each exposed to a variety of these programmes (Archery, 2004). The

SANDF's HIV prevention programme focuses on nine key areas that have been identified as necessary in fighting the epidemic in the military:

1. **HIV in the workplace programmes.** These cover condom distribution and provision, peer education, general awareness of HIV and STI prevention, and occupational transmission of HIV.
2. **Monitoring and evaluation of programmes aimed at HIV prevention.** This aspect is linked to the development of HIV prevention programmes by assessing measures of all aspects of training. A baseline Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice (KAP) study is performed and baseline epidemiological parameters established such as the amount of condoms used and number of STIs recorded. Lastly, changes in baseline information are monitored.
3. **Beyond awareness campaign – Masibambisane (Let's join hands).** The awareness programme contains various sub-themes which require the development of media such as posters, videos and promotional items.
4. **Voluntary counselling and testing.** The South African Military Health Service personnel are provided with skills to handle basic pre- and post-test counselling.
5. **Capacity building.** Members involved in HIV prevention require updates with regards to new HIV information, management processes, policy and strategy. They achieve this through workshops, conferences, meetings, staff visits and bilateral exchanges.
6. **Prevention of occupational exposure.** Initiatives here are aimed at preventing HIV transmission at health centres (for example needle stick injuries), on the battlefield and during training. This aspect focuses more on training of personnel regarding the risk of transmission and the use of protective equipment.
7. **Syndromic management of sexually transmitted infections (STIs).** Although this is identified as one of the key areas in the policy, it is reported that there has been limited training given to nursing personnel on the syndromic approach.

8. **Health promotion and prevention programmes.** This is considered the grassroots initiative for HIV prevention and is designed by regional HIV programme managers to address their regional objectives.
9. **Women's empowerment and gender equality programmes.** Current plans to address the subordination of women that increases their vulnerability to HIV include the launch of regional pilot programmes (Masibambisane Programme, unpublished document).

In these initiatives, the absence of a focus on psychosocial dynamics such as constructions of masculinity and sexuality is starkly evident. This further underlines the need to foreground this focus in HIV/AIDS prevention programmes in the military.

1.7 Outline of the thesis

In Chapter 1 I have attempted to contextualise the need for this study by, among other things, examining national HIV/AIDS statistics. The male role in HIV infection was discussed. Data for the breakdown of civilian and military infection rates were examined and the rationale for focusing on the military context established. The SANDF response to the pandemic since the first case was recorded in 1983 is also discussed.

The theoretical framework of this study as well as theories on masculinity are both presented in Chapter 2. Research on constructions of masculinity in the military is reviewed. In discussing masculinity, I will pay particular attention to aspects of social constructionism as this forms the foundation of this study.

In Chapter 3 I will present the theoretical context for explaining sexuality and particularly male sexuality. A social constructionist perspective, as the theoretical framework of this study, is discussed as a rejoinder to traditional theories about sexuality.

Chapter 4 examines the phenomenon of (hetero)sexuality by focusing on national and international empirical case studies that draw on heterosexual discourses. This helps to

locate the findings of my study among other empirical research, and to clarify the links between heterosexuality and risky sexual behaviour, both generally and specifically, in a military environment.

Chapter 5 discusses this study's research questions, aims and methodological approach. It outlines the qualitative framework used to direct the research process, specifically the use of vignettes in data collection. Discourse analysis is used in the data analysis process. Finally, the power relations between participants and myself are outlined as are the ethical considerations of the research.

Chapters 6, 7 and 8 cover the analysis of my interviews. I explore the underlying discourses emanating from the interviews, relating these to the literature to reflect on and contextualise these findings.

Chapter 9 deals with the limitations of the study and makes recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2: MEN, MASCULINITIES AND THE MILITARY

2.1 Introduction

In this study a social constructionist paradigm is used to understand the meanings that men in the military attribute to masculinity, sexuality and their reported behavioural outcomes. To understand sexual practices, it is necessary to focus on the socio-cultural context and the complex relations of meaning and power within which they are constituted. Social constructionism assists in the exploration of soldiers' constructions of their identities which might include gender power inequalities and how these link with their sexual practices or conceptions of sexuality. This chapter deals specifically with masculinity, while sexuality and risky sexual practices are discussed in the next chapters. These elements are integrated but, given the massive bodies of literature in each, one needs to unpack them separately.

Central issues discussed in this chapter relate to definitions of masculinity and how these are framed within the social constructionist paradigm. The primary goal of the thesis is to analyse how male soldiers construct their masculinity and sexuality and how this intersects with their sexual practices. Theorising and demonstrating the substantive links between the main concepts of this study are therefore essential. Hence, an exposition of masculinity drawing on critical theories of gender and contemporary critical men's studies will be presented. This chapter starts with a brief overview of social constructionism and the rationale for using the framework. This is followed by a discussion of the meaning of gender and its use in understanding constructions of masculinity. Finally, the macho culture that prevails in military settings is explored through examining how the military context reinforces stereotyped masculinity, and how this context facilitates unsafe sexual practices.

2.2 Empirical versus subjective truth

Contrary to traditional theories which emphasise that a statement or research is meaningful if it is either analytically or empirically proven (Ayer, 1971), social constructionism opposes the notion that a truth is a truth only if it is empirical and is incorporated into a paramount theory that is truthful (Gergen, 1997). To substantiate this, Gergen (1997) and Burr (1995) argue that scientific and empirical studies are not objective and universal truths as they are claimed to be, but constitute discursive practices because, like any theory, they are produced within particular contexts and are invested in ideologies.

According to social constructionism, every theory strives towards a way of making meaning and if such a theory is disregarded that would mean there is a blocking of meaning making (Durrheim, 1997; Gergen, 1997). A social constructionist framework is viewed as heterogeneous and therefore not based on a single theoretical framework (Burr, 1995; Durrheim, 1997; Vance, 1989). Social constructionists argue that social constructionism has been influenced by different perspectives and, in turn, has also influenced many disciplines. This view encourages researchers to broaden their thoughts on how they make meaning of the information available in psychological and other social science disciplines (Durrheim, 1997; Vance, 1989). Researchers are requested to “reject the mechanistic, dualistic, and individualistic understanding of their object of study” (Durrheim, 1997, p. 181). Instead, they are encouraged to consider issues of power and ethics while paying attention to the ideological implications of their practices.

2.3 A summary of social constructionist views

The following key suppositions summarise the social constructionist framework. In this regard Gergen (1997) states:

- The terms by which individuals account for the world and themselves are not dictated by the stipulated objects of such accounts;

- The terms and forms by which people achieve understanding of the world and of themselves are social artifacts, products of historically and culturally situated interchanges among people;
- The degree to which a given account of the world or self is sustained across time does not depend on the object validity of the account but on the vicissitudes of social process;
- Language derives its significance and relevance in human affairs from the way in which it functions within patterns of relationship; and
- To acknowledge and commend existing forms of discourse is to evaluate patterns of cultural life; and such evaluations give voice to other cultural enclaves.

DeLameter and Hyde (1998) further articulate the key concepts of social constructionism by stating that knowledge may become institutionalised at certain social levels and be maintained by a specific group. This institutionalised knowledge can be defined as power. Thus power is located in the human body and structures of society and as such demonstrates the importance of non-discursive aspects of human relationships. Existing patterns of interaction depend on power structures originating in the past and maintained by many institutionalised ideologies and practices (Danziger, 1997).

Social constructionism fits into the broader philosophical framework of poststructuralism. Social constructionism posits an understanding that individuals construct meaning by engaging with each other and each other's discourses (Hermans & Kempen, 1993). This means individuals make sense of their worlds and create meaning through definitions and terms that are permeated by social values and cultural assumptions and are manifest through language or language use systems (Frosh, 1989; Held, 1990; Tiefer, 1987a). In this study, the assumption is that a soldier will co-create his own reality about masculinity within his social and cultural context, and his story will be constructed by the dominant discourses of his particular social and cultural context. Further, analysis of the stories and the dominant discourses of the soldiers interviewed are not a truth in themselves but are mediated through the interpretive filters of the researcher.

[This] implies that the way in which the story will be told by the researcher, will reflect the researcher's way of viewing and making sense of her world which, in turn, is influenced by her particular social and cultural context (Rapmund & Moore, 2000, p. 20).

This is illustrated in Chapter 5, where I engage with the research process and reflect on how my personal interests and values could have influenced and shaped the research process (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor, & Tindall, 1995).

2.4 Rationale for the use of a social constructionist framework

Social constructionism, with its emphasis on power and the way in which identities are performed within discourse, was viewed as most appropriate for this particular study which is concerned particularly with how men in the military context construct their masculinity and male sexuality, and how this impacts on their sexual practices. The study is not concerned with the lives of individual men in the military, but rather with unpacking what kinds of discourses are dominant or marginal in this institutional and interpersonal context. Concern with issues of social identity and performance within broader ideologies of gender and power relations makes the social constructionist framework particularly valuable. Social constructionism has been widely used in studies in gender, sexuality and masculinities (Chase, 1995; Connell, 2000; Cotteril & Letherby, 1993; Durrheim, 1997), and is particularly helpful in critical studies which attempt to challenge the status quo of the social dimensions of sexual and gendered practices.

It should be noted that other theories, such as systems theory, locate the subject in their social context and attempt to explain phenomenon with respect to social systems and organisational frameworks. Moreover, while systems theory, for example, may take cognisance of organisational and institutional frameworks, the focus in this study is not only on the participants as military persons, but more importantly on their performance of masculinity which draws on broader discourses of what it means to be a man and what it means to be a man sexually. Thus, the study is concerned with how men in the military

make meaning of being a man in that particular highly masculinised context, and also how notions of what it means to be a man may draw on, exaggerate or perhaps resist broader hegemonic and non-hegemonic discourses of masculinity. For this reason, a theory such as systems theory, which may have assisted in exploring the organisational level of participants' constructions, was not found to be as valuable as social constructionism which allowed for a deconstruction of participants' discourses in the light of broader discourses on what it means to be a man and a soldier.

2.5 Gender and sex

While gender and sex are often used interchangeably in the popular realm, the theoretical debates regarding such a distinction are complicated and complex (Cameron & Kulick, 2003). To explain the meaning of gender sufficiently, I must first clarify the term sex. West and Zimmerman (1992) state that the conceptual distinction between these two terms sets up a rigid, deterministic relationship between them. This entrenches the binary opposites of male-female and culture-biology. The dominant belief is that a person is either male or female physically and then becomes socialised accordingly. For example, Shefer (1999) cites from a popular text on gender and development (Mosse, 1993) which describes sex as a natural, unchangeable "basic building block" for any given culture. By contrast, the term gender is more fluid, seen as "a set of roles", a "script" that we are socialised to learn, so that we can communicate what we are. What has to be learnt varies at different times and places and is therefore historically and culturally bound. Mosse (1993, p. 2) avers:

Our biological sex is a given; we are born either male or female. But the way in which we become masculine or feminine is a combination of these basic biological building blocks and the interpretation of our biology by culture. Every society has different 'scripts' for its members to follow as they learn to act out their feminine or masculine roles, much as every society has its own language ... Gender is a set of roles, which like costumes or masks in theatre, communicate to other people that we are feminine or masculine.

Postmodern understandings have shifted in this respect to begin to understand even the biological as fluid and multiple. West and Zimmerman (1992) concur that even though sex and gender are seen as interchangeable, and both take on specific meaning in culture, it is still the body (sex) that determines the experience that society defines for an individual gender (either masculine or feminine). Gender is problematised in the sense that developmental theories, social learning theory and psychoanalytic theories, among others, view gender – like sex – as fixed from the age of five. This sex-gender dichotomy illustrates how gender is fastened to notions of biological difference between men and women and how they are socially constructed, reflecting the dominant discourse of a nature-nurture dichotomy in patriarchal Western culture.

For social constructionists, everything we know (all knowledge) is constructed within social discourse, posing a challenge to theorists who view masculinity as either genetic or socially constructed. The next section focuses on positioning gender and masculinity within the social constructionist framework.

2.6 Social construction and gender

Feminist and critical researchers argue that constructionism provides a complex, rigorous way of understanding gender (Chase, 1995; Cotteril & Letherby, 1993). Flax (1990) posits that in modern society an individual's sense of self is gendered, therefore a person explains himself/herself from the starting point of being a man or woman. For Cosgrove (2000), gender is created and recreated intersubjectively. The extent to which men, for example, define standards for masculine behaviour is through their relationship with cultural norms and values (Hearn, 2005; Lindegger & Maxwell, 2005).

More recent social constructionist accounts of the meaning of gender have used narratives (Chase, 1995; Cotteril & Letherby, 1993). In this view, the relationships between gender and social and cultural factors are embedded in the way people relate their stories as social products. In this study, the way soldiers relate their experiences and beliefs throws light on masculinity and sexuality.

It is important to note that not only is the military a gendered institution, it is deeply masculinist. Its structure, practices, values, rites and rituals reflect accepted traditional notions of masculinity and femininity but privilege male values (Barrett, 1996). Social constructionism argues that the experiences and identities of gender shared by individuals originate from certain discourses expected from certain gender groups by society (Hollway, 1984). If the experiences of selfhood cannot be separated from interaction with others (Corbett & Kugler, 1989; Kohut, 1971, 1977, 1984; Wolf, 1988), then the experiences of manhood cannot be separated from relating with others. Therefore, in order to change sexual behaviours, interventions cannot disregard underlying discourses.

The focus now turns to more theoretical perspectives on masculinities, drawing predominantly from the social constructionist framework which is the broader theoretical framework of this study.

2.7 Key components of theoretical perspectives on masculinities

Leading theorists in critical men's studies argue that the gender identities of men are socially constructed, changeable and often contradictory (Connell, 2000, 2001; Morrell, 1998, 2002; Moynihan, 1998). Their position is that masculinities, meaning how different men negotiate their identity as men, are multiple, varied and fluid. Further, that masculinity, as a gender identity, is performed in particular ways that serve to reproduce and re-enact broader discourses on masculinities, as well as frame the individual male life (Connell, 2001; Morrell, 2002).

Contemporary articles on gender and masculinity point to the historically and culturally specific states of the concept and lived experience of masculinity. Most research done in the area of masculinity has been conducted through individual life histories or ethnographic studies (Connell, 1995, 2000). Key conclusions are that there are multiple forms of masculinity; there are hierarchical and hegemonic forms of masculinity; and

masculinities are actively produced and created in specific historical circumstances. A brief discussion of these elements follows.

It is argued that *no one type of masculinity* has been found everywhere. Since different cultures and different periods of history construct gender differently, we need to speak of masculinities and not masculinity (Connell, 1995, 2000). Ethnographic studies suggest there are numerous forms of masculinities in any given context (Cornwall & Lindisfarne, 1994; Skelton, 1997; Swain, 2002). Diverse forms of masculinity clearly exist within a given setting be it social or institutional. Within one school, workplace or ethnic group, there may be different ways of learning to be and being a man (Skelton, 1997; Swain, 2002). There are thus likely to be different conceptions of the self and different ways of using the male body and identity across time and location (Connell, 2000). On the other hand, there is a strong argument that some forms of masculinity are more powerful than others and these hegemonic masculinities take on a dominant position in relation to more marginal masculinities. Some (Connell, 2000; Swain, 2002) have argued for a relatively global hegemonic masculinity or at least some fairly consistent universal constructions of successful masculinity. Across cultures and communities, some aspects of masculinity – such as the centrality of sexuality, the importance of physical strength, and control over women – consistently emerge as key to hegemonic masculinities. On the other hand, the literature acknowledges the multiplicity of masculinities, the contradictions evident within the identities of men themselves, and the power of local contexts in ‘creating’ manhood (Connell, 2002; Hearn, 1996; Morrell, 2002; Skelton, 1997).

Swain’s (2002) research is a good example of how institutions or local contexts may construct multiple masculinities and how relationships are defined between them. Swain (2002) studied the relationship between formal school culture and informal pupil culture. He was particularly interested in the options available for boys to construct their masculinity and establish status or prestige within their immediate peer group. Based on his study, Swain found that for boys to effectively gain status and popularity among peers, they needed to demonstrate this through their bodies by doing athletics and or any physical sport. They achieved this through competitive playground games that they

designed and invented to circumvent inimical school policies and enact their masculinity. Skelton (2002) also illustrates how two schools with different social class backgrounds promoted and produced different masculinities. She compared the extent to which the two schools allowed young boys to draw on sexually harassing or violent attitudes and behaviours to define their male identities. Skelton concluded that based on schools attended, hegemonic masculinity is variable and various factors shape it. She observed that boys draw upon, negotiate and reject aspects of constructing, negotiating and reconstructing their masculine selves among their immediate male peer groups. These examples illustrate how institutions may construct multiple masculinities. The way the military as an institution impacts on constructions of masculinity and sexuality among soldiers is discussed later.

While most people conform to biological or essentialist definitions of what their gender performance ought to be (Cheng, 1999; Connell, 2000; Hearn, 1996), masculinities research has frequently identified contradictory desires and conducts (Connell, 2000). This, according to Connell (2000), is one of the key reasons why masculinity is not fixed. Furthermore, there are frequently contradictory discourses on masculinity offered to men. Edley and Wetherell (1997) have shown that masculinity is defined by discourses that construct men both as sensitive and caring and as tough, competitive and emotionally inarticulate. Weisbusch, Beal and O'Neal (1999) found that there are discrepancies in how masculine men actually are, how others thought they should be and what they thought they should ideally be. This was measured by the Bem Sex Role Inventory that included actual, ought and ideal scales (Bem, 1974).

Similarly, Phoenix, Frosh and Pattman (2003) found that boys behaved differently in a group than individually. They found that boys in individual interactions generally spoke out about emotions and relations in ways that in the group situation would be defined as "soft" and "wimpish". Psychoanalytic and ethnographic research has also revealed the existence of internal contradictory desires and behaviour (Phoenix et al., 2003). Connell (2001) postulates that a man or boy may conceal deep homosexual desires by an active display of heterosexuality. Thus the public enactment of an overt masculinity may

disguise action that undermines it. Masculinities may therefore be in tension internally and externally (Connell, 2000, 2001).

Masculinities are actively produced using the resources and strategies available in a given social setting. This is accomplished in everyday conduct or organisational life as patterns of social practices. Masculinities therefore do not exist prior to social behaviour, either through gene programming or through fixed personality structures (Connell, 2000, 2001).

Standards of masculinity vary from time to time, from culture to culture and from one context to the next. However, it is argued that a primary way in which dominant masculinity is established is in opposition to femininity (Connell, 2001). Men define their masculinity within a set of cultural and social practices that involve a rejection and denigration of what they consider to be feminine behaviours. These feminine behaviours often serve as markers of homosexuality in the policing of ascendant forms of masculinity (Swain, 2002; Wetherell & Edley, 1999). Concomitantly, Phoenix et al. (2003) hold that homosexuality is associated with femininity because of its status as not masculine. Thus, the construction of masculinity is partially underpinned by projecting femininity towards particular boys who are singled out as gay or not sufficiently masculine (Martino, 1999; Phoenix et al., 2003). Boys labelled as gay are seen as possessing the same characteristics that are belittled in girls. In a number of studies boys found it extremely upsetting to be called or labelled gay (Martino, 1999; Skelton, 2002; Swain, 2002). These boys are thus policing the behaviour of others and themselves by rejecting versions of femininity or "other" masculinities (Martino, 1999; Phoenix et al., 2003; Wetherell & Edley, 1999).

Another example that demonstrates that masculinity always defines itself as being different from and superior to femininity and other "lesser" forms of masculinity, is that gay men and "housebound" husbands exemplify subordinate masculinities in modern cultures. They are not considered "real men" despite that fact many may still support hegemonic masculinity. By its nature hegemonic masculinity requires constant validation and by proving itself as dominant and in control of itself and others it attains

that validation (Murnen et al., 2002). One way of proving hegemonic masculinity is to act aggressively and even violently toward what is regarded as feminine, female, homosexual and/or “nerdish” (that is, men who do not conform to hegemonic masculinity) (Cheng, 1999).

Numerous studies have shown that some forms of masculinity are prized, honoured and desired above others (Cheng, 1999; Connell, 2002; Donaldson, 1993; Luyt & Foster, 2001; Wetherell & Edley, 1999). Other forms are subordinate or marginalised (Cheng, 1999). Hegemonic masculinity is the type of masculinity performed by the dominant group in a particular context or location (Cheng, 1999). Connell (1995) describes it as the culturally idealised form of masculine character.

Masculine hegemony refers not only to the various groupings of men and the ideals they uphold but also to the process by which their groups and ideals are formed and the organisational situations and constraints that shape and construct their ideals and groups (Barrett, 1995). The numerous attributes that are characteristic of hegemonic masculinity and that appear to be relatively universal include domination, aggression, competitiveness, strength, athletic ability, stoicism and control (Cheng, 1999; Martino, 1999). Hegemonic masculinity is defined in most societies as possessing certain characteristics such as physical strength and bravado, exclusive heterosexuality, suppression of “vulnerable” emotions such as remorse and uncertainty, economic independence, authority over women and other men, and intense interest in sexual “conquest”. Aggressive behaviour, including physical violence, is important to the presentation of hegemonic masculinity (Murnen, Wright, & Kaluzy, 2002).

Simply put, hegemony describes the processes that keep dominant groups in power by ensuring that subordinate groups support or at least accept “the way things are”. Thus, hegemonic masculinity is the socially dominant form of masculinity in a particular culture within a given historical period. Although all men do not necessarily embody all of these characteristics, society supports hegemonic masculinity within all its institutions.

Masculinity should therefore be understood within a social context, and in relation to race, class, economic status and organisational culture.

The term *hegemonic* stems from Gramsci's notion of class relations and refers to the dynamic process by which groups create and sustain power and how normal definitions and taken-for-granted expressions come to define situations (Barrett, 1996). For Barrett (1996), the term *hegemony* goes beyond the material holding of power and refers to the process by which normal and ideal definitions emerge and how the terms of morality surface and persuade. The term *hegemonic masculinity* refers to a particular idealised image of masculinity in relation to which images of femininity and other masculinities are marginalised and subordinated. Hegemonic versions of masculinity achieve meaning within patterns of difference (Barrett, 1996; Connell, 1995). This suggests there is no universal hegemonic masculinity.

Social constructionists argue that masculinity is embedded within a collection of social practices, symbols, discourses and ideologies (Barrett, 1996; Connell, 1995; Jeffrey, 1996). Some writers argue that masculinity cannot be viewed outside of racial and other forms of social inequality. Hence Flax (2004), writing in the American context, refers to race/gender rather than separating them. She argues that race and gender cannot be separated because of their histories in the United States. For her and many others, race, gender, power and sexuality are intertwined. In South Africa, for example, the control exerted by primarily white men over women and black men's sexuality vindicates this view. Flax demonstrates that there are dominant masculinities and subordinate masculinities across lines of 'race', culture and class. To sum up, gender identity/masculinity cannot be viewed outside of social power or historical social context.

2.8 Constructions of masculinity in the military

Structures of organisational authority are dominated, in general, by masculine principles and bureaucracy (Kanter, 1977). The relationship between masculinity and the military is portrayed in the literature as harmonious and mutually affirming (Enloe, 1988; Sasson-

Levy, 2003). Enloe (1988) asserts that terms such as honour, patriotism, cowardice, bravery and duty seem so thoroughly tied to both the military and masculinity that it is hard to distinguish them as either militarist or masculinist. Militaries have long been identified and recognised as an important site for the construction of masculinities. This is not only because they are populated by men or that they constitute a major arena for the construction of masculine identities, but also because they play a primary role in shaping images of masculinity in broader society (Barrett, 1996; Connell, 1992, 1995; Morgan, 1994; Woodward, 2000).

In military training, for example, recruits are systematically closed off from civilian life in an effort to transform “boys” to “men”. The military attracts “recruits with the attributes suitable for molding into an identified finished product, the competent soldier” (Woodward, 2000, p. 641). Recruits learn that there is a cult of toughness and masculinity traditionally associated with making soldiers out of civilians. They are taught that the proper response is to exhibit courage, endurance, toughness and lack of squeamishness (Barrett, 1996). Training teaches that soldiering requires commitment and determination. Defence of the country is touted as the reason for masculinity to be embraced, mobilised and emphasised in the army (Barrett, 1996).

Military training aims to produce “warrior heroes”. Research on masculinity in the military suggests that the “warrior” is still a key representation of masculinity despite far-reaching political, social and technological advances and changes. The concept of warrior hero has been crucial in the construction of notions of national security to facilitate the mobilisation of hegemonic masculinity (Lomsky-Feder & Rapoport, 2003). As Woodward (2000) argues, this concept is a model of military masculinity:

The warrior hero is physically fit and powerful. He is mentally strong and unemotional. He is capable of both solitary, individual pursuit of his goals and self denying contribution towards the work of the team. He's also a bit of a hero with a knack of picking up girls and is resolutely heterosexual. He is brave, adventurous, and prepared to take risks. Crucially, he possesses the abilities to

conquer hostile environments, to cross unfamiliar terrain, and to lay claim to dangerous ground (Woodward, 2000, p. 641, cited in Army Recruiting Group).

In these conceptions the warrior hero is gendered and sexed as a man. But considering the growing numbers of women in the military, a pertinent question for this study is: how do men construct their masculinity when women are in 'their environment'? Williams (1999) argues that, despite the increasing number of women in the military, no other institution is more closely associated with masculinity. Of the 20 million members of the world's armed forces, an overwhelming majority are men (Connell, 2000). Debates about the expanding role of women in the military are raised later in this chapter.

There are varied relationships between specific constructions of masculinities and the military (Sasson-Levy, 2003). Barrett's (1996) study explores how the United States Navy reproduces an ideology of hegemonic masculinity and how male officers' concrete practices and choices construct an order of gender relations. He shows that definitions of masculinity are relationally constructed through association of differences. For instance, aviators draw upon themes of autonomy and risk-taking. They are seen as the elite in relation to warfare officers and supply officers. Surface warfare officers draw on themes of perseverance and endurance and consider their work manly because they survive more rugged conditions and endure more intense competition. Supply officers draw upon themes of technical rationality. They think of themselves as specialists preparing for a successful business career. These are striking examples of how institutions may construct multiple masculinities and how relationships are defined between them.

The South African military is no exception to the rule and has its own multiple definitions of masculinities with dynamic hierarchies of identity. These different masculinities do not earn equal social respect. Some are actively dishonoured (for example, homosexuals); some are exempted (sports heroes); and some are socially marginalised. This vindicates the view that in every society internationally and nationally the hegemonic model of masculinity categorises groups of men in relation to each other through normalising the definitions of masculinity and defining its standards

and proper manifestations (Agostino, 2003; Connell, 1995; Lomsky-Feder & Rapoport, 2003; Swart, 2001).

Soldiering and masculinity constitute ideals of manhood. Writing about the South African military, Cock (2001), for example, states that guns are a key feature of hegemonic masculinity. Even though gun ownership and use varies across racial lines and between institutions, it is nevertheless central to the way many men act out their masculinity. African researcher Du Pisani (2001), argues that many men are driven by guilt feelings to obey higher authority. These are the feelings which soldiers are indoctrinated with during their basic training. The requirement is a high level of respect for leaders, rank structures and authority; adherence to rules; a self-image of moral superiority; and the tendency to place people in separate compartments by classifying them as different. What then is the relationship between masculinity and subordination to orders, given that soldiers must have the capacity to be violent? On the one hand, soldiers must have combat ability that represents the ultimate expression of masculinity. Yet, on the other hand, to be disciplined and obey orders requires a heavy dose of submissiveness. This dualism sheds light on the complexity of multiple identities embodied in the military. It also symbolises the ranking of power relations among soldiers, which might result in different ways of constructing masculinity.

An important question raised by Sasson-Levy (2003) hinges around the contradictory ideals exhibited by marginalised groups in the military, principally those with lower rank. She states that because of their marginal status these soldiers accentuate the importance of home and family over that of the military and the state. Because of their class and ethnic background, neither the state nor the labour market is a viable option for pride and self esteem. The home and not the military thus becomes the site where these soldiers gain value, power and exclusive status as men.

Enloe (1975) suggests that most military organisations are shaped not only by general demographic patterns, but also by the ethnic composition of the regime in power and by the regime's policies for coping with ethnic fragmentation. In Britain, for example, only

white men aged 16 to 24, and mostly educated to secondary school level, were recruited to the military (Woodward, 2000). Ethnic factors were powerful in the South African military during the apartheid era. The military, which gave the National Party-led regime its coercive capacity during the apartheid era, was almost all white. The implication of this is that white men had a monopoly over the construction of a certain kind of masculinity which was linked to racial supremacy (Gqola & Goniwe, 2005). The military reflected the growing ethnic communalism of the Afrikaner. Several features of the South African political system determined the ethnic character of the country's military. As Enloe (1975) states, power has previously been legitimised and distributed racially, with ethnic criteria usually left implicit rather than explicit.

2.9 A brief overview of the South African military

The South African military has a range of combat experience and participated in a number of conventional wars, including the First and Second World Wars (Stott, 2002; Williams, 2003). As a gesture of solidarity against communism in the 1950s, South Africa sent its Second Air Force Squadron to Korea, where it served until 1953. From 1966 to 1974, South Africa also provided policing services and military support to neighbouring white colonial governments in South West Africa, Rhodesia, Mozambique and Angola. During this period, the South African Defence Force (SADF) was engaged in a number of low intensity military deployments, incursions and cross-border raids against these and other Frontline States on a regular basis from 1975 to 1989.

South Africa was also covertly involved in a number of attempted coups, either directly or by supporting so-called liberation armies or dissident military personnel. These included the 1981 Seychelles coup attempt and other initiatives in the late 1980s and early 1990s in the former Transkei and Ciskei, as well as the 1986 economic blockade of Lesotho that resulted in the deportation of approximately 100 ANC members (Stiff, 2001).

The defence force has extensive operational deployment experience inside the country. As early as 1914 and 1922, soldiers were used to suppress strikes by white mine workers. During the 1980s, the SADF took on increasing responsibility for internal security matters, providing the South African Police (SAP) with considerable support in their attempt to crush anti-apartheid resistance (Stott, 2002). On the eve of the first democratic general election in 1994, the SANDF replaced the SADF. This new structure emerged from the decision to integrate the non-statutory forces of uMkhonto weSizwe (MK) and the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA) with the SADF and the Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei (TBVC) forces (Le Roux, 2003; Seegers, 1996).

The transition from the SADF to the SANDF has been tremendously complicated and marred by tension and dissatisfaction. The amalgamation involved unifying seven armed formations and, at the same time, converting non-statutory force members into a conventional army (Le Roux, 2003; Ngculu, 2003; Stott, 2002). Integration normally refers to the process by which armed forces and military traditions are merged into one defence force at the end of a war. However, the short- and long-term process of replacing the SADF with a truly national defence force comprising statutory and non-statutory forces that had been at war for 37 years, was more complex. Since 1994, and while undergoing complex processes of transformation, restructuring and downsizing, the military has been involved in a range of security issues. In both the 1994 and 1999 elections, for example, the SANDF assisted the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) in the registration and voting processes (Stott, 2002). The military was deployed in high-risk areas around the country to reduce tensions between members of the various political parties and to provide the necessary security on voting days (Stott, 2002).

Currently, the SANDF plays a major role in border patrols, with 23 companies engaged at any one time along South Africa's extensive frontiers. The military also performs a central role in assisting the new South African Police Service (SAPS) in crime combating operations and is heavily involved in a rural protection plan for farming communities that have come under increased criminal attack since the early 1990s (South African White Paper on Defence, 1996, South African Defence Review, 1998; Stott, 2002). In 1997, 54 army companies (between 6000 to 8000 troops) were assigned to providing support to the

police (Stott, 2002). Externally, the new South African military has been, or is presently, involved in a number of operations. The SANDF is cautiously engaged in peacekeeping missions in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) (Stott, 2002). This deployment, officially called the South African Protection Support Detachment, is South Africa's biggest, most expensive and riskiest military mission since 1994 (Stott, 2002).

Given the above historical context, I deem it important to discuss the historical and present context in which soldiers joined the military and how this may relate to their constructions of masculinity.

2.10 Military service: career vs. conscription

Militaries are not unified or homogenous structures. They are stratified according to gender, race and class, though their primary identifier is as masculine institutions. Barrett (1996) states that militaries the world over have defined the soldier as an embodiment of traditional male sex role behaviours. They have socialised millions of men according to a traditional blueprint. Hence there has been a long association between the military and dominant/hegemonic images of masculinity. Yet militaries are not merely random collections of men or women. Their ethnic composition, for example, reflects the dominant ideologies and policies of the regime in power. This is a primary factor in determining who is in the military and who is not; who is in the air force rather than the army; and who is and who is not a commissioned officer. In apartheid days the SADF was a vehicle for white dominance and was dominated by white men, especially at the higher echelons. "Coloureds" and Indians were recruited and given weapons training purely for self-defence in war times. However, they were not permitted to perform combat roles and were confined to auxiliary duties. Africans were recruited and trained for armed guard duty at military installations. Africans not required for guard duty were trained as drivers, clerks, storemen and dog handlers (Enloe, 1975).

Militarisation in the 1970s and 1980s impacted on the lives of many South African men. Compulsory military service for young, fit and white South African men was introduced, resulting in the imprinting of the soldier image in popular culture. For the better part of the two years of conscription, tough and crude professionals, many of whom were corporals and sergeant majors, controlled these young men's lives (Du Pisani, 2001). The military success of the SADF in the bush war was publicised in such a way that the image of the warrior hero was revered. While some resisted, many whites were induced by government propaganda and a youthful desire for adventure to participate enthusiastically in a form of military service that assumed the status of initiation into manhood (Du Pisani, 2001).

Enloe (2000) states that young men of draftable age during the 1980s were propelled toward military service not only by conscription law, but also by a desire to be seen as manly and by the fear of being seen by others as "faggots". Conscription has been constructed as a crucial system for reproducing/ensuring "normal" adult masculinity (Enloe, 2000). Compulsory military service has been acknowledged for the effectiveness of its schooling function (Du Pisani, 2001; Enloe, 2000). Military service is viewed as a time that can serve to change young conscripted soldiers into responsible men who can support their families and co-operate in organised civil society (Enloe, 2000). According to Jo (1997), many people in South Korea believe that the required years of conscription are a significant turning point in the acquisition of a trained muscular body and male maturity. An honourable discharge means the end of 'adolescent wandering' and youthful resistance to the social order (Jo, 1997). Cock (2001) contends that the SADF was a crucial source of ideas about what behaviour was appropriate for white South African men. Many SADF conscripts emphasised that the core of military training was to inculcate aggressiveness and to equate it with masculinity (Cock, 2001). However, the qualities of a gentleman – whereby soldiers are clean, have a good appearance and show attention to detail – are also values that the military seeks to impart (Barrett, 1996).

The global shift from mandatory conscription to volunteer armies has provided many men with the opportunity to combine armed masculinity with the masculinity of the

breadwinner (Snyder, 1999). In the United States, for example, military service is perceived as a path for social mobility and most soldiers enlist for economic reasons (Sasson-Levy, 2003). In contemporary South Africa many people join the military for job security or educational opportunities that will provide the financial and promotional prospects needed to gain material success (Heinecken, 1994; Heinecken & Khanyile, 1996). The study by Heinecken and Khanyile (1996) indicates that 78,7% of soldiers polled joined the military for job security with fringe benefits, together with a preference for discipline, orderliness, uniformity and cohesiveness. About 60% indicated an interest in weaponry as a motivating factor.

Caforio and Nuciari (1994) concur that job security and career prospects motivate many people to join the military. They further point out that most occupational officers come from lower socio-economic backgrounds, and therefore represent the broader population and not elite social groups as in previous times. It is important to note that there is also a connection between job security and traditional masculinity. Generally, men are expected to be strong, to be the breadwinners in their families, to provide shelter and defend their families and their societies (Foreman, 1999). For example, research conducted in Latin America suggests that men's construction of being a man is to be both heterosexually active and a financial provider to the family (Barker, 2000; Fuller, 2000). Providing for one's family has long been understood as a major focus for the construction of masculine identities (Collison & Hearn, 1994; Connell, 1995; Sasson-Levy, 2003).

In the above discussion I have argued for a link between masculinity, socio-economic status and sexuality. With regards to male bodies and identity, while not espousing a biological determinist position, many have theorised the centrality of the body and sexuality in the construction of masculinity (Connell, 1994, 2000; Hearn, 1996). In the discussion that follows, I argue that the body, especially in relation to strength and virility, is salient in the construction of hegemonic masculinity, and this is particularly true of the military. In this context, men's bodies – which are expected to be tough, macho, proud, aggressive and sporty – are valued and associated with organisational success and provide images for teamwork and tough competition (Kimmel, 2000).

2.11 Masculinity, military and the body

Connell (1994) criticises the neglect of the body in theorising gender in terms of the sex-gender conceptual divide, which emerges from the philosophical mind-body tradition, and intersects with other classic binary opposites like male-female and rational-irrational. Connell's concern about the neglect of the body is shared by other researchers (Crossley, 1996; Dowsett, 1996; Vance, 1989) who appeal for acknowledgement of the body as an active agent in shaping sexualities, genders and social processes. These theorists argue not only for the body's agency in social practice, but also for the material diversity of bodies.

This point is nowhere more important than in relation to gender. Gender is fundamentally a way in which social practice is ordered. In gender processes, the everyday conduct of life is ordered in relation to a reproductive arena ... This arena includes sexual arousal and intercourse, childbirth and infant care, bodily sex difference and similarity. It is thus constituted by the materiality of bodies (Connell, 2000, pp. 58-59).

This does not mean these researchers favour deterministic discourses over socio-culturally determined accounts. Rather, the notion of 'embodiment' is central to a number of contemporary theoretical perspectives and feminist writings that contribute to understandings of human subjectivity (Jung, 1996; Potts, 2001; Somerville, 2004). If men's bodies are inextricably relevant to masculinity, then to understand how their bodies are intertwined with their masculinities, "we must not abandon the conventional dichotomy between changing culture and unchanging bodies" (Connell, 2000, p. 57). Connell elaborates by saying that Foucault and feminists have developed an account of the way bodies are drawn into socio-cultural and historical processes. He further argues that social institutions and discourses have given social meaning to bodies. A range of bodily practices from the society – ranging across dress, sport and sexuality – address or

modify bodies. This view brings to focus the centrality of bodies in the military, raising questions about the desired strong physique and the symbolic role of the uniform.

For some men, the physical training that produces the physical fitness required by the military seems to be a way of reasserting their gender, in particular proving their masculinity (Cohn, 2000). For some, military service is an inherent part of maturation, a rite of passage to successful male adulthood (Klein, 1999). The military further embodies codes of honour that stress a number of supposedly male virtues including willpower, honour, courage, discipline, adventurousness, independence and sexual virility. These are supposedly tempered with restraint and dignity, so reflecting masculine ideals such as liberty, equality and fraternity (Nagel, 1998). These attributes are all characteristics of hegemonic masculinity (Cheng, 1999; Martino, 1999). The demands of soldiering bring together these manly virtues and the concepts of bravery, fearlessness and persistence (Aids brief, n.d.; Heinecken, 2000). Attaining this masculine ideal depends on soldiers' physical fitness, strength and even emotional 'maturity'. The military-masculine ideology discourages military personnel from admitting they are emotionally vulnerable as this is potentially threatening to military morale, hence the ascendance of phrases such as "behave like a soldier" or "take it like a man".

The opposite side of the coin with respect to the centrality of the body in masculine achievement is the way in which female soldiers are problematised in the military.

2.12 The military, femininity and body

Women have almost universally been excluded from combat. In the first instance, their biological role (bearing children) and gender roles (raising and caring for children) were inhibiting forces. The traditional belief in both military and civilian spheres is that men defend the country, women and children. The key underlying argument is that if women die in combat, there will be no one to fulfill their biological role.

New lives can be created, but it takes one woman to bear each child each year, while one man can father a larger number of children a year. Numerous women are essential to the replenishment of a population, but only a few men are required. (Steihm, 1980, p. 56)

This seems to be a good argument for polygamy and the prospect of a patriarchal dividend for the successful surviving warrior. This is in line with sex role theory whereby men are seen as the only gender that should be placed in risky situations, and emerges from the belief that women are the weaker sex while men are considered strong and brave (Weitzman, 1979). Another common concern raised is that if women are in combat, men would concentrate more on defending them than on fighting their opponents.

Women are described as not having the ability to perform military tasks that require a high level of muscular strength, such as, for example, the carrying of heavy equipment (Presidential Commission, 1992). Countries such as the Netherlands, Denmark and Canada have never excluded women from combat, but there are very few women in the infantry and other combat corps due to the physical training requirements for entrance which seem to be difficult for women (Presidential Commission, 1992).

South Africa has restricted women from combat. However, Article 9 of the Constitution of South Africa (1996) states that women should be afforded equal opportunities in, and to, all roles. Therefore restricting women from combat denies them equal opportunities

and experiences in the military which might inhibit their access to experiences needed for professional growth. Based on the above, the exclusion of women from all aspects of the military is a way of exerting masculine power.

2.13 Summary

In terms of the social constructionist position mapped for this study, masculinity is socially constructed rather than an inherently meaningful category. This position is consistent with a growing body of literature, which concurs that masculinity and the construction of masculinities varies with context and over time. Social constructionists argue that identities and selves are not fixed. They are fluid, shifting entities that are socially constructed through language and socio-historical context. This study breaks with the notion of masculinity as a fixed essence, opting for social constructionism as a framework to open space for new ways of theorising the complexities, ambiguities and contradictions that mark the present-day experiences of individuals.

This chapter highlighted how traditional and popular expectations of the way men in general and particularly those in the military construct their masculinity are deeply entrenched. It explored how the military as an institution and military values play a powerful role in constructing and embracing hegemonic masculinity. The literature underlines that successful masculinity hinges on being economically independent, physically strong, brave and heterosexual. The military promises all of these. This suggests that, whatever reasons may have initially spurred men to join the military, as they become soldiers, the imperative to uphold hegemonic forms of male identity are embedded in the social context.

Considering that social identities such as gender, culture, race, age and class play a major role in constructing masculinity, the assumption is that historical context shapes identities and that South Africa's racialised history may have influenced different experiences of masculinity based on race identities. These different experiences might have produced new discourses of masculinity. In utilising a social constructionist framework it is hoped

this study can reveal these alternative discourses. This framework enables exploration of the power dynamics in discourses of masculinity, and the meaning associated with power at an individual level. The suggestion is that sexual behaviour cannot be tackled without examining issues of masculine identity, therefore this study seeks to explore/deconstruct how masculine ideologies are constructed and understand how they influence male sexual practices, specifically in the overtly masculinist context of the military. The ultimate aim is to use the information to inform HIV/AIDS intervention strategies in the military.

CHAPTER 3: THEORISING SEXUALITY

3.1 Introduction

Before locating sexuality within the social constructionist framework, I critically assess the work of traditional sociobiologists, psychoanalysts and sexologists who have relied on biologically deterministic perspectives and moral positions in defining and understanding sexuality. My aim is to further demonstrate the relevance and importance of locating this study within a social constructionist framework. The discussion that follows emphasises the centrality of language and discourse in understanding sexuality and explores the social constructionist view of the relationship between sexuality and power.

3.2 Traditional theories of sexualities vs. social constructionist view on sexuality

Traditional theorists of sexuality have tended to rely on the assumption of an innate natural sexuality and sexual identity. Sexual essentialism is embedded in most western societies, which consider sex to be natural, unchanging, a-social and transhistorical (Rubin, 1993; Weeks, 1986). These approaches assume that sex proceeds from a biological mandate that presses against but must be confined within culture (Weeks, 1986).

Sexual essentialism is a very strong component of traditional theories emerging in the 18th century mainly through medicine, psychiatry, psychology and other scientific sex studies (Cameron & Kulick, 2003; Rubin, 1993). During this period, sex only featured as a concern in discourses of medicine and religion. Religious (moral) discourses defined sexual practice as reproductive and generally sex was viewed as a sin. On the other hand, medical discourses viewed non-reproductive sexuality as pathological. Masturbation, for example, was seen as a disease (Aron & Aron, 1991; Tiefer, 1995). These discourses form the main discourses of essentialism, and they coincide with each other (Tiefer

1995). Sexuality was both medicalised and pathologised, so it is not surprising that research on sexuality was published mostly in medical journals.

The overlap of medical and moral discourses is illustrated for example through Christian self-purification doctrine which became linked with anti-masturbation campaigns. These were then translated into a medical discourse. These arguments are articulated powerfully by Ussher (1999, p. 41):

Within the annals of science, the subject of human sexuality has traditionally been studied within a narrow reductionist framework, in which sex is almost solely conceptualized as a physical behaviour or bodily response ... The gaze of psychologists who have entered the arena of sex research has historically been focused within a similarly narrow vein. The dictates of positivism and realism that still dominate our discipline mean that experimental studies of biology, behaviour, or bodily response are deemed the most legitimate form of inquiry, with theoretical development being minimal or absent and research framed within a narrow hypothetical-deductive mould.

Ussher's (1999) view raises concerns about psychologists who continue to work within this narrow positivist framework. She believes that sex researchers who continue to use positivist methodologies do not assist in generating the new bodies of knowledge needed in psychology. In this narrow framing, further discussion around sex and sexuality is restricted because traditionally these terms have been conceptualised simply as a collection of physical behaviours associated with physiological arousal and sexual desires (Aron & Aron, 1991; Masters, Johnson, & Kolodney, 1996). Traditional theorists adopt an objective/neutral way of defining sexuality that is inclusive of biological, developmental and cultural constructions. This reductionist definition, which holds sway in a wide range of textbooks, is summed up by Aron and Aron (1991, p. 27) as "the constellation of sensations, emotions, cognitions that an individual associates with physiological sexual arousal and that generally gives rise to sexual behaviour".

Therefore, in broad terms, the traditional biological understanding of sexuality tended to pathologise and medicalise sexuality while more recent theorists emphasise sexuality as socially and culturally constructed. Positivist scientific inquiry has been extensively critiqued for providing little insight into how individuals from diverse backgrounds construct and give meaning to their sexuality (Foucault, 1978; Rubin, 1993; Ussher, 1999).

Foucault's (1978, p. 103) significant critique of the positivist and empiricist position adds the notion of the centrality of power in contemporary production of normative sexuality:

Sexuality must not be described as a stubborn drive by nature alien and of necessity disobedient to a power which exhausts itself trying to subdue it and often fails to control it entirely. It appears rather as an especially dense transfer point for relations of power between men and women, young people and old people, parents and offspring, teachers and students, priests and laity, an administration and a population.

For Foucault, the popular scientific discourses of sexuality serve as a form of control over people. While certain groups, such as men in patriarchal society, appear to shape and control sexuality, arguably all individuals are controlled through the normative structures dictating sexuality. Foucault's (1987, 1990) innovative work on the history of sexuality concludes there is no seamless definition of sexuality.

There is a growing body of work that offers a similar perspective, arguing that there can be no objective and universal way of defining sexuality as the meaning attached to the concept is context dependent. "[It] cannot be viewed as a fixed, a-historical, clear and pre-given quantity" (Haug, 1987, p. 207). Foucault's work has a central place in the social constructionist perspective on sexuality, though anthropologists and social scientists such as Gagnon and Simon were also challenging the biological determinist approach as early as 1973.

In the last decade there has been an increase in work applying a social constructionist account of sexuality (for example, Lacquer, 1992; Stein, 1992; Tiefer, 1992; Weeks, 1990). Consensus emerging within critical frameworks is that sexuality can only be defined and known in a particular historical context and locality. According to Scott and Jackson (1996, p. 8):

What counts as sexual depends on the meanings of specific acts in both their wider cultural and immediate interpersonal contexts.

In this study both the wider cultural and the interpersonal serve as points of departure in defining sexuality. A theoretical beginning is provided by Foucault's historical analysis, which attempts to identify discourses about what sexuality is and how it is used as a tool to control, regiment and conquer human bodies. In his book *The history of sexuality* (1978), Foucault argues that the focus on sexuality resulted in an increase in the regulatory surveillance of people's sexual practices and desires. He suggests that this is a manifestation of new forms of control surrounding the self, which regulate and prescribe the construction of normative sexual behaviours and desires. The new controls further construct and limit the way individuals understand and live out their sexuality, usually privileging hegemonic discourses, as Shefer (1999, p. 8) points out:

Within contemporary discourses on sexuality, the privileging of heterosexual desires and practices through homophobic and heterosexist discourses is evident within all social institutions, including medicine, psychiatry and sexology at all levels of popular culture. Feminist, gay, lesbian and queer theorists have found such a framework especially useful in highlighting how discourses have reproduced male power and heterosexual power through the unequal binarism of male-female and heterosexual-homosexual in which power has been invested within the first term of each.

Current theorists emphasise that sexuality is constructed in different ways in the different historical, social and cultural contexts in which individuals live. Of key importance is

that differences in discussions around and interpretations of sexuality by different researchers are enmeshed in their specific social and historical contexts (for example, Bourdieu, 1998; Connell, 1995; Fracher & Kimmel, 1987; Gagnon & Parker, 1995; Masters et al., 1996). Arguably therefore, sexuality is a subjective experience that is history and context specific; that is, embodied in and psychologically integrated with sexual arousal and desire. This subjective experience can be cognitive, emotive and behavioural, but it is in this complex and comprehensive experience that the meaning of sex and sexuality is constructed (Holland, Ramazonoglu, Scott, Sharpe, & Thompson, 1990; Weeks, 1986).

According to Holland et al. (1990, p. 390):

By sexuality we mean not only sexual practices, but also what people know and believe in sex, particularly what they think is natural, proper and desirable. Sexuality also includes people's sexual identities in all their cultural and historical variety. This assumes that while sexuality cannot be divorced from the body, it is also socially constructed.

Weeks (1986, p. 15) also provides an incorporative definition:

Sexuality is a historical construction which brings together a host of different biological and mental possibilities – gender identity, bodily differences, reproductive capacities, needs, desires and fantasies – which need not be linked together, and in other cultures have not been. All the constituent elements of sexuality have their source either in the body or the mind.

Sexual identity, says Weeks (1987, p. 46), is “not a destiny but a choice” and while not denying the challenges raised by theorising the role of biology or mental processes, he asserts that “the capacities of the body and the psyche are given meaning only in social relations” (1986, p. 15). This is in line with researchers who dispute that sexuality is only

a biological given and prefer to view it not only as culturally and socially constructed, but also in constant flux over time.

Having highlighted the difference between the social constructionist and essentialist views of sexuality and the critique against essentialism, I now contextualise the discussion around sexuality within gender and sexual binarism.

3.3 Contextualising sexuality within gender and sexual binarism

As highlighted, social context is vital in researching and developing theory around human beings. This is according to a wide range of perspectives – including social constructionist, symbolic interactionist, ethnomethodologist, existentialist, phenomenologist and revolutionary psychoanalysis. According to Weeks (1986), human sexual behaviour cannot be reduced to the workings of genes and chromosomes. Lacquer (1992, p. 16) concurs:

Sex, like being human is contextual ... and ... the private, enclosed, stable body that seems to lie at the basis of modern notions of sexual difference is also the product of particular, historical, cultural moments. It too, like opposite sexes, comes into and out of focus.

Sexuality in contemporary societies is viewed as the construction of sexual identity within the binary constraints of gender, namely masculinity-femininity; and those of sexuality, namely heterosexuality-homosexuality. These are enmeshed with each other and within power relations (Lacquer, 1992). The elaboration of how the construction of sexual identities intersects with power is discussed later in the chapter.

As proposed, social contexts frame the way in which people are sexual (Caplan, 1987; Gagnon & Simon, 1973; Tiefer, 1987a, 1992). This frame varies at different historical periods and varies from one culture to the other (Foucault, 1978; Lees, 1986; Vance, 1989). Research also indicates that how an individual explains him/herself intersects

with other social identities, as does his/her construction of sexuality. Sexuality, then, is an intersection of social identities in the realms of the political, economic, historical, personal and experiential that link behaviour and thought, fantasy and action (Fullilove, Fullilove, Haynes, & Gross, 1990; Holland et al., 1990; Shefer et al., 2005; Vance, 1991). This supports the argument of Caplan (1987) and Lees (1986) that geographical borders, race, ethnicity, culture, age and class play pivotal roles in determining sexual behaviours and identities.

Vance proposes that these factors and their intersection should be acknowledged and understood so as to avoid a generalisation or simplification of sexuality. An illustration of the intersection of some of the factors listed above would be to examine the constructions of masculinity and sexuality of soldiers who were involved in the political struggle during the apartheid era and in the period after 1994. Similarly, exploring how white male soldiers constructed masculinity and sexuality before 1994 and then in the post-1994 era would cast light on changing social identities. This kind of research is likely to support other findings that sexual identities are historically and culturally specific.

Weeks (1986) summarises social constructionist understandings of human sexuality as follows: sexuality has many histories and therefore varies between the beliefs of different societies; it is produced by society through interacting complex factors; and is fluid and therefore susceptible to social forces. The advantage of using the historical and contextual approach, argues Weeks, is that it opens the whole field to critical analysis and evaluation, and makes it possible to relate sexuality to social phenomena.

This leads me to attempt to answer the following important questions in succeeding sections and chapters: How is sexuality articulated within economic, social and political structures? What role should we assign to patterns of patriarchy and the relationship between sex, language and power? If sexuality has a historical context, to what extent can this be reinterpreted or influenced?

3.4 The centrality of language and discourse

The crucial role of language in constructing human identity, sexuality and meaning is emphasised in social constructionism. Gergen (1994) argues that knowledge is not the result of an individual's cognition, but the outcome of social relatedness in the sense that knowledge is constituted through language or discourse (Gergen, 1994). This supports the view that the way people make meaning of their experiences is facilitated by social values and culture, and is manifest through language and language systems (Frosh, 1989; Held, 1990; Tiefer, 1992).

Similarly, Bayer (1998, p. 4) argues that:

Social construction participates in meaning making as a participatory process from which emerge psychological subjects and subjectivities. As social construction's emphasis is placed on the ways we negotiate the meanings of our lives, so its practices have for the most part stressed language as history's and culture's agent in fashioning psychological subjects.

This suggests people structure their experiences of sexuality and the world through language and that the concepts used by people do not pre-date language but are created within it (Burr, 1995). In other words, language is viewed as determining thoughts that impact on how sexuality is experienced. Therefore if there is no way to express a certain concept in a language, that concept will be marginalised or invisibilised in experiences and meaning. Social constructionists use the phrase "language is not transparent" (Burr, 1995, p. 34) to explain this. This sounds a caution to guard against the assumption that language is transparent and a means through which individuals' thoughts and emotions can be made readily available to others (Burr, 1995).

For example, while the psychoanalytic view is that emotions such as anger, envy and hatred are inborn in all people, and the words used to name identified feelings are just

labels chosen to refer to these feelings, social constructionism views this differently. As Burr, 1995, p. 34) states:

In English-speaking cultures, the words 'anger', 'hatred' and 'envy' and the concepts to which they refer pre-date any one person's entry into the world (as infant), and in the process of learning to talk we have no choice but to come to understand ourselves in terms of these concepts.

This view suggests that how people experience the world, especially their internal world, is undifferentiated and indefinable without the framework of language to give it structure and meaning. Harré (1989), for example, states that how individuals experience themselves and live out their subjectivity depends on stories which explain the nature of humanity that are to be found entrenched in people's languages. In this study, soldiers' stories are likely to be influenced by the way language is structured in the military. This determines how soldiers' experiences of masculinity might intersect with their sexualities and psychological make-up. Sexuality is therefore discursively constructed. That is, meaning is obtained within discourses and the language in which those discourses are circulated (Cameron & Kulick, 2003).

According to Plummer (1984), nothing is intrinsically sexual, but naming and labelling gives it this characteristic. This statement urges researchers of the need to move cautiously in applying Western definitions to other cultures, as different cultural groups label different attitudes or practices as either appropriate or inappropriate, moral or immoral, healthy or perverted (Weeks, 1986). In each culture, for example, regulations govern how men and women should behave, so shaping sexuality and providing the "permissions, prohibitions, limits and possibilities through which erotic life is constructed" (Weeks, 1986, p. 27).

The discussion above highlights the social variability of sexual forms, beliefs, ideologies and behaviour, confirming that sexuality does not have just one history but many, each of which needs to be understood in its uniqueness and as part of an intricate pattern (Weeks,

1986). According to Durrheim (1997), the social constructionist view has international acknowledgement and acceptance and has begun to make an impact on South African psychology.

3.5 Social constructionism, sexuality and power

The ways in which power is embedded in the construction of sexuality (body and sexual practices) is crucial to a full understanding of the concept (Gilman, 1985; Pape, 1990; Ratele, 1998). Critical theorists posit that the act/relation of sex is constructed and enacted within existing relations in society, so sexual relations can only be understood within the complexities of social relations and as a moment in which power is enacted (Foucault, 1978).

Power dynamics are at work in all aspects of human functioning at the intra-personal, inter-personal and macro-structural levels. A full analysis must take into account all these levels and their potential intersections. For example, in 'Third World' countries researchers indicate that gender inequality and women's sexual and economic subordination are viewed as the cornerstone of the HIV/AIDS epidemic (Hamblin & Reid, 1991; McFadden, 1992; Schoepf, 1992; Seidel, 1993). HIV/AIDS in Africa is gendered and is regarded as a development and rights issue that involves power and differential access to resources (Seidel, 1993). Because of their social and sexual subordination, women are disproportionately affected by the epidemic (Hamblin & Reid, 1991).

This example illustrates the overlap of economic context, cultural dynamics and gender power inequalities in the negotiation of heterosexual sex. A review of literature on sexual practices in sub-Saharan Africa demonstrates the extent to which the transfer of sexual favours from women to men is paralleled by a transfer of material resources from men to women (Heineken, 2000; Standing & Kisekka, 1989). Sexual relationships thus become a source of income for women. This gives men more opportunity to have multiple sexual partners to prove their masculinity, with soldiers particularly prone when

they are deployed on active service and earning more than others in their milieu (Foreman, 1999; Heinecken, 2000; Standing & Kisekka, 1989). Dolan (2000) concurs that soldiers on deployment earn considerably more than their civilian counterparts, and are therefore in a better position to attract local women. This may have possible implications for the spread of HIV/AIDS.

To shift levels, Weis (1998) argues that power extends beyond social structure to the inter-personal. Researchers, he adds, are defining power as a tool used to secure intended outcomes in a relationship, particularly to influence another individual's behaviour to meet that outcome. Further, that in relationships, people use different power strategies from different sources, including politics, culture and economy. For example, social structure factors like social position held by soldiers and their access to economic opportunities play an important role in shaping their power. This view further supports the notion of the intersection between economic context and social or cultural prescriptions in producing gender power inequality. It becomes crucial then to examine the ways in which men and women exercise power in their sexual relationships (Weis, 1998).

Social constructionism acknowledges that power is a central dynamic in both sexuality and masculinity and is determined by social institutions. This is evident in the military where power is institutionalised and soldiers are encouraged to have heterosexual relations (Kimmel, 2000). While an individual's position in the structure of a group or culture defines relative power, Burr (1995) cautions that discourses that provide a potential source of power are not exclusively reserved for a particular group or culture. Even individuals in marginal positions can gain power by drawing on suitable discourses. This will be elaborated in the following chapter.

A key aspect of social constructionism is that it reveals the underlying issues of power dynamics because it focuses on the context of an individual rather than on an individual self (Bohan, 1993). In terms of this study, by unpicking the nature of the context,

opportunities are raised to suggest intervention strategies to achieve power equality and change hegemonic forms of male sexual expression.

3.6 Summary

This chapter contrasted two opposing theoretical positions on sexuality. On the one hand, the essentialist paradigm which emphasises individual differences and views sexuality as a psychobiologically determined internal state/trait operating outside of and insensitive to social surroundings and culture. On the other hand, social constructionism which acknowledges internal states and individual differences but contextualises them in the social. It disputes the view of sexuality as only a biological given and sees it as culturally and socially constructed. Social constructionists emphasise that differences in discussions around sexuality by different theorists are intricately bound up with the social and historical context in which sexuality is defined.

The central point of this chapter is that constructions of sexuality are an intersection of social identities – including the political, economic, historical, personal and experiential – that link behaviour and thought, fantasy and action. Further, that sexuality is in a constant state of flux that varies over time.

The social constructionist approach helps frame an understanding of how male soldiers construct their sexuality through unravelling the complexities of sexuality and power dynamics; how these are shaped by social institutions and social differences; and how these interact with social identity. The role played by language and power in forming individual identity and sexuality is also emphasised, and contrasted with the failure of essentialist theorists to address either the fluid nature of sexuality or the behavioural differences of an individual in diverse situations.

In short, this chapter points to the links between sexual relations, body and social relations. This suggests that human behaviour should not be viewed exclusively through a particular individual. The realisation of sexuality as fluid gives hope that new

discourses could be developed and could contribute to HIV/AIDS intervention strategies.

CHAPTER 4: CONSTRUCTIONS OF MASCULINITY AND (HETERO)SEXUAL PRACTICES

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on male (hetero)sexuality, tracing how practices of virtually compulsory heterosexuality are experienced in institutions, and particularly in the military. While acknowledging that there are multiple forms of sexual identity and sexual practice, heterosexuality is the point of departure in this study as the military setting is dominated by the masculine (Holland, Ramazanoglu, Scott, Sharpe, & Thomson, 1996). This is in line with local research indicating that the social construction of dominant masculinity impacts on heterosexual practices (for example, Campbell, 2001; Dunbar-Moodie, 2001; Hunt, 1989).

The location of heterosexuality within dominant discourses of sexuality is unpacked, as are the implications of these discourses in people's sexual lives. Local and international research on heterosexuality within the sexuality discourse is evaluated. Finally, I discuss the factors influencing risky sexual practices and how they present in the military context.

4.2 Motivation for focusing on heterosexuality

A heterosexual base has been adopted as this study is linked to the SANDF context, a formal government institution that is historically and currently male-dominated. The study explores constructions of masculinity among male soldiers, paying specific attention to the intersections of their conceptions of sexuality. Invariably, people's construction of masculine sexuality is associated with heterosexual practices. However, a focus on heterosexual practices does not suggest that this is the only sexual practice that takes place in the military. As Haywood and Mac an Ghaill (1997) suggest, labour processes in social organisations have implications for the construction of gender differences and masculine sexuality. Similarly, Jeffreys (1996) and MacKinnon (1989) argue that gender is constructed to attend to the needs of institutionalised heterosexuality.

Says Jeffreys (1996, p. 75): "Gender dynamically empowers heterosexuality, provides its most powerful pleasures." Given the importance accorded the impact of social organisations and institutions on sexuality in the literature, and the locus of this study in an institution of hegemonic masculinity, it is vital to focus on heterosexuality. In the military, it could be said heterosexuality is implicit, if not compulsory. Certainly, the enforcement of heterosexuality in the institution is of benefit to men in the physical, emotional and economic realms.

Compulsory heterosexuality has been characterised as the key strategy to control women, ensuring in its tyranny of definition the continuation of male domination (Weeks, 1995). The term compulsory heterosexuality, coined by Rich (1980), is also said to be enforced on men. Various feminist theorists confirm that heterosexual sexuality has been increasingly highlighted as a central phenomenon that creates and reflects unequal gender power relations, patriarchy and male domination (for example, Jeffreys, 1990; Kitzinger & Wilkinson, 1993; MacKinnon, 1989; Rich, 1981; Richardson, 1996; Vance, 1984). This suggests that both the transmission of HIV and its prevention involve power relations between heterosexual partners as well as broader political and social relations (Flood, 2000). Therefore, deconstructing heterosexuality to show its masculine foundation exposes not only the exclusion of other types of sexualities, but also may assist in slowing the pandemic.

In her seminal paper "Compulsory heterosexuality and lesbian existence", Rich (1981, p. 31) argues that the compulsory nature of heterosexuality makes it difficult for other kinds of sexualities such as lesbianism to be accepted as "an alternative lifestyle". Other forms of sexuality continue to be marginalised globally and in South Africa. For example, to label men who are not homosexuals as homosexuals, is a way of undermining them and reflects hostility towards those who are homosexuals (Gordon, 1983). Continued homophobia in most societies highlights how heterosexuality is a dominant and hegemonic practice that assures male privilege. The implications are that to be masculine means to be heterosexual (Herek, 1986).

Radical feminists such as MacKinnon (1979, 1989) and Hartsock (1985) concur with Rich (1981) and further describe how enforced heterosexuality is reproduced through a masculine sexuality embodying power, aggression and violence. For MacKinnon, all sexual practices between men and women, whether they involve coercion, violence or even consent, have an element of male domination over women. She states that all forms of heterosexual relationship signify a moment of male dominance and a broader social control of women by men in all spheres. This radical feminist psychoanalytic view, which conflates the penis with power (Segal, 1994; Silverman, 1992), is open to criticism but still highlights how hegemonic heterosexuality reproduces male power (Potts, 2001).

Heterosexuality as an institution, as interpersonal relationship, and as sexual practice between men and women, has been increasingly problematised over the last decade (Shefer, 1999). In South African research on heterosexuality, coercive heterosexual relationships and male domination over women have been widely reported in the literature (Buga et al., 1996; National Progressive Primary Health Care Network, 1995; Richter, 1996; Varga & Makubalo, 1996; Wood & Jewkes, 1998). However, the focus of research has been more on women, despite the fact men predominate in positions of power.

4.3 Locating heterosexuality within discourses of sexuality

Hollway's (1983, 1984, 1989) work on subjectivity and meaning in heterosexual relationships explores the way men and women construct their gendered subjectivity in relation to each other. Even though Hollway's study is based on middle-class men and women in the United Kingdom, her work has made valuable contributions to a social constructionist understanding of sexualities worldwide. Hollway (1984, 1989) identifies three popular discourses of sexuality that have been widely used in many local contexts in understanding heterosexuality. The three discourses, which are explored in detail below, are: the male sexual drive discourse; the have/hold discourse; and the permissive discourse. Studies in South Africa have highlighted the salience of these discourses in current local practices of heterosexuality (for example Harris et al., 1995; Miles, 1992;

Shefer, 1999; Strebel, 1997; Wilbraham, 1994; Wood & Foster, 1995). Some of these researchers have explored these discourses within the context of understanding factors that contribute to HIV/AIDS.

4.4.1 Male sexual drive discourse

The male sexual drive discourse draws on popular biological theories such as essentialism, which view male sexuality as natural and determined by hormones and genes. The belief is that out of biological necessity, men's sexual desires are uncontrollable, therefore they cannot be denied (Hollway, 1989). The male sexual drive construction posits the notion that male physical sexual desires are overwhelming and therefore legitimates the perception that the penis dominates rational thinking (Potts, 2001). This division between mind and body perpetuates widely held beliefs that men's sexuality is beyond their control (Potts, 2001).

This interpretation excuses men from responsibility for their actions, as the meaning attached is 'there is nothing men can do about their sexual urges'. This mode of reasoning results in men taking sexual risks and has historically been used to explain rape and coercive sexual practices towards women (Kottler & Long, 1997). The male sexual drive discourse is therefore often used as a plausible excuse for not using condoms or not practicing safe sex.

A number of qualitative studies in South Africa highlights the salience of this discourse of male sexuality (see Miles, 1992; Shefer & Foster, 2001; Shefer & Ruiters, 1998; Strebel, 1993). This discourse is not confined to men, as women have also been shown to legitimate and accept these discourses. The study by Miles (1992, p. 17) with young, unmarried, heterosexual female students found that they constructed themselves as subject to such a discourse, specifying men's "uncontrollable sexual urges". Women seem to view men's sexual passion as falling within the frame of an irrational space, where rationality on safe sex methods is not possible (Miles, 1992). One South African study which looks at men's talk on gender and sexuality where the sexual drive discourse

features, is that of Harris et al. (1995). In their study, men and women are continuously constructed and reconstructed as different. Participants' construction of gender is based on an assumption of ontological difference, which is either natural or social and is explained through 'proof' emphasising differences in power use, different preferences and different needs.

4.4.1.1 Constructions of universal male sexuality

It is important to note that this popular construction of male sexuality is reflected and reproduced in scientific models of male sexuality established by contemporary sexologists. This scientific model has been generalised worldwide and serves as the model of human sexuality (Jackson, 1987). The model has been popularised and promoted so that it is accepted as a naturalised science. It was taught to generations of men and women, emphasising heterosexuality as natural. Hence both men and women operate within the male sexual discourse. Heterosexual practice, which institutionalises male domination and female subordination, was also emphasised as natural and inevitable (Jackson, 1987). The scientific model of sexuality has been modified in the work by Kinsey, Masters and Johnson, even though they retain its essential principles (Jackson, 1987).

Jackson (1987, p. 72) summarises the underlying assumptions of the scientific model of sexuality as follows:

- Sexual desire is a basic, biological urge, drive or instinct which demands satisfaction, or, to use Kinsey's term, "outlet". In men the urge is usually considered to be much stronger than in women (though not all sexologists agree on this).
- If the (male) sexual drive is denied legitimate outlets, it will find satisfaction in illegitimate ones. This is one of the main findings of Kinsey's *Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male* (1948), and was his favourite explanation of rape, the sexual abuse of girls and other "sex crimes" and sexual deviations.

- Alternatively, repression of sexual desire may lead to physical or mental illness, and especially “neurosis” in women. It is in this aspect of sexuality that the influence of psychoanalysis has been particularly strong, and even those sex researchers most hostile to psychoanalysis in general have accepted the repression-neurosis connection (albeit a crude, over-simplified version thereof).
- The need for sex is as basic as the need for food. Throughout the literature this analogy between sexual desire and hunger is repeatedly made, with the implication that the consequences of “sex starvation” are extremely harmful.
- The “sex” that we all allegedly need is “intercourse”, i.e., copulation or coitus. It is important to use the technical term, as the meaning of intercourse is very broad (as in social intercourse) and could in theory be taken to refer to any kind of sexual activity or interaction. In practice, however, its meaning is quite specific, and refers to the penetration of the vagina by the penis; thus “having sex” is synonymous with coitus in everyday speech as well as in the sexological literature.

These characteristics described above are still accepted as ‘facts of life’ in most societies (Jackson, 1987). Other research confirms that cultural values and heterosexual practice still fail to acknowledge positive conceptions of active female sexuality (Holland et al., 1996; Lesch, 2000; Wilbraham, 1994). Women are still regarded as less sexual than men and as the ones who should meet men’s needs (Shefer, 1999).

4.4.2 The have/hold discourse

The have/hold discourse refers particularly to women’s (hetero)sexuality and incorporates religious and moral values that emphasise monogamy and nuclear family life for women. The central notion is of women being able to have and to hold a man in order to prove her worth and achieve status (Hollway, 1989). This discourse coexists with the male sexual drive discourse in constructing male sexuality as ever-ready, urgent and determined by inherent (uncontrollable) drives. The common assumption of

(hetero)sexuality is linked to the cultural imperative of reproduction. However, there are obvious contradictions for men.

Men resolve the contradiction through the whore-madonna (mistress-wife, whore-virgin) split which historically divides women into two types. (Shefer, 1999, p. 120).

The implications for men are that they will marry 'nice' girls who become their wives and are then expected to bear and be responsible for children. This symbolises the have/hold discourse. The same men who marry 'nice' girls would then sleep with 'sluts'. In this way men can position themselves in both discourses. The implication of this discourse for women is the contradictory message which suggests that women are asexual and, on the other hand, their sexuality is "rabid and dangerous and must be controlled" (Hollway, 1984, p. 232). This discourse expects men to be the breadwinners to their wives and children; hence a man is positioned as the head of the family. With regards to sex, it is acceptable that women should respond positively to their partner's compelling need for sexual intercourse (Hearn, 1998). The manner in which men are positioned in the have/hold discourse allows them to construct their masculinity and sexuality in relation to custodial responsibilities; the task of women is to control the drive by submitting to their male partner's needs.

4.4.3 The permissive discourse

The permissive discourse is more based on gender equality in the sense that both men and women are expected to express their sexuality equally. Therefore, reciprocity might be more evident. Hollway (1989) argues, however, that this discourse is a descendent of the male sexual drive given its assumption of a natural (biological) sexuality that spontaneously exists and needs to be expressed. She criticises this notion which promotes the idea that sex is purely physical and asocial.

Having mentioned that the permissive discourse favours both sexes, Hollway's (1989) findings criticise this discourse and its practices given that such a discourse operates in an environment where there is still gender power inequality. Campbell (1980, p. 1-2) concurs:

[The permissive era] permitted sex for women too. What it did not do was defend women against the differential effects of permissiveness on men and women ... It was about the affirmation of young men's sexuality and promiscuity; it was indiscriminate, and their sexual object was indeterminate (so long as she was a woman).

4.5 The implications of the three discourses

Hollway (1984) argues that men and women position themselves in relation to discourses in their sexual and intimate relationships. There are some advantages and compensations in taking up certain positions in discourses and in relation to each other. Gender difference, she argues, is reproduced through conversations between subjects. One of the examples she gives to demonstrate this highlights the contradictions in men's talk whereby her male participants spoke of wanting women to be strong so they could share responsibilities, but on the other hand, they position themselves as stronger than women. Similarly, women accept the discourse and want men to be stronger than them as they benefit by being looked after by men (Hollway, 1984). These positions reproduce the dominant construction of male sexuality (Gilfoyle, Wilson, & Brown, 1993). This raises questions about what sort of contradictions could be happening in the military, as the military encourages toughness and leadership from soldiers. Both toughness and leadership are associated with manhood. Clearly, when female soldiers are in senior positions in the military, apparent contradictions are raised in relation to their ascribed gender role as caregivers and as submissive sexual partners. As Hollway (1984) points out, once contradictions emerge, they provide a platform for reproduction of the status quo or for potential change.

South African studies have identified instances of all three of Hollway's discourses. For example, Wilbraham's (1994) study that explored the construction of women's subjectivities in South African popular media illustrated both the male sexual drive and have/hold discourses. Similar discourses emerge in a study which examined men's talk on gender identity and sexual identity (Harris et al., 1995; Kaminer, 1993). Miles' (1992) study of young, unmarried female students (black and white) identified elements of both the male sexual drive and permissive discourses. The women participating in the study reported overwhelming male sexual urges; they also advocated a need to be assertive, and to express needs and desires in an intimate relationship. What is interesting in Miles' study is that the second, assertive response was framed differently by black and by white students. The white women drew more on feminist discourses while the black women draw more on a discourse that emerged from political struggles against apartheid. This response ties in well with the social constructionist view that constructions of sexuality cannot be separated from social identities that are in turn interwoven with racial and political contexts. The focus now moves to male sexuality in relation to risky sexual practices, and the implications of the discourses discussed above in understanding male sexuality in the light of HIV/AIDS.

4.6 Heterosexuality and risky sexual behaviour

The definition of risky sexual behaviour centres around sexual practices that carry certain risks such as unwanted pregnancy, and the transmission of HIV and other STDs. Risky sexual practices have been defined as unprotected sexual intercourse through inconsistent or lack of condom use (Peltzer, 2000; Reddy cited in Shisana & Simbayi, 2002), and unprotected anal sex (Karim & Renigie, 1998; Halperin cited in Shisana & Simbayi, 2002). Other instances include sharing sex toys or any equipment that goes inside the body, and sadomasochist practices involving blood. Other sexual behaviours that could entail psychological risks are listed by Moore et al. (1996, p. 55) as "early sexual debut", sexual exploitation (as victim or perpetrator), multiple partnering, and "deviant' sex". All these tend to correlate with unprotected sexual intercourse, with some sexual practices being more risky than others.

The HIV/AIDS epidemic is the result of specific patterns of sexual practices and social constructions of hegemonic masculinity that place men at risk of infection and prone to transmitting the virus. Men are expected to be sexually active and to have more partners than women, due to constructions of the male sexual drive and the have/hold discourse. Engaging in sex with different partners is regarded as a victory or conquest, and this embodies masculinity (UNAIDS, 1998). Because they have more partners, men are more likely to contract and pass on the virus to others (Foreman, 1999).

Linked to pressure on men to have multiple sexual partners is the added negative construction of the condom, especially for men in the South African context. A further complication is that engaging in sex with many partners and using unsafe sexual practices which could result in STIs appears to add status to men (Faxelid et al., 1994). In a national study commissioned by the South African Health Department examining factors that influence health seeking behaviour for STIs, it was confirmed that STIs can symbolise a positive moment for men and may be considered as proof of their sexual success (Shefer et al., 2002). This is demonstrated by two quotes taken from this study (2002, extracts 1379):

With men let me speak [on] behalf of men, with men we do really not hide. If I have, maybe gonorrhoea I will go to men and say "hey men, I've got gonorrhoea can you try [refer] me [to] an imbiza" [traditional healer] then men will refer me to imbiza, then they will cure me, it is easy with us we can talk.

And a man mh [] man can have pride to call other man to look at his penis if it is sore, a man has guts to do that men but with women.

The views of these informants illustrate that the consequences of risky sexual practices may not perturb men as the imperative to prove their sexual prowess may be more important to them than their reproductive health (Wilton, 1994). Researchers concur that

constructions of male identity and heterosexuality play a key role in risky sexual behaviours (Pleck et al., 1993).

For women, STIs apparently have a different meaning. The stigma of infection is embarrassing, and if women are infected, they keep this to themselves as they don't want to be labelled negatively as either promiscuous or loose (Lesch, 2000; Shefer, 1999; Strebel, 1993). These different constructions for both men and women emerge out of gendered constructions of sexuality. Men are expected to be sexually active and promiscuous whereas women who are overtly sexually active or take many partners are stigmatised. Ironically, even though women are expected to be sexually inactive, they are blamed for causing STIs (Shefer et al., 2002).

A woman can get this kind of a problem from a man, but it is rare. It is rare, really. Usually these kinds of problems women are gotten from women (From Shefer et al., 2002, extracts 1381).

I believe it is females who cause these STIs. You find that the person only wipes the vagina instead of washing properly. This then resembles bread with mould, then the charges [] of uncleanness formulate (From Shefer et al., 2002, extracts 1381).

In keeping with the pressures of dominant masculinity, men are encouraged to "prove" themselves through frequent sexual encounters. Over-confident men have also been found less likely to use condoms (Foreman, 1999). Here again, sexual behaviour is strongly affected by how people construct their sexual identity.

Homophobia is also identified as a further barrier to the adoption of safe sex in heterosexual culture. Discomfort around, fear of and hatred expressed towards homosexuals in contemporary heterosexual culture is strong (Flood, 2000). Various discourses position homosexuality as unnatural and diseased. It has been pathologised

even in recent academic psychology (DSM III, 1987). The HIV/AIDS epidemic has exacerbated homophobia:

The historical accident in [the] industrialised West [was] that the epidemic was concentrated among gay and homosexually active men, [and] AIDS was quickly appropriated by homophobic discourses (Flood, 2000, p. 52).

Gay men have been perceived as dangerous 'other', resulting in those in heterosexual relationships distancing themselves from the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Penetrative heterosexual sex is constructed as natural, giving primacy to male sexual pleasure (Wilton, 1997) and limiting women's ability to negotiate safe sex practices. This further sustains heterosexual power inequality.

Another aspect that hinders the adoption and negotiation of safe sex is the meaning attached to intimate relationships. Definitions in society of love, trust and loyalty constrain the use of condoms in long-term relationships. Condoms are seen to signify the opposite: that is, distrust, less love and less commitment (Flood, 2000). Hence condoms are more likely to be used with casual partners because they are not viewed as long-standing relationships (Galligan & Terry, 1993). Regular partners are usually trusted to commit to a monogamous relationship. This results in the abandonment of condoms at an early stage even in new relationships if they are perceived to promise a future (Flood, 2000; Moore & Rosenthal, 1993; Rosenthal & Reichler, 1994).

These practices support Hollway's (1989) argument that emotional factors influence risky sexual practice. The emotions identified by Hollway in her personal experience and clinical work are fear of rejection, dependency, need and love. To illustrate the link between risky sexual behaviour and constructions of heterosexuality, I outline below one scenario analysed by Hollway (1989) in her book *Subjectivity and Method in Psychology*, showing why some choose to invest in certain discourses and not others.

Beverly had recently met Will, soon after leaving a man with whom she had a relationship for several years. After having known each other for a month, Beverly and Will decided, while making love one evening, that they wanted to have a baby together and did not use any contraceptive. When Beverly found she was pregnant, Will was very pleased. However after much difficult discussion and confusion, Beverly decided to have an abortion. Later I asked her why, in retrospect, she had decided to make love without contraception. She said that she thought it was one in a chain of decisions which were symbols of commitment between them, in the face of worries each had about their compatibility. They had decided to live together and get married, but neither felt dependable. Having a baby was the strongest commitment. As Will put it, it is a decision to stay together, come what may, for at least 15 years (Hollway, 1989, pp. 47-48).

In this case making love without contraception and having a baby were associated with securing commitment to the relationship. In addition, the link between having unprotected sex and securing commitment is established through opening the possibility of pregnancy. The clear connections are that of having unprotected sex and commitment to a relationship.

In a social constructionist view, making love without contraception means secure commitment to the relationship because it entails having a baby. The baby becomes the single image with multiple meanings such as commitment, love, trust, and loyalty. The meaning centred on having a baby is commitment; and all the emotions/feelings listed above are socially constructed as a symbol of commitment to a relationship (Hollway, 1989). The commitment construction might originate in the have/hold discourse, which emphasises sexuality and child bearing as the key to monogamous relationship. Similarly, Janice (2005) argues that emotions are produced and reproduced by normativity, so should be seen not as irrational but as embedded in culture.

The foregoing emphasises that efforts to prevent unsafe sexual practice need to recognise that sexuality is deeply embedded in masculine and feminine identity and that individuals

engage in unsafe sexual practices for multiple and complex reasons (Silberschmidt, 2004). It might be expected that women engage in risky sexual practices to secure love and commitment, as does Hollway's participant Beverley, whereas men might follow similar practices to gain power and reproduce elements of hegemonic masculinity.

All the discourses of the male sexual drive – including penetration, conquest and risk-taking – need to be acknowledged as instrumental in the spread of HIV/AIDS. Sexuality and masculinity intersect, and are drawn together in a practice where men conquer by sexual intercourse, both spreading the virus and expressing hegemonic masculinity (Lindegger & Durrheim, 2001). Given that condoms are devalued due to masculine entitlement, and because they are believed to restrict pleasure, it is difficult to simply advocate the use of condoms (Lindegger & Durrheim, 2001). Clearly all projects working with men to fight HIV/AIDS, both nationally and internationally, need to acknowledge that constructions of masculinity and sexuality are fluid and explore the contradictions that may facilitate change.

4.7 The military and constructions of risky sexual practices

There is an association between work in the military and high-risk sexual activity (Okee-Obereng, 2001). What this study aims to explore is the underlying value system in military organisational culture as a possible component facilitating risky sexual practices. UNAIDS (1998, p. 3) reported that “the military professional ethos tends to excuse or even encourage risk-taking”. Aggression is valued and is associated with “conquest”. Willingness to accept and take risks is the key feature in a soldier's preparation for combat, but off the battlefield it might vicariously motivate soldiers' willingness to engage in needlessly risky behaviour, such as unprotected sex. Nkosi's (1999, p. 167) quotation from a Malawian soldier demonstrates this poignantly:

Soldiers like to conquer. The more women you take to bed the more you feel like a real man.

Soldiers are specially trained in risk-taking and aggressive behaviour (AIDS Brief, n.d.; Woodward, 2000). By virtue of their profession, soldiers are at risk of injury during training and during conflict. As Heinecken (2000, p. 4) states: "War is a bloody business." Soldiers are expected to transfuse blood if injured and to assist wounded colleagues. This exposes them to contaminated blood, especially as HIV testing has not been a policy in the pre-deployment or high-risk training phases (Archery, 2004; Heinecken, 2000). The risk of HIV/AIDS through sexual intercourse might appear minimal compared to the risk of death through military activities. In a study of mineworkers, Campbell (2001) found that the risk of death underground outweighs the risk of HIV/AIDS. Campbell (2001, p. 276) found that "sex is regarded as one of the most easily available recreational activities at the end of a stressful and exhausting day with a range of factors undermining the likelihood of condom use". Campbell, Mzaidume and Williams (1998) describe how miners in South Africa have extolled the importance of frequent intercourse for the maintenance of physical and mental health. Similar living conditions, such as working away from home and being separated for long periods from partners, are reported as contributing to high rates of HIV in the military (Foreman, 1999; Heinecken, 2000). Soldiers may hold similar beliefs to that of miners about how to preserve their mental and physical health.

When on deployment soldiers often stay in close proximity to refugees and displaced persons. They are paid well and are therefore in a position to ask for sexual favours in exchange for cash. If soldiers are off duty with money to spend, they are reported to frequently seek sex from women with financial, emotional and sexual needs (Archery, 2004; Foreman, 1999; Heinecken, 2000). Certain military living conditions also put soldiers at particular risk of contracting and transmitting HIV. For example, most soldiers are single, or are not allowed to marry during their enlistment, and usually live in single-sex quarters (Aids Brief, n.d.). The loneliness that soldiers feel when far away from their loved ones, and living alone in single quarters, might encourage risky sexual practices.

In the 19th century large male-dominated organisations, such as the military, discouraged active sexuality in the workplace (Burrell, 1984). The current position, as a Captain Clifton of the US army explains, is that the army does not prohibit heterosexual relations among soldiers, but it does not provide facilities for sexual relations (Guttman, 1997). This absence of facilities does not appear to deter soldiers who abide by the motto “where there is a will, there is a way” (Guttman, 1997, p. 22). While heterosexuality is the accepted norm outside the workplace, according to Kimmel (2000), homosexuality and celibacy are disdained. “Symbolically, a certain kind of male heterosexual sexuality plays an important part in legitimising organisational power” (Kimmel, 2000, p. 115).

It is also reported that sexual intercourse happens not only between soldiers and civilian women, but also among colleagues within the military. Female recruits in the US Army are reported to have accused drill instructors of rape and sexual harassment. Female soldiers have made similar accusations throughout the US military (Guttman 1997). Much as there is a commitment to integrating women, the implications are that sex and sexual difference may continue to challenge working relationships (Guttman, 1997).

4.8 Summary

This chapter demonstrates that heterosexuality reproduces male power, particularly in the military. The practice of other forms of sexuality, broadly, is taboo, and large sectors of society support institutionalised heterosexuality.

Research on constructions of heterosexuality, sexuality and risky sexual practices both in South Africa and internationally was presented in this chapter as an understanding of the construction of sexuality is vital to developing appropriate HIV/AIDS prevention strategies.

The value of understanding the often contradictory discourses that underpin unsafe sexual practices was highlighted, as they provide insights on the diversity of how people negotiate heterosexuality and how new knowledge is generated (Shefer, 1999).

Links were drawn between the appearance of sexual discourses in the military and among mineworkers, drawing attention to broad constructions of male sexuality in institutionalised and work-based contexts, and pointing to a key area for further research. This affirmed the relevance of this study in exploring alternative discourses which could be useful not only for the military but for the broader community. Clearly, accounts of risky sexual practices in relation to constructions of male sexuality in the military demonstrate that this is an area that needs further research.

CHAPTER 5: METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

5.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological framework that guides this study. As expressed by Hollway (1989), it is difficult to separate methodology from the theoretical paradigm of this study, as I regard the theory informing research on men's sexuality and risky sexual practices as integral to the methodology. In Chapter 4, I outlined the theoretical work of Hollway on heterosexual discourses and discussed how and why people locate themselves through a particular discourse. In this chapter, I outline the rationale for using a qualitative research methodology framed within discourse analysis. The key, and shared, concepts of qualitative methodology and discourse analysis are then discussed and the relevance of discourse analysis not only to this study, but to psychology in general, is spelled out. The research aims of the study and the research methods and procedures are also outlined. The influence of reflexivity related to personal background and its influence on the research process is explored. The chapter ends with a reflection on the reliability and validity of the methodology used.

5.2 Commonalities between qualitative research approach and discourse analysis

As detailed in Chapter 2, social science practice has moved away from the traditional empiricist and positivist paradigms. The shift towards qualitative research methods is based on the acknowledgement that research is "a distinctly human process" (Marshall, 1986, p.193) and can never be objective and neutral.

The anti-positivist/anti-empiricist or so-called qualitative movement that has been carried forward by the postmodern "turn to discourse/language" approach is argued to be a "defining feature of contemporary social science" (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 1995, p.1). Even though discourse analysis has much in common with the qualitative paradigm it is distinguished by its origins in postmodern philosophy, and shows a number of metatheoretical and methodological departures, which are discussed later in this chapter.

5.3 A link between social constructionism and discourse analysis

It is common for social constructionist researchers to use discourse analysis, though as Burr (1995) argues, social constructionism does not necessarily mean one must use discourse analysis. Social constructionists may use other qualitative or quantitative methods in their research. On the other hand, Durrheim (1997, p. 181) argues that discourse analysis is particularly relevant for researchers using social constructionism as this theoretical framework is inherently anti-empiricist:

By rejecting truth, representation, and objectivity and the idea that meaning is derived from individual sensory experiences or mental operations, discourse analysts have a different conception of what a psychological investigation is and what it aims to do.

5.4 Relevance of discourse analysis in psychology

As a psychologist it is important for me to look at how discourse analysis and social constructionism can be of assistance to psychology as a discipline. One of the important components of discourse analysis, which it shares with feminist research methodologies, is self reflexivity. Wilkinson and Kitzinger (1995) state that feminist psychologists and female social scientists are inclined to use discourse analysis for a similar reason. Many progressive local psychologists have successfully deployed discourse analysis (for example, Duncan, 1993; Levett, 1988; Potgieter, 1997; Strebel, 1993). As a result I have drawn from their work and that of Shefer (my mentor and co-supervisor). Self reflexivity provides an opportunity for a researcher or psychologist to share his or her own theories of the world, and to critically reflect on how they are discursively constructed to reproduce dominant versions of the world (Henriques, Hollway, Urwin, Venn, & Walkerdine, 1984; Parker & Shotter, 1990). The researcher's or psychologist's social identities, personal ideologies, investment in the research, as well as his or her relationship with the research participants are crucial to self reflexivity. Discourse

analysis emphasises the close examination of power relations in the research process. A methodological and metatheoretical framework that acknowledges power is crucial in the field of critical psychology, especially as traditional psychology has tended to play a conservative role in many social settings globally over the last few decades (Henriques et al., 1984; Potter & Wetherell, 1987).

Burman and Parker (1993, p.2) suggest that in discourse analytic psychology, “instead of studying the mind as if it were outside language, we study the spoken and written texts ... the conversations, debates, discussions where images of the mind are reproduced and transformed”. If psychologists agree with this, the implication is that they should accept the ambivalence and uncertainty it implies, because the discourses through which individuals construct their identity are multiple and contradictory and contain residues of many different social and ideological dynamics (Connell, 2000). As Wetherell (1995) argues, the psychologist’s role then shifts from a position of authority and unquestionable experience, to a position of probing the nature of discourses embraced by clients and the investments attached to those discourses. In the context of this thesis the questions are: Do soldiers embrace traditional discourses of masculinity and male sexuality? If so, why? How does this frame male soldiers’ masculine and heterosexual practices? Discourse analysis seeks, from this point, to deconstruct or search for how meaning is constructed, how discourses are reproducing or challenging dominant meanings, and how they reflect or resist existing power dynamics.

5.5 Discourse analysis

As in social constructionism, a discourse analysis focuses on language and how it is used. However, it is more than a method of analysis, as it constitutes a metatheoretical framework. According to Potter and Wetherell (1995, p.83), discourse analysis is:

A complete package which combines some meta-theoretical notions about knowledge and objectivity ... with the theoretical ideas about discourse and action ... and these, in turn, are meshed with some methodological suggestions for broad strategies and specific techniques of analysis.

Discourse analytic work includes diverse forms such as linguistic analysis, conversation analysis, ethnomethodology and poststructuralist/postmodernist discourse analysis (Burman & Parker, 1993; Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 1995). While these forms differ in practice, common linking threads are their emphasis on the centrality and structuring influence of language, their way of interpreting data and their reflexive kinds of analyses.

5.5.1 Discourse analysis and language

Wetherell (1995, p. 134) argues that discourse analysis “emphatically privileges the social/linguistic over what has been conventionally understood as the psychological; it argues that experience, and thus subjective psychological reality, is constituted through language and the process of representation”. As stated, discourse analysis is underpinned by the social constructionist understanding that representation of experience (language or language-like systems) is identified, labelled and constructed through language and stories. Gavey (1993) concurs by stating that discourses denote a particular set of ideas and practices constituted in and by language that are reflected in written and spoken texts.

In this study, discourse analysis is used to unpack the language used by participants and to analyse texts. The aim is further to deconstruct the way in which participants make sense of their masculinity and sexuality through language. From this perspective, it could be argued, for example, that soldiers can only act within the language that they come across. They understand themselves and attach meaning to their experience through “the available language that is deployed by the discourses within which they participate” (Phillips, 2001, p. 51).

Wetherell and Potter (1987) describe discourses as functional insofar as language is used. People use language for almost anything they do, even though that might not be apparent to them. In their view, language functions to construct accounts of experiences in the social world. They argue that a person's story may vary according to its function (intention). As stated earlier, variation in stories is an essential element in the subjectivity of discourse analysis, as people are viewed as utilising different discourses to facilitate adopting different meanings about themselves and the social world (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). The influence of this variation depends on how the discourse is analysed and what role it is fulfilling for an individual. In this respect, discourse analysis is arguably more complex and nuanced than qualitative methods which focus on presenting themes. Discourse analysis focuses on how subjects and objects are constructed in the text, and interrogates the effects of these constructions within broader contexts of social meaning. In this way, discourses are not only key to the construction of meaning and identity, but are also deeply embedded within the broader social context and interwoven with power dynamics.

5.5.2 Discourse analysis and power

Lather (1991) argues that our spoken and written texts reflect structures of societal power. This suggests that discourses reproduce power relations and power inequalities that exist in societies. Therefore discourse is not just a means of communication, but is closely linked to power. According to Foucault (1979), discourse and power are in an inseparable relationship. They are imbued with power and as a result shape how people think, feel, behave and experience the world in which they live (Burman & Parker, 1993; Foucault, 1979). For Foucault (1979) different groups have different power to entrench their discourse. He argues that power is not vested in some people while others are deprived of it, but differential access to power is an effect of discourse. Power resides everywhere, and exercising it can be used to change human behaviour (Burr, 1995). "To define the world/people in a way that allows you to do certain things is to exercise power. When we represent or construct 'something' in a particular way, we are in fact producing

a particular 'knowledge' which in a sense 'has power'" (Potgieter, 1997, pp. 42-43). Foucault would see this knowledge as power: the power to define others.

There could be a number of discourses operating around a particular event, each possibly having a different function, and it follows that the dominant discourse is constantly being challenged and resisted (Foucault, 1979). Any version of events could be a product of social practices for acting in a certain way, and for marginalising alternative positions. People draw upon discourses that allow them to be presented in a favourable way (Foucault, 1979). Discourse analysis highlights the importance of acknowledging resistance and contradictory discourses. Resistance is viewed as a refusal of dominant discourses (Parker, 1992) which may facilitate the development of alternative discourses. If people resist dominant discourses, contradictions in and between discourses will emerge, facilitating processes of change. It is exactly this kind of change that might contribute to educational programmes around HIV/AIDS or masculinities aimed at men in the military.

As mentioned, discourses are described as reflecting and constructing existing power inequalities. Parker (1992) lists three criteria that differentiate discourses which emphasise this characteristic: firstly, discourses support institutions; secondly, discourses reproduce power relations among people; and lastly, discourses have ideological effects. In speaking of discourses supporting institutions, Foucault (1979) does not suggest that power resides in a particular institution or group in that institution. Instead, it can be said that institutions have disciplinary power that has the effect of individuals willingly subjecting themselves to control and monitoring by experts (Potgieter, 1997). This suggests that an institution exerts a form of social control as its discourses provide structure in people's daily lives. As people do not resist this, Foucault (1976, p. 86) regards it as central to the way power functions: "Power is tolerable only on condition that it masks a substantial part of itself."

The military is an excellent example of power being tolerated and not resisted (see Chapter 3). As senior officers and parliamentarians hold powerful positions, they have

the authority, mandate and resources to legitimise military discourses. This example relates to Gergen's (1989) concept of a "warrant voice", whereby he argues that all groups desire to have their version of events represented. However, some discourses warrant more voice than others, especially if people are in positions of authority. The dominant groups usually have control over ideological apparatuses such as the military and academic institutions.

In contemporary western society the human subjectivity (the individual) is shaped and given reality in particular ways in medical, psychiatric, legal, educational, political and psychological discourses – these reverberate in other fields of discourse related to gender, race, nationality, age, class (Levett, 1988, p. 184).

In this study, emerging discourses that appear to support the military, and broader dominant discourses that shape men's sexuality and their concept of masculinity, are identified from participants' accounts. While Parker (1992) maintains that discourses reflect power inequalities, he warns us not to conflate Foucault's two terms "power" and "knowledge". To do so would be to generalise and interpret power as everywhere, so losing the political potential to challenge power. Foucault, by contrast, maintains that power *is* everywhere. Given such debates, it is important to understand that discourses are contextual and historical, are not static, and do change over time. This view relates to the term variation discussed above, and vindicates the view that masculinity and sexuality are also contextual and cannot be universalised (Parker, 1992; Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Wetherell & Potter, 1992).

5.6 Goals

Broadly, this study proposes to understand a group of South African soldiers' constructions of masculinity and explore how their constructions reportedly impact on their sexual practices. The specific focus of the study is to explore the conceptions that soldiers have about their masculinity, while paying specific attention to the intersection of their conceptions of sexuality and reported risky sexual practices with their male

identities. An additional objective of this study is to determine whether the positioning of the self as masculine within hegemonic constructions of masculinity, particularly as they emerge within the SANDF cultural context, could reinforce unsafe sexual practices. The ultimate aim is to inform the SANDF's HIV intervention programmes.

5.7 Research questions

The broad question that this study examines is:

- How does a group of South African soldiers construct their masculinity and sexuality and what contribution can this understanding make towards the prevention of risky sexual practices and the consequent spreading of HIV in this particular context and in broader contexts?

Constituent questions include:

- How do male soldiers' constructions of masculinity facilitate their vulnerability to risky sexual practices?
- Does the military context reinforce hegemonic masculinities? Does this context facilitate the engagement of risky sexual practices?
- How could risky sexual practices be addressed in this particular environment?

5.8 Research context

Participants in the study were solicited from male students at a higher education institution within the SANDF. Soldiers at this institution come from different provinces in South Africa and reflect a diversity of social identities in South Africa, across race, class, culture, language and marital status. The mission of this higher education institution is to provide contextualised preparatory and higher education, training and development to selected officers in the Department of Defence.

5.9 Sample

The proposed sample was to be 20 male soldiers. However, I ended up with 14 participants because I followed a saturated data technique, whereby data was collected until such time as it began to be repetitive and no longer added new themes or insights. It has been argued by qualitative researchers that “more interviews can often simply add to the labour involved without adding anything to the analysis” (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, p. 16).

Participants were between 23 and 33 years old as people in this age group are identified as being at the highest risk, not only in the SANDF (Heinecken, 2001), but in the rest of South Africa (Shisana & Simbayi, 2002; UNAIDS, 1998). All participants were officers enrolled in a tertiary institution pursuing a career in the military. Even though participants were students at the time of data collection, they had been in the military for more than four years. Representativity during sampling is not regarded as crucial when doing qualitative research. However, diversity was taken into account, specifically when identifying and selecting the participants. Firstly, racial and ethnic diversity is central given the salience of race and ethnicity in the South African context. Secondly, diversity according to military rank and educational level was also taken into account but within the limitations of the student population at a junior level. The decision to interview participants from diverse backgrounds was based on the assumption that different experiences, predispositions and circumstances may have led to different constructions of masculinity and sexuality. A diverse sample facilitated the possibility of diverse stories being heard which could contribute significantly to the nature and content of future HIV/AidsIDS interventions. Although not all groups are represented, for example no Indian men approached agreed to participate, the sample of participants broadly approximates the SANDF’s demographics.

A sample was drawn from the full list of students. Participants had to be aged between 23 and 33. I chose those members who had been in the SANDF for more than four years in order to establish the impact of the military on their constructions of male sexuality.

Six names were randomly selected from the second year, third year and postgraduate students, while ensuring there were both black and white candidates. Chosen candidates were contacted by e-mail. After they expressed interest electronically, candidates were contacted by telephone and asked to fill in consent forms. They read through these in their own time to make sure that they understood the interview process and the purpose of the research. The consent form included information about the research and the rights of interviewees regarding the confidentiality and anonymity of the data provided, as well as their right to withdraw from the study at any stage.

The table below provides a summary of participants' biographical information and is indicative of their diversity. The table lists their race¹, age, number of years in the military, educational level and marital status. All participants are junior officers, with ranks ranging from lieutenant to captain. Four of the participants were Afrikaans speaking, two English, two TshiVenda one IsiSwati, one IsiXhosa, two IseSotho, one Setswana and one IsiZulu speaking. However, their ranks and mother tongue are not listed in the table as this might compromise the anonymity of the candidates. Pseudonyms are used to identify participants.

Table 4: Participants' biographical information

Participant	Race	Age	No. of years in the military	Educational status	Marital Status
Simon	White	31	13	Undergraduate	Single
Thulani	African	32	10	Undergraduate till Nov 04	Single
Richard	White	27	9	Postgraduate	Single

¹ Race is differentiated on the basis of historical apartheid categories: African, Coloured, Indian, White

Table 4 continued

Participant	Race	Age	No. of years in the military	Educational status	Marital Status
Mikobe	African	31	11	Undergraduate 'till Nov 04	Single
Bongi	African	25	7	Postgraduate	Single
Mtobeli	African	26	4	Undergraduate 'till Nov 04	Single
Tshepo	African	29	9	Graduated Dec 04	Single
Kgao	African	31	5	Graduated Dec 04	Single
John	Coloured	26	7	Postgraduate	Single
Thando	African	33	11	Graduated Dec 04	Single
Johan	White	28	9	Postgraduate	Married
Gerhard	White	23	5	Graduated Dec 04	Single
Sam	Coloured	30	12	Undergraduate	Single
Jeff	Coloured	30	5	Postgraduate	Married

5.10 Interviews and interviewers

While focus groups allow for multiple and divergent voices, they may also silence the less hegemonic ones (Fontana & Frey, 1994). As a woman doing research I felt more at ease in one-on-one interviews, reducing the possibility of male participants posturing in the groups and possibly 'ganging-up' against the facilitator. Therefore, in-depth, individual interviews were the main form of data collection in this study as my interest lies in the narratives and stories of participants and how these reflect, reproduce or challenge broader discourses. The initial phase of each interview elicited biographical

data about the participant or interviewee, before moving on to a semi-structured schedule guided by vignettes and containing open-ended questions (see Appendix I). Gadd (2000) suggests that the use of open-ended questions encourages interviewees to make their own associations without pressuring them to defend themselves or constrain their responses. The structured part of the interview schedule included a biographical questionnaire sourced from the Section Effect Analysis (Research Unit) in the SANDF. This questionnaire was used to elicit information such as rank, age, race, work experience, educational level and home language. Starting with this descriptive questionnaire was also a way of making the interview context less threatening.

The second part of the interview was less structured. The interview schedule and vignettes were utilised mainly to guide the conversation towards exploring the participants' constructions of masculinity. Before the interviews were conducted, the interview material was discussed with my supervisors of whom one is in the field of psychology and one in the field of gender studies. A number of the vignettes used were taken from Shefer's (1999) research and some from unpublished information generated by the co-interviewer of this study. Some were then adapted to better represent the military context. During different interviews topics were often addressed in uneven depth depending on the degree of willingness of participants to share specific information. As a result, the questions varied considerably in style and detail (Poynton, 2003). For example, most of the questions required participants to describe their feelings and perceptions as if they had had the same experience as people used in the vignettes. This approach was used instead of asking participants directly if and why they engage in risky sexual behaviour.

I anticipated that the interview format and use of vignettes would elicit rich and detailed data from the participants and not force the interviews in a preconceived direction. Secondly, the format was intended to establish good rapport through a positive and respectful approach so participants would be encouraged to share more intimate information. The message emphasised was that their stories were valued and they could talk freely without fear of being judged by the interviewer. I was concerned that being an

academic and female might lead participants to perceive me as a feminist who might be judgemental. Although there is an assumption that people of the same gender are able to connect better in an interview situation, Scully (1990) found the opposite to be true in her study when, compared to her male colleague, she appeared to connect better with the male participants and obtained greater levels of disclosure. Her finding is consistent with the view that societal expectations forbid emotional intimacy among men. I found that I was able to communicate well with the male participants. This might be due to my experience of being a psychologist who has to deal mostly with men in my day-to-day work in the institution. This supports Scully who found that female counsellors elicit greater disclosure.

To counteract any barriers based on gender, an experienced male interviewer was co-opted to conduct three interviews. This served to ascertain whether gender and other aspects of social identity (for example, age, race, and language) impacted in any way on the interview process or created discomfort for the male participants (Phoenix, 1994; Shefer et al., 2005). Further, this helped ensure a different data set, outside of my influence, was achieved through the interviews carried out by the male co-interviewer. This method might be of methodological interest if tangible differences in the data collected by different researchers are evident. The co-interviewer was selected based on his excellent interpersonal skills, open-mindedness, and expertise on the subject of sex and sexuality. His training as a clinical psychologist and his research experience in emotional and sexual matters proved valuable and effective. His findings did not appear compromised by the fact that he was a male interviewer interviewing male subjects.

Reissman (1987) argued that the gender of interviewer and interviewee does not interfere with gathering reliable and valid data, but points out that cultural differences could result in misunderstandings by the interviewer. I am an African, middle-class female educational psychologist in my mid-thirties. The co-interviewer is a coloured middle-class male clinical psychologist in his early forties. With some participants we were at the same cultural level; with others in the same socio-economic grouping; while with some there was no congruence at all. We have both been registered psychologists for

over four years and have also been involved in community and research work for over eight years. Therefore we have experience in cross-cultural interviewing and interventions and are careful of possible pitfalls. As a result, before the interviews began we reminded ourselves not to make assumptions and to clarify issues we did not understand. Hickson and Christie (1989) and Ibrahim (1985) indicate that culturally aware and skilled therapists or counsellors can overcome some potential cultural barriers.

The co-interviewer conducted only three interviews. This was sufficient as the participants were comfortable discussing masculine sexual issues with me. Secondly, my results were similar to that of my colleague, giving me the confidence to continue interviewing alone. In addition, I wanted to gain more control over the interview process. Even though I was satisfied with the data that he elicited, and learnt a lot from his interviewing style, I also felt the power of analysis was taken away from me as he retained his own mental notes. I believe that from mental notes you gain better control.

The interviews were conducted in English, but those members who spoke a similar language to that of the interviewers were encouraged to express themselves in their language of preference. All participants however chose to use English which is the official language of the SANDF. In order to create a relaxed context free of other obligations, the interviews were scheduled over a weekend or after-hours in my office. Each interview took about two hours.

5.11 Transcription of interviews

The interviews were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim by the interviewers. According to Charmaz (1990), transcribing one's own interview provides an opportunity to engage with the data from the beginning. All the transcriptions were done in the same week that the interviews took place, in order to capture non-verbal aspects of the interviews, such as gestures showing discomfort or excitement and non-verbal communication such as tone of voice, tension or laughter. I then listened to my

colleague's audiotapes and read his transcripts and afterwards we discussed our interpretation of the interviews.

5.12 Data analysis through discursive approaches

The interviews were transcribed to computer. This was time-consuming and perfect replication was not always possible. For example, sometimes participants' talked beyond the end of the tape, and information was missed. Discussions had, at times, to be recalled from memory which could have altered the accuracy of some of the data. However, the transformation of data is reported as something that happens often with transcriptions and is therefore to be expected to some extent (Strebel, 1993).

The meanings drawn from the transcriptions were derived from repeated readings of the transcripts and were understood in terms of discourses. During these readings words and phrases were grouped according to emerging themes across participants' stories and a comprehensive list of common themes was identified and sifted into meaningful categories (Mishler, 1990; Thompson, 1990). When themes were identified, I then searched for sets of statements which indicated both consistency and variance. When the same words and phrases kept on appearing they were sorted into a number of categories and themes. This is what differentiates discourse analysis from content analysis. With content analysis words or phrases may only occupy one coding category (Potgieter, 1997). As I was not pursuing narrative or content analysis I decided to unpack the discourses as themes rather than by presenting case studies. This was not an easy task, as it required extensive prior reading, an understanding of the topic and practical experience (Billig, 1988; Strebel, 1993). As I was new to qualitative research, I had to continuously read the data and review related literature. Participants' views were continuously interrogated through the broader literature on discourses of masculinity, sexuality and risky sexual practices.

Hollway's (1995) interpretative discourse analysis was used to explain the discourses available to the participants. Analysis and interpretation of the transcripts, as reflections

of the meaning created by participants, was by no means exhaustive, and should be read as an attempt at arriving at an understanding of how men construct masculinities/femininities and (hetero)sexuality in everyday life. The discourses of masculinity, sexuality and risky sexual practices, as well as the positions that participants take up in them, were identified and described. The power these have in shaping participants' discourses and the contradictions they produced were brought to the fore. Contradictions signalled that participants could be positioned in different discourses. It was then important not to view their accounts as fixed or as a representation of their true selves, rather that the text is viewed as "transindividual" (Parker, 1992, p. 7) and reflecting the multiple discourses, some dominant, some more marginal, that are available to men in the military. The hope in discourse analysis is to identify alternative, challenging discourses that might assist men (and women) to develop more appropriate sexual practices, particularly within the context of HIV/AIDS which demands more responsible sexual behaviour.

All stories originate from social discourses and relations of power. For example, when participants shared their views on the vignettes used, during the analysis it was possible to dissect out the cultural and historical discourses underlying their stories (Riessman, 1993; Thompson, 1990). Some participants, for example, believe that women cannot refuse sex when their partners want it as men have such powerful sexual needs. This is a male sex drive discourse, and it serves an ideological function (Hollway, 1989).

Hollway's discourse analysis is adopted in the analytic process of this study, and also provides the psychoanalytic tools to clarify discourses. In this study, a psychoanalytic approach was not used at all, despite the fact this approach enables examination of both the conscious and the unconscious. Adding a psychoanalytic exploration of the interiorisation of the psyche was considered beyond the scope of the study. However, psychodynamic explanations of participant's involvement in specific discourses were applied at times. This form of analysis is considered necessary to understand the reproduction of gender-differentiated discourses (Van Wyk, 2004).

5.13 Ethical considerations

An important first ethical step in carrying out any research study is obtaining permission to conduct it (Upvall & Hashwani, 2001). This process can be a lengthy and cumbersome one fraught with barriers that the researcher must be willing to bear and overcome (Thompson, 2000; Upvall & Hashwani, 2001). This is particularly relevant for research in the military which has very strong disclosure considerations due to its link with national security. A copy of the research proposal stating the rationale, aims and objectives of the study was submitted, together with a written request for permission to conduct the study within the military, to the Defence Intelligence Office. A security clearance to utilise certified information also had to be obtained from this office. A further contractual obligation is that the information generated by the researcher is of a confidential nature, and the final product must be submitted to the Defence Intelligence Office for scrutiny and final security instructions before it can be published.

The next phase was to seek approval for the study from the Ethics Committee at Stellenbosch University. This research is ethical as it does not constitute any apparent harm or danger to the participants and participation in the study was completely voluntary. Its expected outcomes could be used in the development of HIV/AIDS intervention strategies for the SANDF. Further, if the research is declassified by Defence Intelligence, its findings can be disseminated in broader South African society.

All prospective participants were fully informed about the nature and purpose of the study. After obtaining verbal consent for participating in the study, informed written consent was required from the participants in order to formalise and guide the researcher/participant interface. The consent form outlined the purpose of the study and gave participants the right to either refuse to answer specific questions or discontinue participation in the study at any point. Confidentiality was stressed and no names were required. The only identifying details required were the number of years in the military, race and educational level. However, the research required detailed biographical

information in order to assess whether these details intersected with constructions of masculinity and sexuality in the literature.

From an ethical point of view, only one experienced interviewer was co-opted in order to ensure confidentiality.

5.14 Self-reflexivity

The concept of reflexivity acknowledges that the researcher plays a significant role in the construction of the research process and of the findings (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor, & Tindall, 1994). The findings obtained are themselves constructions that are open to change and can be interpreted in many ways. This has certain implications for the role of the researcher as co-creator. Reflexivity demands that the researcher be introspective and explore how her/his personal interests and values may have influenced and shaped the research process, analysis and outcome (Banister et al., 1995).

Personal factors play a crucial role in the researcher's task of constructing and interpreting the interviews. According to Banister et al. (1995), this is in line with a social constructionist approach. As Mishler (1990) adds, all individuals construct their realities, and their construction is framed within their personal and social background and context. In this study, the social constructionist assumption was that a soldier will co-create his own masculinity within his social and cultural context, and his story will be constructed by the dominant beliefs of his particular social and cultural context. "It also implies that the way in which the story will be told by the researcher, will reflect the researcher's way of viewing and making sense of her world which, in turn, is influenced by her particular social and cultural context" (Rapmund & Moore, 2000, p. 20).

I am aware of my identity as an African single mother who is "middle-class", Xhosa-speaking and in my mid-thirties. I grew up in a working-class environment in Molteno, a small town in the Eastern Cape. Self-respect, respect for others and hard work were instilled as crucial values. These values, instilled by my family, motivated me to study

hard to ensure a better life. During both my undergraduate and postgraduate studies, I took social science courses which further exposed me to an understanding of social and gender inequalities.

A strong commitment to gender equality and social justice has inspired me and played a role in this research process. Exploring constructions of masculinity and male sexuality meant having to confront my own constructions of femininity, masculinity and sexuality. This confrontation was a way of seeking control and power in my personal circumstances so as to protect myself from male domination. There is no doubt that my personal history with men influenced my motivation to conduct this study, and this might have impacted on interpretation of the data. However, I am able to empathise with men as a result of my training as a psychologist and my previous work with men at the South African National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence. The reading I have done around masculinity and men's sexuality and risky sexual behaviour have made me aware that men's constructions are not their personal choice but are mediated within social and cultural contexts.

Unfortunately, I could not simply claim identity as a researcher, as most of the participants already knew me as a psychologist. This raised questions about whether this knowledge might have elicited different information. Participants were willing to discuss and personalise issues rather than generalising them. This raised the question whether this response was related to issues of power. The power relationship between researcher and participant is shaped in part by the position each occupies in the social order, raising questions about the ethics of research (Fonow & Cook, 1991; Oakley, 1990). Dowsett (2003) suggests that factors like race, gender, class, and age differences be considered when conducting research as they have a distinct impact on power relations. In qualitative and feminist research it is emphasised that researchers usually have power over participants (Parker & Burman, 1993; Wilkinson, 1988). As Lather (1991) points out, the contextual power relations also frame the research process.

Based on the issues of power discussed above, I asked myself whether I or the participants had more power in the interviews, even though I do not hold military rank that could put me in a power position relative to the participants. The willingness of participants to answer all the questions in the interviews raised a number of issues for me, which remain largely unanswered but point to the multiple and diverse power relations that might have been present in the research process. I asked: Were participants willing to talk to me in some of the interviews because they feel they have power over me because I am a woman, a civilian and African? Were they prepared to discuss issues of masculinity and sexuality because they want to prove their masculinity to me? Is it due to my being a psychologist that they know that whatever we have discussed is confidential? Could it be that my therapeutic and research skills enabled me to probe the issues deeply? Is the willingness on their side a “softening” strategy because they know that as students they might be sent to me for therapy or to elicit certain recommendations? From the above it is clear that participants all offered high levels of personal disclosure, and none appeared threatened by the questions asked. Further, at the end of each interview participants were given an opportunity to reflect on the interviews to determine if any discomfort was experienced.

The results generated from this study stimulated my interest in how non-military men generally construct their masculinity and sexuality, and to what extent the study might have an impact on men in the broader realm. At the same time, my overwhelming feeling was that I should research women, with the hope of creating awareness of how certain discourses oppress us. Notwithstanding my personal biases, the intention of this research is not to criticise men and show how ‘bad’ they are but rather to explore how they make meaning of themselves and their behaviour. The aim is to inform intervention strategies. As shown in studies by Poynton (2003) and Shefer et al. (2002), men’s willingness to talk about themselves proved to me that engaging men in conversation is a valuable strategy in challenging the HIV epidemic and other gender-based problems, including violence against women.

I should point out that my previous research at third year, honours and masters levels has been within a quantitative framework. This study represents my first encounter with qualitative methods and post-structuralist literature. Even though the interview data was fascinating and detailed, coming to grips with its often contradictory meanings using a new methodological framework was the most challenging part of this study. However, it was a fruitful and enriching exercise.

5.15 Reliability

According to Banister et al. (1995), the concept of reliability is not widely used in qualitative research studies as knowledge is constructed and cannot therefore be empirically tested. Secondly, reliability cannot be applied to interview data (Bruner, 1997; Richardson, 1990). I therefore relied on the representation of participants' experiences because I do not have direct access to their experiences. As researcher, I can only listen, record and interpret participants' representations. Riesman (1993) lists five levels of representation in the analysis process to demonstrate that knowledge in the social sciences is socially constructed. These are:

- Attending to experience
- Telling about experience
- Transcribing experience
- Analysing experience
- Reading experience.

Riesman (1993) explains that at each level the representation is modified. Firstly, the person telling his/her experience does not attend to or remember the whole experience. This suggests that participants only relate experiences from their personal memories at the time of the interview. On the second level, when the participant relates an experience, that experience is modified simply by telling it to a listener who will influence the interviewee's representation of the experience. Participants do not always tell everything. Rather, they choose what to say and might exclude parts that contrast

with how they want to appear to the interviewer. Reinforcing the argument, Jones and Rupp (2000, p. 280) argue that:

The interviewee does not just narrate a chronological account of items they think will interest the interviewer. When reconstructing their life history they are relating and connecting experiences and events they consider as relevant from their own idiosyncratic subjective perspective. During the interview, the interviewee will be unconsciously reinterpreting past events, actions and experiences as he/she decides what and how to present the past.

Another view explicated by Marshall and Rossman (1995) is that participants may be unwilling or uncomfortable about sharing what the researcher needs, and in some cases might be unaware of the recurring patterns in their lives. A third level points to how the researcher transcribes a story to written text, deciding on a largely unconscious level what to include and what to discard. The words may be heard differently and subtly transformed in the transcription. Fourth, the researcher selects aspects of the story that interest her, and these are analysed and added to her interpretation. Lastly, the reader reading the final report constructs her or his own meaning from that report. Therefore, at every point where an experience is translated into language, there is a new interpretation and new text. This results in a highly complex and even ambiguous meaning. This way of elaborating the research process highlights the complexity of the analysis, raising questions about the traditional view of reliability.

5.16 Validity

Mishler (1990) links the concept of validity to trustworthiness and not truth. This suggests that this concept does not refer to whether a study's findings reflect a static, objective reality, but points to how clear and credible the findings of the study are. Trustworthiness can be achieved firstly by documenting the research process in detail so that other researchers can critically scrutinise the process. Secondly, validity can be achieved by comparing the findings of the study to other work of a similar nature. Lastly,

reflexivity is seen to play a major role in validating one's research findings (Lather, 1991; Riessman, 1993; Strebel, 1993). It has been suggested by Banister et al. (1994, p. 151), that to validate one's research one has to keep a reflexive journal which explores:

Who you are, why you chose the particular topic, procedural notes, how you felt ... in fact anything that you believed affected the research.

The aim of this study is not to uncover universal truths or facts, but personal meanings and what is 'true' and relevant at this stage for each participant. From the details presented in this chapter, I endeavoured to adhere to trustworthiness guidelines by documenting the research process. The findings of the saturated data technique followed, strengthened the integrity of the emerging discourses. Moreover, during the transcription and analysis of the interviews, the consensual validity of the emerging discourses was continually assessed with the co-opted interviewer. Further, the continuous discussions with my colleagues in the field of gender and psychology and dialogue with my supervisors co-facilitated consensus on discourses that emerged. Certain discourses mentioned in the literature have also been confirmed in my research process. Self-reflexivity was thus an important feature of all stages of the research.

5.17 Summary

In this chapter the research methodology that guides this study was outlined. Discourse analysis was posited as the most appropriate framework for achieving the objectives of this study, which is to explore the constructions of masculinity and male sexuality within a military context. Key to exploring these constructions is the meaning of the concept of power, and relations associated with power and its subjectivity. I also discussed ethical considerations as well as my personal interpolation with the project process and analysis. In the next chapter an analysis of my findings will be linked to a review of both national and international literature.

CHAPTER 6: DISCOURSES OF MALE IDENTITY

6.1 Introduction

This thesis is particularly concerned with the multiple ways in which participants construct their masculinity and in Chapter 4 I showed how this intersects with their sexual practices in relation to dominant discourses on gender and sexuality. In this chapter and the two that follow, the way soldiers draw on dominant discourses is examined and contextualised with reference to available literature. These chapters draw from 14 interviews focused on issues of men, masculinities, (hetero)sexuality and risky sexual practices in the military. The content of each chapter is not mutually exclusive as there are overlapping discourses. The narratives presented in these chapters are not only those that emerge as dominant, but also those that reflect more marginal, unusual and alternative discourses.

While the relevance or impact of a particular discourse does not rely on the quantity of the data, I have made some attempt to quantify the data to provide a sense of how dominant or how marginal a discourse is. This enables me to draw connections between participants, their understanding of masculinity, and their risky sexual practices.

As cautioned in the previous chapter, the analysis and interpretation are by no means exhaustive, and therefore the discourses portrayed should not be generalised to all men in the military. What should be noted is that the participants' constructions of sexuality call for investigation as they have concrete implications for the lives of both young women and men in the SANDF and broader society.

This chapter is presented in two parts: The first explores the manner in which participants in this study construct their masculinity and how their identity is linked more broadly to traditional forms of masculinity; the second part explores how participants construct their male identity within the military context.

6.2 Part 1: Becoming and being a man

There are multiple accounts of the processes of becoming a man (Connell, 1995; Morrell, 1998). The processes that participants describe in their development as men reflect a fairly smooth transition towards assuming the characteristics expected of them. In addition, the men's stories reflect how dominant gender positioning is constructed and hegemonic masculinity is achieved.

6.2.1 Traditional notions

Generally, men define their masculinity within cultural and social expectations. In this definition, masculinity is traditionally constructed as being different from and superior to femininity (Swain, 2002; Wetherell, & Edley, 1999). Questioned on what it takes to be a man, participants in this study drew on multiple discourses of socio-economic status, culture, nature and race (Connell, 1995). However, the key element related to the traditional construction of manhood is reflected by economic position²:

Thando (33): Ubudoda abukhulelwa. (you don't grow up and be a man). So they said through your actions you can prove that you are a man. So that's what they (elders) used to emphasise – that you can be 10 years old or 12 years old and be a man and 40 years old and still be a boy. I grew up with my grandmother. I didn't stay with my parents [] when schooling, I just lived on her pensions and then after that I decided to go and look for work or part-time jobs during school holidays. Then she starts saying I can see now you're growing up to be a man.

For this participant, who in the South African context grew up in a poor, peri-urban township, being masculine primarily centres on attaining financial independence and is

² The majority (12) of participants are English second-language speakers but interviews were all conducted in English. This is the reason why some quotes are grammatically incorrect. However, I have made corrections where grammar interfered with the meaning. Transcription conventions include:

[] Data left out or inaudible

... Pause

(text-translation)

[explanatory]

achieved at an early stage through growing up separately from his parents and developing an early desire to earn money from part-time and holiday jobs. For Tshepo, who comes from a similar socio-economic background, earning money underpins masculine status:

Tshepo (29): Where are you working? You see that is the first question to them (women). Where are you working? And after that, aha! Not a man.

Both participants view their independence as emerging from socio-economic factors, clearly supporting the dominant discourse on masculinity regarding being a breadwinner and showing the centrality of financial independence in the construction of masculinity (Barker, 2000; Foreman, 1999; Fuller, 2000).

In the following examples of men's imperative to be responsible, participants further underwrite popular constructions of masculinity whereby men are not only material breadwinners but also protectors at emotional and physical levels (Connell, 1995).

John (26): In the first place if you've got your occupation you'll be able to do whatever is required of you. Be physically well built I would say. Um, in terms of relationships for me to be able to make my girlfriend or my lady quite happy. That's in a relationship there must be protection ... so in the end I must give her everything that she can have. Then I'm feel quite a man in my relationship.

Sam (30): I want to be the father figure in the house. I must be able to give my family anything, everything they want.

Providing for one's family has long been understood as a key characteristic in the construction of masculine identity (Collison & Hearn, 1994; Connell, 1994; Sasson-Levy, 2003).

6.2.2 Notions of emotional/psychological control

Universal constructions of successful masculinity are defined by discourses that construct masculinity within a set of social practices that reject behaviours perceived as feminine, such as nurturance, sensitivity or the inability to control emotion (Connell, 2001; Edley & Wetherell, 1997; Martino, 1999; Phoenix et al., 2003). Fairly consistent global constructions of masculinity include an emphasis on reasoning and psychological stability as proven by emotional inarticulation (Connell, 2001; Morell, 1998; Swain, 2002). Participants in this study pivoted masculinity discourses around notions of rationality, emotional control and standing for self and what you believe in.

Simon (31): As a man you must have principles, strong ones. You have to stick to your beliefs. You must not ... a man must have a personality that everybody looks at you and say ja. Luckily [], I am what I am. Today, I'm me, tomorrow, I'm me the day after that I'll still be me.

Mtobeli (26): For me ... to be a man enough, you must be able to be a responsible person. That is the first thing you must be responsible. And you must be able to stand up for what you believe on, stand up for it. Because sometimes you find out if you are a guy what you believe on most of the people they don't like it. And you have to stand up for what you believe on.

A different view is provided by Jeff (30), who argues that moving from boyhood to manhood requires a lengthy maturing process.

Because moving from a boy to a man is an emotional trip. A mentally emotional trip. Because how many times haven't you read that a 55-year-old does not have the mental capacity, only has the mental capacity of a 15-year-old. It's not because he's retarded, or physically incapable, it's just that he's not developed over that, over that timespan.

Jeff, a coloured participant from a slightly better economic position and an urban context, tends towards a more psychologised discourse which subscribes to the notion of masculinity as an achieved identity as a result of emotional maturity. While the participants quoted above highlight different concerns, they all appear to construct masculinity around responsibility and life experience, in many ways reflecting traditional notions of successful men as mature, rational and both emotionally and financially independent (Nagel, 1998).

Jeff used an example of an experience that 'turned him' into a man a few years before he even joined the military which further highlights the significance of maturity and being in control (in this case in a position of leadership). This was not linked to chronological age but rather signified an emotional/cognitive age:

I already worked in the private sector for about four years, five years. I was at university for two, I worked for a company with a good proven track record myself, and I've proved myself at that company and I decided then thereafter to go to the military. And I felt that I had, I wouldn't say that I, but I would have had the capability to make some, some statements or some judgments as such. I mean, I've been outside why, why can I not. I've worked with many people, people that could have been my parents, I was manager of.

This excerpt shows how leadership as a form of exerting power and control over other people is crucial in maintaining hegemonic masculinity (Du Pisani, 2001). Leadership is crucial in the military as the military system uses rank hierarchy which clearly draws boundaries between seniors and subordinates. This rank hierarchy is visible to everybody. The quotes above underline that the construction of manhood (masculinity) hinges around responsibility, control and, ultimately, power (Connell, 1995). Further, by linking leadership and emotional stability, participants support the notion that one cannot be a leader without being assertive, rational and in control emotionally.

6.2.3 The body

The centrality of the body to masculinity also emerged during the interviews (Connell, 2000). As Connell argues, institutions and discourses have attached social meanings to bodies. In the military particular emphasis is placed on physical fitness in achieving masculinity (Klein, 1999). Notions of the strong body, particularly in the military context which values toughness, are taken further in the second section of this chapter. An excerpt from John underlines the centrality of the physical in constructions of masculinity, as despite the fact he 'looks like a teddy bear', joining the military proves he is a man:

John: If you've got your own occupation you'll be able to do whatever is required of you.[] I don't really, personally, again, I don't really care about what people think about me. My soft voice or physique about my stomach and my backside, but ja, I don't really care about what people think about me. You know because I've been characterised as a ... they used to call me a teddy bear that was when there was nothing (pointing to the beard) at that stage, that was when I joined the army. And I never felt like threatened.

The foregoing excerpt demonstrates that bodies have become hyper-biologised, in the sense that social acts are brought under the realm of the biologist. This results in the body becoming the point of transfer of power. Broadly, the terms of masculinity require men to have a high level of muscular strength. This suggests that men should be physically fit and well built (GETNET, 2001; Klein, 1999). Therefore, the body is key in the construction of successful masculinity (Connell, 1993, 2000; Dowsett, 2003; Lindegger & Maxwell, 2005). Bodies in this view have moved beyond biology, and play a crucial role in how people construct their masculinity and how they behave/act in their social surroundings. Rubin (1993) suggests that the biological body should be acknowledged as experienced through cultural meaning. Similarly, participants in this study raise the significance of the adornment of the body, with emphasis on dressing and the role of the media in reinforcing bodily concerns for men:

Simon: You don't read Cosmo [*Cosmopolitan*] (laughing). I enjoy, I shave, put moisturiser on, I look after my body, ok. I put some weight down, I enjoy ... I don't want to be this, you know you get a guy who thinks he is a man because he's got a lot of chesty hair, he has a moustache, he is healthy. I want to look good. I want to be a man but I want to dress well. I wanna look good. I want to make an impression, so I want to cut my nails, I want to clean my nails ...

Gerhard (23): If you really are a true man, then every true man has got blood in him and that blood is causing him to look at the other, the other gender also so obviously you want to sometimes impress some of the ladies, and um you won't do that by dressing like a clown or a idiot or whatever. [] I think um just to dress neatly, clean, try and read *Men's Health* more often and see what the the dressing tips, how to make a tie, how to wear which shoes with which clothes and or which pants and belt and all that type of things. Putting a bit of aftershave on maybe now and then when you go out, and put your your Axe or your Ego [deodorant] I think that, that is dressing, dressing from a man's point of view.

Interestingly, the excerpt from Simon speaks of men's bodily concerns shifting towards those traditionally constructed as more feminine – that of wearing nice clothes and using moisturisers, etc. This points not only to increased advertising of such products for men, but also to the way male discourses are changing under consumer pressure. It throws up concerns about appropriately 'doing' masculinity. The excerpt from Gerhard on the other hand emphasises cleanliness and 'looking after himself' primarily in relation to attracting women. Here masculinity and the centrality of the body as representative of successful masculinity are constructed in relation to women's sexuality and their responses to men. This ties in with McFadden's (1992) argument that in all societies and cultures, dressing and physical appearance are key to the constructions of sexuality. In this view physical appearance is culturally constructed; and being sexual is related to the clothes that individuals wear and how s/he appears to the other.

The same participant (Simon) who perceives cleanliness as a symbol of manliness also expressed the counter view that if a man performs a military activity in a military environment, he has to be dirty. Therefore dirtiness in a different context can also signify manhood:

It depends [on] a situation. Once we go to Lehotla (South African Army Combat Training Unit), I don't want to be clean. I will be dirty because we are at Lehotla.

Dirtiness is said to be one of the key principles of military training, demonstrating the hard work that is expected from 'real men' (Service Sound and Vision Corporation, 1995, cited in Woodward, 2000).

6.2.4 Intersection with ethnic rites of passage

Factors relevant to constructions of ethnicity can play a significant role in the interpretation of masculinity. In her study of the construction of masculinity among Xhosa-speaking men, Gqola (2005) notes how the initiation ritual underpins hegemonic masculinity for initiates. Goniwe agrees with Gqola in his interview with her (Gqola & Goniwe, 2005), and both concur that the ritual serves to construct a self-conscious masculinity which gives circumcised men a voice of authority and decision-making rights. Coloured participant Jeff was wary of the implication that circumcision conferred manhood, while not being circumcised held men in perpetual limbo. For him, men who are circumcised create animosity in the military as they undermine the rank structure. He argues that in most cases boys go for circumcision before they are emotionally and mentally developed enough to be called men:

Somebody does not automatically become a man just because he spent three or four months in the bush in a little camp.

Jeff further argues that circumcising immature boys puts a lot of pressure on them to prove their masculinity. This becomes problematic for them, for other ethnic groups, and

for military culture. He quoted the example that, if a group from a certain department is given a task which requires one person to lead the group, a person who is circumcised would be selected, or there might be conflict:

Jeff: [A circumcised man] would try to force, even though he wasn't appointed by a senior official as being the leader. He wanted to enforce his authority because he was, he was a man. And there was many times that I've heard where a black guy would tell a white guy and a coloured guy, 'I'm a man, you're still a boy. You haven't proven yourself yet'. And then the question is 'How can you say that?' And then he would say: 'I've been to initiation, what have you been?'

A hierarchy of masculinity conferred by bloodline within a particular ethnic group can also have broader implications for the assertion of authority. Jeff elaborated:

With the, with the black, irrespective of tribe that they came from, [] how can I say, within my my intake there was, ja, there was one, two guys that were sons of a, what do they call it, the headman of the, of the particular tribe. [] Like the guy that came from PE. He wasn't the son of the headman, but he was the son of somebody, somebody else that was the headman. He had the royal bloodline as such. He had the authority line as such.

Mtobeli, who is circumcised, confirms that the initiation ritual symbolises manhood/masculinity. However, he denies that he demands recognition of his masculinity from other people who do not belong to his ethnic group.

Because I'm in the military I will compromise. It's like now here we have boys who call us by name and you don't ... you don't have a choice because at home the boys ... boys don't call me by name [] but in the military they call you by name. Then I will accept it because I'm in the military.

Clearly the notion of subordination is as important to masculinity as the notion of hegemony. Statements by these participants show a complex understanding of masculinity should take account of systems of race, ethnicity and class. As other theorists have noted, cultural processes, political needs and consolidation of power (both in the military culture and other cultures) enable, deny, impose and constrain expressions of masculinity and create power imbalances that necessitate dichotomies of who is good or bad, weak or violent (Connell, 1995; Dowsett, 2003; Morrell, 1998). To add complexity, it is possible there is a clash between military discourse and the discourse of circumcision, as both discourses compete in defining hegemonic masculinity.

6.2.5 Men prove themselves to other men

In contemporary discussions about masculinity, it is argued that some forms of masculinity are more powerful than others (Connell 2000), and various studies concur that some forms of masculinity are more desirable than others (Cheng, 1999; Connell, 2002; Donaldson, 1993; Luyt & Foster, 2001; Wetherell & Edley, 1999). This results in men striving to achieve the culturally idealised form of masculine character. This study also shows there appears to be a “culture of deception” around masculinity (Lindegger & Maxwell, 2005, p. 9) meaning there is a need to be seen as conforming to hegemonic standards. Men reinforce masculine styles of behaviour that conform. As Mtobeli mentioned, sometimes men lie about their principles so as to maintain hegemonic practices. A striking example is the relation of masculinity to alcohol consumption. One is not man enough if he is not drinking alcohol (Connell, 2000).

Mtobeli: Some people they ask ‘what is wrong’, and I would say ‘nothing, I don’t feel like drinking, I was drinking yesterday’. Bakubiza ngomzalwane (They call you a born-again Christian).

This excerpt highlights the importance of men proving themselves to other men (Buchbinder, 1994; Lindegger & Maxwell, 2005) even if this is premised on deceit. Some participants deal with such pressures by drawing on religious injunctions, whereby

abstaining from alcohol and avoiding sex until marriage are viewed as signs of masculinity. Men in this discourse prove their masculinity by sticking to these principles:

Johan (28): I define manliness more in terms of how you ... it's very religious, but how you submit your life to God's principles because being a man is more being disciplined and sacrificing than doing what you want to do. [] I think few men are willing to sacrifice when they are young to say I won't drink or I won't sleep around, I won't abuse women, I won't go into relationships where I know a lady will get hurt but I have no intention of marrying her.

Gerhard: There, there's a lot of guys that think that being a man [] means that you must impress the ladies, the whole time and and that you must be at heart of every party and you must be able to drink [] For me being a man is just doing, doing the right thing ... I don't see why you have to go out and try to be man and get so drunk.

These participants draw their constructions of masculinity from the marginalised discourses, just as the literature shows that 'housebound' men signify a subordinate masculinity in modern cultures (Murnen et al., 2002). The marginalised view of not seeking many partners acknowledges the multiplicity of masculinities, in this instance facilitated by a local religious context (Cheng, 1999; Connell, 2002; Hearn, 1996; Morrell, 1998; Wetherell & Edley, 1999).

6.2.6 Masculinity and heterosexuality

Some of the links between masculinity and sexuality are demonstrated in the excerpts above, though clear elements of a 'deceptive' masculinity are expressed. The desire 'to be seen' in its various forms is emphasised and needs to be unpacked. This discourse alludes to another vital building block at the heart of successful heterosexual masculinity: that of men using the voice of hegemonic masculinity primarily for the sake of other men, and only secondarily to elevate their status for women. According to one participant:

Thando: There is always this behaviour that you always must maintain as a man. So that you don't feel like letting other guys down or something but, ja because mostly as guys you'll talk about maybe sometimes how to treat girls, there is a certain language ... don't let your girlfriend do this to you, don't let your girlfriend do this even if you might be ... so in most instances I found that I might be lying with the guys about what I talk about ... only to find that in my relationship I do something totally different.

What is significant about Thando's statement is that men will support de facto notions of love and intimacy with women, but would generally not express such sentiments overtly because they want to maintain hegemonically masculine culture (Agostino, 1997). Male sexuality is discussed further in the following chapter.

Concomitant to the imperative to be heterosexual, and for men to prove their sexuality through multiple heterosexual practice, is a powerful rejection of alternative sexualities. In Agostino's (2003) work with the Australian Defence Force, participants expressed discomfort with homosexual soldiers as their presence appears to question the very foundation of military identity which is based on traditional constructions of masculinity and the achievement of a successful (hetero)sexual identity. This tension is underscored in the following explanation by the participants of this study:

Sam: In the army, you are part of, the fighting part, fighting corps, soldiers. You can't be a soldier if you are a homosexual.

Int: Okay. You mean you can't fight if you love another man?

Sam: Yes. When you go to the field, you work in teams, men, men, mostly men. Say for instance you are a team of six, you sleep in one tent, you drive in one vehicle, everything you do you do in your teams. And if there's one guy who's a homosexual, what do you think would be the consequences of the team? You

understand? They won't be that productive as a team as straight men ... It's just logic. There's also our, our buildings at the [naming the unit], even here, two men sharing a shower, in the other places there's a communal shower so, thirty men sharing a shower, now with one guy there being a homosexual in that place. It's chaos. They will, they will, I'm telling you they will chase that guy out or they will hit him.

Lesbianism is rarely openly acknowledged but is certainly viewed with far more acceptance, highlighting the threat of male homosexuality to male soldiers:

Sam: Okay, they won't cuddle in front of us, but you can see, these two, there's something going on.

Similarly, Gerhard stated that it is not a common practice, "it's only rumours":

I think there are not many cases and um I've come, come across some, not many, but I've come across some of them, some of the girls, here [] tended to to more go more to the to the lesbian side. Maybe not hard core or full lesbians, but maybe just experimenting.

According to John, a woman may be in a (hetero)sexual relationship when she joins the military but may become a lesbian while in the military. Same-sex partners are viewed as being chosen for the same reasons as that of choosing opposite sex partners – that is coping with frustration and loneliness:

You choose that person that you can associate with more, I mean, there's many people but there's only that certain person you can associate with.

While lesbianism appears to be tolerated, (hetero)sexuality is set up as the normative best practice and homosexuality is viewed as problematic, pathological and morally reprehensible. Sam shared a story of a woman who was involved in (hetero)sexual

relationships before joining the military. She is currently in a relationship with another woman who has never experienced a (hetero)sexual relationship:

She still must explore the life, she hooked her up. Now she's the guy in this relationship, and the other poor woman who never was involved with a man, is the woman in this relationship, so I think she's withholding this poor lady from life.

The relationship is discredited through objectifying and pathologising homosexuality and viewing same-sex relationships as involving coercive practices and unsatisfactory outcomes (DSM III, 1987).

Gerhard: It's difficult to talk about that [homosexuality] without being controversial but there's a, ja, there's a, there are a couple of girls and maybe one has one has to go and look, look past the fact that they are lesbians, look why []. Or in the cases of men. You have to go and look why, and then maybe it's not only, it's not maybe because they are in the Defence Force. It's because, once again, the way they have been brought up or something that happened with them sometime in their lives that made a lasting scar and then it took them maybe a bit, I won't say off track, but to let them decide, listen, men is not for me, or women is not for me, I'm going the other direction ... So I think, I think that is, you have to look past the the fact that it's the military that made them that way, you have to look, maybe something happened to them ... somewhere, it's a psychological thing.

It is quite clear participants question the normality of homosexual practices. On the other hand, an awareness of human rights and constitutional rights around sexual orientation is evident alongside the moral panic which emerges in homophobia:

Gerhard: Maybe they've got a valid reason that they became, why they became homosexual, maybe they've had a very sad past, that that won't make them

different in my eyes. If he, he must just not, he mustn't force himself onto me, like come with his, oh hello and that type of things, then he will make me uncomfortable. But as long as he's happy and he's he's he's um he's professional in his way in which he deals with other people, then I've got no, no problem with that.

Even while protecting the rights of homosexual sexuality, participants use objectifying, pathologising and moralistic discourses to explain and reject this sexuality. The marginalisation and silencing of those practicing same-sex relationships in the South African military is more than evident from such discourses. The ability to support and provide services for such men or women in the light of prevention or care related to HIV status is therefore clearly inhibited in this context.

6.3 Part 2: Being a man in the military

This section of the chapter explores how participants construct their masculinity within the military environment. Men's perceptions of women's role in the military and how this role intersects with masculine constructions are also highlighted.

6.3.1 Racialisation of masculinities in the military

Historically, soldiering in South Africa has been divided along racial lines. Young white males were conscripted to military service while young black males were mainly used in non-statutory forces (Enloe, 1975; Frankel, 2000). From 1994 both black and white forces were integrated. Despite this integration, the historical stigma attached to being a soldier has had an impact. The associations of soldiering with apartheid are still evident in the participants' stories. A study of masculine constructions among soldiers in South Africa therefore cannot proceed without taking social background into account, and, as Dowsett (2003) asserts, to understand masculinity, historical factors need to be investigated.

All the white participants in this study expressed the belief that soldiering is a 'calling' and not just work. This reference to the 'calling' of soldiers is often central in the stories about how they came to their current occupations. This is shown in the following excerpts from middle-class participants, some of whose fathers were soldiers:

Simon: I always believe that soldiers ... soldiering is not a job it's a calling. You don't just come here because you don't get work from the outside. People like that irritate me. You don't just come here for a cheque, you come here because that is what you want to do. Unfortunately you don't get too many people like that ... And I believe that one must do the best job that he can.

Gerhard: Soldiering is not really a job, it's a way of living. You either, you are either um meant to be a soldier, or you are wasting your own time and the state's time and money.

Johan: It's a calling. It's not working in a job, it's doing something to make a difference um not only to the military, but to the country. [] I enjoy it (military). I enjoy it very much. A lot of people don't understand that people can still be in the military and be passionate about it, especially if you're a white guy these days.

The historical context of race and its relationship to the SADF is implicated even though there is transition in the SANDF. In contrast to the white participants, all the African participants joined the military for socio-economic reasons. Some were even scared to wear the uniform when coming off-duty:

Tulani (32): When I joined SADF it was torture, especially in Soweto. It was not easy for a person to join SADF until 1996. In '96 because now forces integrated to make people tend to understand that soldiers from outside integrated and now it was a new force, the SANDF. I started for the first time in 1999 to go home in uniform. I went once at night.

Similarly, Thando (33) was never interested in the military but due to his socio-economic circumstances he could not afford to enrol at a tertiary institution:

I tried to go to varsity, I was accepted in 2 institutions ... but I had no money to study, [] I decided to go to this security company, and then the Defence Force.

Similarly, when he joined he was scared of wearing his uniform because of the racial stigma attached to it:

Ja, it was quite scary because I remember there was a time where you could not go on buses and trains to your house in uniform. Now it is exciting.

The above highlights the racial and political tensions that existed during the apartheid era and a few years after. Issues of incomplete transition from SADF to SANDF implicate race and identity. This explains why African participants in this study joined the military for socio-economic reasons as opposed to 'a calling'. Other studies have found that many people join the military for job security, career and financial prospects (Caforio & Nuciari, 1994; Heinecken, 1994; Heinecken & Khanyile, 1996).

Interestingly, for Sam (30), joining the military was about the masculine imperative of needing to be responsible and to provide for the family. He expressed powerful emotions about how men neglect this responsibility. This is an important discourse around responsibility and frustration at how men neglect this.

It breaks my heart to see how some families suffer because the man is irresponsible []. I can't stand it. That's why I come here I, I just want to carry on, I just walk away, because I can't, I can't stand it, I can't handle it.

Joining the military for this participant is a paradox. On the one hand he is running away from problems (running away does not symbolise masculinity), on the other hand joining

the military helps attain power which will demonstrate responsibility (exhibiting masculinity).

Most participants associate soldiering with acquiring toughness, discipline, leadership and responsibility. These are the characteristics of hegemonic masculinity that are embraced in the military (Barrett, 1996; Cheng, 1999; Martino, 1999). To quote two participants:

Mtobeli: The military will teach you ... will tell you to be a responsible person because everything you do in the military, you are accountable.

Simon: I personally think once you get to the army, you become completely different. I definitely became matured in the Defence Force from day one. [] At school, I was shit, shit really. But in the army it is different. Well you can have problem with authority and it doesn't mean they will take your shit. Do you understand?

These excerpts again demonstrate the successful use of hierarchy in the military to reproduce subordinate and dominant masculinities. It is worth pointing out that most of the black participants have settled in the military and appreciate it for the same reasons (representing the country, positive male identity) as their white colleagues. This points to the argument that the processes of racialisation and its intersection with masculine identity is fluid, and variations reflect changes in politics.

The complete commitment and loyalty expressed by the participants in this study supports Woodward's (2000) findings that the recruitment literature, which was directed at whites, sought commitment and determination from recruits. This was an expression of the racial discourse in this study.

Johan suggests that there are whites who no longer feel a sense of belonging in the military. On the other hand, Simon also mentioned that some white soldiers from the

SADF resisted change and left the new SANDF system as they could not tolerate having African colleagues. This suggests that some whites are still stuck in the old apartheid paradigm and consequently view themselves in terms of a historical context. This also mirrors reports which state that integration of the SADF and SANDF was marred by tension and dissatisfaction (Le Roux, 2003; Ngculu, 2003; Stott, 2002). An example given was of SADF soldiers who struggled with accepting the uMkhonto weSizwe soldiers as equals (Ngculu, 2003).

According to Jeff:

Whites think they are the most cleverest people that God has given South Africa ever before. That only they can make the right decisions, and this goes more to the Afrikaner. Within the white community there's still splits. If you Afrikaner, you English, you Czech, you true Dutch, as you know. But they personally, especially the Afrikaner, because the military and especially the army's dominated by the Afrikaner as such and they, as from what I've picked up, personally feels that they are a gift to the country, and whatever they say is and can only be the right thing. The coloured people has always been in the middle, they accept it because they have to, that is how they feel, and I would refer to them as they because I personally see people as individuals, I don't ... I been classified due to a corrupt system, although it cannot be proven, but it's a system that's placed that classification, like black, African, coloured, Indian on an individual.

These excerpts illustrate the argument that geographical borders, race, ethnicity, culture and class play a crucial role in the construction of identities (Caplan, 1987; Lees, 1986; Shefer, 1999). The excerpts further illustrate that masculinities are actively produced and masculinities are created in specific historical circumstances (Connell, 1995, 2000). In South Africa, race played a major role in how men constructed their masculinities. The excerpts above about reasons for joining the military and the socio economic pressure experienced by certain racial groups testify to this. Examining Simon's excerpt below, it

appears that transformation might have brought challenges to some men from different racial groups on how they construct their masculinity in the new dispensation. Furthermore, the excerpts show that even though there is no longer conscription in South Africa, some white males still join the military for reasons of sentiment and the status afforded the soldier. For instance:

Johan: I like the uniform, I just, I just, I like the image of being a soldier.

Gerhard: If I'm at Stellenbosch and I'm in uniform and I walk in there between the girls, then I'm feeling two feet taller. Really, I think it's the, it's the feeling of pride. [] It's a nice feeling to be in uniform, I think even nicer if you're walking between civilians on the street and people are looking at you.

The uniform confers a sense of masculinity, and even makes these soldiers feel much more masculine than civilian men. Gerhard further mentioned that his friend also feels like showing off when he is in Stellenbosch:

He would walk up straight like this (demonstrating with shoulders up).

The social structure of the military creates gender patterns which not only give male soldiers a sense of masculinity through the danger implied in their profession, but also a sense of strength through observable symbols, primarily that of the uniform. As Connell (2000) puts it, bodily practices from the society ranging across dress, sport and sexuality modify bodies. Therefore, the desired strong physique and the symbolic implications of the uniform bring to focus the centrality of bodies in the military.

As highlighted, some of the white participants still derive pride from being in the military, but this is not true for all participants.

Simon: Times have changed; the days where you'll go to town and be proud of being in uniform, in the cities have changed, you can't do it anymore. You actually go to your room, put on civilian clothes and then go to town.

The reason given for this discomfort is the lack of discipline that exists in the SANDF as compared to the SADF. For some, the integration of military forces took away the strict training measures that the SADF enforced. This shows the challenges experienced by some participants in the construction of their male identity in the new dispensation.

6.3.2 Definitions of masculinity within military activities

The weapons used in the military for some participants represent both a real and symbolic idolisation of aggression. Military weapons and their implicit threat of aggression constitute the ideals of hegemonic masculinity (Cock, 2001). In a study conducted by Heineken and Khanyile (1996) it was found that weaponry indeed was a motivating factor for joining the military. Similarly, most participants expressed satisfaction with carrying a rifle, concurring that it provides the sense of manhood. A few excerpts demonstrate this:

John (26): At first, when we started with our training, it felt good, okay. Yoh! I used to go home after my first weapons training and so, and I used to brag with this weapon, so yes, to a certain degree it make you feel better or special then you see [] It definitely give a boost to manhood.

Military training in the sense of reinforcing masculinity has worked for this participant. This is the participant who was teased by his peers for his physical appearance and was even called a "teddy bear". Similarly, carrying a rifle brings a sense of masculine achievement for most participants:

Tshepo: You just want to drill, drill, you feel like ja (yes) ja (yes) I am in the army. [] You think that this thing is gonna explode [] On the other hand there is that excitement.

Gerhard: The first time you do it, you feel like yoh! This is the big world. Once again every now and then when you handle a weapon again after a long time, once again you get that shaky feeling. You get that adrenalin rush.

Gerhard elaborates:

It's just like in a relationship also, at first, everything is new to you, you can't wait just to hold the girl's hand and to kiss her at night and whatever, but then after a while you get use to it and then it's not funny anymore, and ag wat. It's just another thing, there's nothing special.

Interestingly, Gerhard likens the experience of carrying a rifle with intimate relationships. In a quintessentially patriarchal metaphor, women are conflated with military weapons, both bringing a similar fission of excitement and 'otherness' (especially when the relationship with weapon/woman is new). It should be noted that Gerhard is the participant who is not sexually active because of his religious beliefs. Carrying a rifle and sexual intimacy are for him clearly related and are associated with pleasure and power. This points to the intersection between masculinity, sexuality and sexual practices, and highlights the insidious way in which the military is sexualised (and imbued with the same forms of gender power relation) as well as sexuality militarised (with woman constructed as objects, like a rifle, to be owned with pride, and which also bring a sense of power).

Tulani sees the issue of weapons as very much part of his authority status, although he intimates that carrying a rifle has never been an issue for him:

Tulani: I had my own rifle but now when I'm in the car, then I will put it there, and the troops will see (as if he wanted to cough). When we are patrolling then I will have my weapon but most of the time my weapon slings, I like to sling it, then I'll supervise them whether they have their weapon properly because I will be talking to people that we are arrest or people that we think they break the law.

Tulani joined the military before integration for socio-economic reasons. Being in the military for him during apartheid was a torture and was never associated with masculinity. Currently, he is an officer with leadership skills, and sees himself as a man. These excerpts highlight the different constructions of masculinity in different historical contexts. Researchers have argued that masculinities are not static, they are changing (Connell, 1995, 2000, 2001; Morrell, 1998, 2000).

Similar to Barrett's (1996) study in the navy, participants in this study benchmarked their masculinity against risk. The more risky or challenging the job, the more masculine they felt. Markers ranged from physical fitness to the number of deployments a soldier has undertaken. All these are regarded as factors that symbolise hegemonic masculinity (Cheng, 1999; Edley & Wetherell, 1997; Martino, 1999).

Those from intelligence corps³ believe that their corps has higher status than the rest because it is more challenging. Tshepo stated that if you work in intelligence you must know how to present orders to the management and the risks involved.

Tshepo: You have to convince, the commander ...

Thando and Gerhard who are in the same corps also believe that intelligence is the biggest challenge:

Thando: You are playing with your life everyday.

³ A corps is a body of troops or a body of persons engaged in the same activity.

Morgan (1994, p. 166) argues that in the military gender plays a crucial part in determining “who does what” and “who is what”. This is borne out by the way many of the participants referred to the opportunities granted to women to join the military. Asked how they feel about women joining the military, participants expressed a mixture of approval and discomfort around women’s vulnerability. This is illustrated in the following extracts:

Mtobeli: I think ja, because there’s ... there’s a lot of things in the military, ja, there are some things, which we see that women is gonna fit.

Thando: Its nice for ... the fact that they are soldiers and the fact that opportunities are also given for them. But in my own own view I wouldn't appreciate it like I wouldn't eh advise maybe someone to join. I wouldn't want to see her get involved in military deployment maybe its my (stereotype), but I would prefer to see her working in the (unit). To be more diplomatic and I don't like the fact that, the environment we turn to deploy to ... sometimes it turns to be risky especially accommodation. Ja, I think I'm more protective.

Similarly, Simon demonstrated the scenario in a risky environment:

[If] she has to be a platoon commander, where she has to be take people to war and command them in battle, where she has to be the only lady among 35 people at the DRC, where there is no food, no toilet, no shower. And there you are lady, take control of this group. What is she going to do? Black men are more sexist than white men are. Black men don't want ladies bossing them around. Especially in the lower ranks, troops don't want ladies bossing them around. And what this lady is gonna do in the middle of the jungle with 37 men. Is she going to stand up and say Hey! you do what I'm going to tell you to do or else ... or else what? Do you understand?

The excerpts from both Thando and Simon demonstrate the binary gender logic of male/female and protector/protected. They feel it is their responsibility to protect women; moreover, masculinity is supposedly overly concerned with the protection of women during warfare (Agostino, 2003; Connell, 1995; Foreman, 1999). Otherwise, if women join the military they are expected to prove that they have capabilities and strength to cope with the military environment which is constructed as a male domain, therefore inherently not for women. A further racialised discourse is used to highlight uncertainty about having women in the military, as seen in Simon's excerpt. Some participants are concerned about women leaving their traditional roles. Sam, for example, contrasts women soldiers with the feminine ideal:

Sam: That womanly thing er walking like women, sitting like a woman, bend like. You can see, this is a soldier, this is a woman. So I think the military generally takes away some of the woman's, some of the woman's um, how can I put it ...

Sam's position is that women are not organic soldiers therefore military women's femininity is questioned, with women viewed as behaving like men. He sees women's presence in the military as a challenge to their femininity, which even interferes with standard norms of masculinities. This argument is supported by Gerhard who stated that he would love to see more women being feminine and not doing physical work which is part of soldiering and therefore not suitable for women. However, he acknowledged that the physical training gives women "nice bodies". This ambivalence is widespread:

Johan: Well, I think women in general in organisations have a lot to offer because they bring a very good balance to organisations. But I think the utilisation of women in the military should be managed very well. Er, and I think that they tend to push women into functions that are supportive instead of trying to do it scientifically. 'Cause in my career I've seen few women who are good fighters. I've seen few of them 'cause one was on my crew, a very good soldiering officer and I mean she will go far in her career. But, I agree with opinion that

operationally and in training women in general are not conducive for healthy military um effectivity and for keeping a good discipline among the troops.

Johan further states:

Ja, what I'm, what I think is that when you have women in the military in command positions ... um ... I think when they are in administrative support roles you won't have that much of a risk. But if you have women in command, you must choose them very well. Because if, because women are such an issue in the military ... um ... you can't just choose any woman to take command, because you are looking at a tradition and men don't easily submit to any woman. So they have to deal with that, they have to deal with the fact that they are physically not as strong, that they don't have as strong a voice. That they have, that they are more emotional. So women have a lot against them um compared to men in taking command. And I just think that in the military we need to make life easier for those women. And we need to look at the impact that their command will have on the troops involved. So all I'm saying is we must make decisions about where we put women based on science and use psychologists to put, to make the placings of women in important command positions more sound. Um. Because the impact it has on men and the effectiveness of units on performance under training is huge. That's, that's something we should take responsibility for.

This participant draws from cultural discourses which view male bodies as compatible for war (Agostino, 2003). He further sees the women's participation in command or combat roles as having dire consequences in terms of corrupting or weakening military deployment. To put it simply, the suggestion is to maintain effective military culture, women should be excluded because of the disturbance this brings to male-female power relations. Another expressed discomfort about women in the military is drawn from a discourse of women's liberation which seems to be not good for military effectiveness.

Simon: I have my reservation about that, not because of women but because how women are treated. Women are being given qualifications when they don't complete the same course that everybody else completes. [] You get female pilots that are damn good pilots. But there are a lot of females that are getting qualifications that they don't deserve. The last soldier magazine was earmarked for women. [] There's ... there's an Indian girl on the cover, she is a pilot. She got her wings ... there was a b-ig write up, she is so fantastic. She got her wings and that was a year ago. A month after that article was written, she flip herself on the runway. She put a plane on its back on a runway. She got grounded. She is not allowed to fly anymore. Because, she is one of those where it was said we need an Indian girl pilot. She doesn't pass all the test, she doesn't do all the evaluations like everybody else. She just got there as a political token.

This excerpt demonstrates the superiority of race and that of maleness. The implication is that there is inherently something wrong with representation across race and gender. The unspoken assumption from Simon's excerpt is the general incompetence of women. Simon elaborates on this women's liberation discourse that is enforced irrespective of women's perceived lesser capabilities in certain areas:

Simon: Guys carry their rifle sacks, guys carry their kits, guys carry their things, guys cook their food. [] We don't have females in our regiment because they don't make our selection process. But now the Col. who was there before, said there would be female parachutists by the end of the year. He put two females on a course. They didn't make it on the course but they carried on, now that brings immediate resentment in us, because that you have to shit physically and mentally to be able to do that course whilst the girls just walks in "I'm a lady". Both those ladies refused to carry. Because one was scared of heights and the other just could not carry on. Thus, the course commander was sent away from course because they said he is a sexist but the two girls wanted to come. Do you understand?

Int: Would you have said that is a minority?

Simon: It depends, if you take cores like Intelligence, there you need ladies, you need ladies in personnel. But the infantry you can't. For example in 2001 there was a platoon of ladies. OK but now the platoon of ladies they slept in separates sleepy, separate shower separate messes because they are ladies. They don't do duties because they're ladies and that is too difficulty, and they're ladies (Sounded annoyed). Do you understand? If they want to be infantry soldiers, then they must be infantry soldiers now the ladies have different PT test than men.

Simon's notion of differences in expectations, duties and concessions is based on gender. The discourse here is that women's inclusion in the military compromises standards of quality, masculinity and soldierhood. Similarly, Sam is of the opinion that women are given positions that they don't deserve and then men left in junior positions do the entire job for them. A consequence is that men are then paid less:

Sam: And the men, my 2 IC must do her job. His name's not on the payroll to receive the same salary as that woman. He's not getting the salary for that.

6.3.4 Male soldiers and civilian male relationships

The military has institutionalised power, it makes soldiers feel physically strong and some feel even more intelligent than civilian men. There is a strong perception from some participants that civilian men are ignorant and somehow less knowledgeable about what is happening around the world. The soldiers' direct involvement with security issues makes them feel as if they have access to direct modes of male power and privilege that limit civilian men's ability to prove their masculinity, for instance by going to war. The implication is that civilian men lack these essential masculine traits. A number of reasons for the poor relationship between soldiers and civilians is evident in the following excerpts:

Tulani: There are lot of differences for example ... a soldier is actually trained not to fear, I'm ... I may say now some of the soldiers they fear nothing ... It is actually their motto that ... they are actually different than civilians.

John: I've got this one friend now that is in the police force so he's actually become competition (laughs).

Int: What is the competition all about?

John: He must just know that I'm his boss, stronger than him. [] Currently he actually is in a more, in a more challenging environment than me because he's working with criminals he must go out to, so he's actually doing more challenging work.

The discourse of competition between civilian men and soldiers is articulated as a major facet of the construction of masculinity among soldiers. Soldiers' working conditions are risky (Heinecken, 2000). As soldiers are risk-takers by profession, they see themselves as more masculine. This results in soldiers undermining civilians to a point that mixing with them is viewed as not serious and therefore physically and emotionally relaxing:

Simon: When I'm out there, I'm a soldier but I talk civilian shit. [] You know we did a lot of things in the early 1990s that we were just not supposed to talk about. What you saw, you don't talk about it because its not ... (couldn't finish) []. You literally became a zombie to see so many dead bodies, so much blood. Once I got to civics I don't I don't want to talk Army. [] I want to escape Army for a while. I just want to talk about rugby, and ... and chase the ladies, get away from that.
Recharge.

Participants dwell on the notion that being a man is tough and taxing, and being in the military is quite demanding for men. On the other hand civilians' lack of insight is annoying to soldiers as their knowledge, skills and capabilities are not recognised by

civilians. It should be noted that in the literature this lack of knowledge is associated with femininity (Potts, 2001). In this case these feminine traits also apply to civilian men:

Tulani: Civilian guys are actually ... are ignorant about the social behaviours of the soldiers. They tend to generalise the behaviours of the soldiers. Some of them don't understand that there are rank structures and how those structures work. If they see a troop doing something wrong, they say soldiers, they don't know that soldiers are not the same.

Simon: These days unfortunately the army has a stigma that, if you're in the army it means you're too shitty to get a job from outside.

Tshepo (31): Especially when you have a firearm, they just take you like... Hayi, hayi [no., no], this guy can shoot you, which is not the case.

The lack of recognition from civilians results in soldiers experiencing a paradoxical sort of powerlessness, a demasculisation. To deal with this frustration they cut themselves off from civilians. Thando, for example, acknowledged that non-commissioned officers are not that important. For Johan and Gerhard the reasons for not having civilian friends are based on the fact that they spend most of their time at work with their colleagues.

Interestingly most participants reported having good relationships with civilian women. Does that mean women are more knowledgeable? It appears that women seem to assist soldiers in proving their masculinity through their sexual relationships. There is a perceived sexual rivalry between civilian men and male soldiers. The perceived sexual rivalry seems to be an overwhelming preoccupation among men. This emerges from their struggles for power and status, with the competition articulated over possession of women. Some participants feel that civilian women admire soldiers. According to Sam:

In the military we've got a, got a unique lifestyle, see. We do things unique. And some civilians don't like the way we do things.

Int: Such as?

Sam: We pop out say hundred bucks we go to the bar we say so we sitting over there, here's the money for the night, you just supply us. [] Now, the ladies in the vicinity, usually likes the way we as soldiers are. Because in the discos we like to er make jokes. Just releasing the military. Then there usually becomes quarrelling because now the civilian guys we break their hearts.

Int: Do you quarrel about women?

Sam: Yeah. Definitely. Some women are very funny, you see. Or most of them. Okay, I saw them, that they like the way that we as soldiers are doing things in a club. We'll get there, like, properly dressed and some civilian guys, how do I, does not come properly dress, so there's the first point. Number two is um, especially on pay day, soldiers, soldiers got little, how can I put it now, they don't care about money, see, especially on pay days. [] And the women in the see it is nice in that group and so they will make some plans to get in the group, you see. And a civilian guy will see maybe this girl ...

Again the signifiers of being well dressed and possessing and flaunting money are raised as a sign of masculinity. The competition is also evident in the following excerpt:

Gerhard: In the military we always look at the civvies with suspicion. You know the civvies they are slagat [], they are not so lekker ... The civilians again think, ja no the military guys think they are so clever and they are so masculine ... and they come with their uniform to take our girls away. Things like that.

Gerhard's statement supports Buchbinder (1994) who argues that discontinuities in male-male relationships are due to them being suspicious of one another. There were patterns across the sample that showed it is easier for soldiers to impress and get favours from younger women as soldiers are paid better than civilians (Bujra, 2002; Heineken, 2000; 2002). Some participants disagreed with using inexperienced women to prove their masculinity. One participant disagreed that women liked soldiers.

6.4 Conclusion

In this section we have looked at how a group of male soldiers construct and construe their masculinity. The responses to questions illuminated the diversity of discourses the participants draw on to explain what it is to be masculine and how this is achieved. Key concerns are with independence and relations with women, in particular opportunities to draw women closer to them. The variety of responses proves the difficulty of singling out one type of masculinity. In showing how race and national politics play a role in the construction of masculinity, participants noted that a specific period in South African history made soldiers construct their masculinity in different ways. It was also found that the masculine world view is predicated on how independent men are, and what opportunities they are able to leverage to ensure upward social mobility. For some participants masculinity is a concept located within Christianity which emphasises the importance of the family and home. Having reviewed the literature it appears that in these domains masculine culture is articulated not just by soldiers, but by all men.

The intersection of masculinity and sexuality is also identified in this chapter. Traditional discourses of masculinity with respect to (hetero)sexual practice prevail in the military context and could facilitate unsafe sexual practices. Dominant discourses are interwoven with moral authority which serves to reproduce heteronormativity. Also evident is a moralising and pathologising discourse on homosexuality which is clearly common but continues to be ostracised as non-military. This serves to bolster heterosexual masculinity and femininity as the normative ideal, thus closing down questions about how men and women practice heterosexuality. The contradictions emerging signal a

space for change in dominant masculinity and sexual practices, but also cause a great deal of discomfort for traditional men who appear to predominate in the military.

Having contextualised the meaning that men in the military attribute to masculinity, and how masculinity intersects with sexuality, the following chapter (Chapter 7) explores how this intersection impacts on participants' (hetero)sexual practices.

CHAPTER 7: CONSTRUCTIONS OF MALE SEXUALITY

7.1 Introduction

This chapter explores how the construction of masculinity by a group of male participants from the military context impacts on their sexuality and is articulated in their sexual practices. As stated, the development of HIV/AIDS interventions requires that we interrogate not only gender but also constructions of sexuality in relation to broader masculinity and the way in which male identities overlap and intersect with other social structures such as age, race and ethnicity (Dowsett, 2003). The strength of this chapter lies in its constructionist perspective and conclusion that the way in which men position themselves in relation to dominant discourses on masculinity and sexuality may be contradictory, multiple and fluid, which also opens up the possibility of challenge and change.

While this chapter deals primarily with discourses of male sexuality, these discourses are inextricably linked with the construction of masculinity, as covered in Chapter 6. A central theme in understanding male sexuality relates to the construction of sexual difference as gendered, and the notion that male and female sexuality, and by implication masculine and feminine sexuality, are inevitably and inherently different and 'other'. This is played out through two related sub-themes: firstly, constructions of feminine sexuality as bound up with love and emotion which will be the focus of the next chapter (Chapter 8); secondly, constructions of masculine sexuality, with an emphasis on the notion of the male sexual drive discourse, which is addressed in this chapter.

7.2 The binary construction of male and female sexuality

The essentialist theory of gender argues that men and women behave differently because of their biological nature (Aron & Aron, 1991). For participant Daniel, a 27-year-old white man, although men and women are "different in many ways" and "similar in others", they are "sexually constructed in different ways". Although Daniel cannot

unpick why this sexually/biologically constructed difference should be there, he thinks it is crucial. For him, sexual difference is biologically determined, causing men and women to relate differently and develop a masculinity and femininity which enables them to be in relationship.

Daniel: For, if we weren't so different, we wouldn't be together.

He also cautions that:

With those differences, we're always going to find some problems.

This could be a simplified way of saying that ultimately, all conflict between women and men can be reduced to gendered and sexualised difference.

Drawing on a popular discourse, exemplified in the best-selling text *Men are from Mars, Women from Venus* (Gray, 1992), Daniel goes on to state that men and women are constructed so different sexually, it is as though they "come from different planets". However, even though men and women may inhabit different 'sexual planets', in this discourse each gender's 'sexual planet' is transparent/knowable (or potentially so) to members of the other: "Women know what men want. And vice versa" (Daniel).

Men in this discourse are attracted to women because their sexuality is different from, and in opposition to theirs:

At the end of the day, we [men] want to see female sexuality because it's [] opposite. That's what attracts us.

Looking at the above excerpts, essentialised differences between men and women are constructed as the key ingredient for a relationship between men and women. Further, what appears to be of utmost importance to men as emerges in discussion below, is that

male sexuality and men themselves must not just be a source of attraction for female sexuality, but must actively arouse women:

Daniel: It is important that we [men] ... see female sexuality to be turned on by us.

It is interesting that women are obfuscated here. The focus is on their sexuality, that is, it is not women who must be turned on, but their sexuality as if it is something separate from them. This discourse does not allow women to own their sexuality, so it is not them that become aroused but their sexuality as if it is some 'other' part of them. The objectifying of women's sexuality allows it to be conquered and "owned" by men.

The sexual difference identified by Daniel is also given prominence by Simon. However, he recognises that the difference occurs not only between men and women, but that women also express their sexuality differently from other women. However, the core discourse remains that female sexuality is defined in terms of a woman's response to a man, and male sexual performance confirms masculinity (Tiefer, 1987b).

Simon: My previous girlfriend, she went insane in bed and ... ja! ... You do get girls who don't have the same passion, but when you go to someone, also you get someone who is completely wild. In the beginning you'll think 'what am I doing wrong?'

The next section focuses on *how* men's sexuality is differently constructed by participants. It reveals discourses of nature and culture and demonstrates how participants draw on many of the dominant discourses on male and female sexuality that have been identified in both local and international research.

7.3 Constructions of male/masculine sexuality and sexual behaviour (male sexual drive discourse)

A key discourse emerging from interviews echoes one that has been well documented in the literature: that of the male sexual drive, initially defined by Wendy Hollway (1989), but reported in many local and international texts (Miles, 1992; Shefer & Foster, 2001; Shefer & Ruiters, 1998; Strebel, 1993). In this discourse on male sexual practices, men are positioned as looking for, even fixated on "certain things". According to Daniel and Mikobe, the best thing for men is to have sex, a lot of it, and with as many women if possible. They elaborate:

Daniel: [Men] want a lot of it. For a man sex ... generally [is about] the more, the better. If we had our own way, we'd just like to have sex with a woman. Then, two or more nights later ... have sex with another woman.

Mikobe (31): You always need to have a lady around you that you can [] call at any time, be with her, I think there's a lot of people who believe this.

Men's preoccupation with sex and seeing sex as separated from a relationship is evident in Simon's discussion about his purely sexual relationships with women he meets in nightclubs:

I had interesting relationships with girls in the past, where we had [a] purely sexual relationship ... and we just had sex.

Other participants concur:

Tulani (32): What I know is men like sex.

Bongi (25): They [men] will get into a relationship for ... sex only.

The non-intimate sex reported by the participants seems to hinge around masculinity. Holland et al. (1991, p.12) contend that sexual pleasure that is predicated on the absence of love or commitment mirrors the "male model of sexual empowerment".

This male obsession/preoccupation/fixation with "having sex" is constructed as ever-present at all levels of social interaction:

Daniel: In the street ... when a man sees a woman, the first thing he thinks of is ... sex.

In this discourse it is common for men to think about sex all the time. Similarly, Mikobe argues that when men think and/or talk about women passing them by on the street, it is highly likely that "they are only thinking of sex". Some participants agree on this preoccupation and relate this to circumstances imposed by military life. This concurs with those who found that as soldiers work away from home and are separated for long periods from partners, they are more sexually active because of loneliness and might even engage in risky sexual practices (Foreman, 1999; Heineken, 2000). For example:

Simon: So when you go to the base area you start seeing a girl. Hey! It's a girl, you smell it, you smell a perfume. Its amazing when you haven't been around ladies for a while, the girl can be walking on the side of the base and you start (sniffing sound, animal like) looking (laughing) and when you go into the community when you go to buy "take-away" or something you go to town, then you try your best to get attention from local ladies because it is so nice.

Tulani: We go to girls having this mind and we tell our mind if she, can arrive here on the base, I will then kiss her, have sex with her.

Here the male sexual drive discourse is constructed in animalistic terms, as stemming from a deep rooted primitive urge reflected in the sniffing sound made by Simon. As to

why this obsessive preoccupation with “having sex” exists among men, participants drew predominantly on a discourse of biological essentialism:

Daniel: It's his instinct to want to sleep with her.

Mtobeli: You see a woman ... you start having feelings for a woman. Even if you know that you have your own partner ... I think its something natural ... I think its natural.

This discourse again underscores that sex and sexuality are vital for constructions of masculine identity. Male sexuality as constructed here is in itself a “natural” force and source of motivation for men. A further link in this discourse is the belief that male subjects must have their sexual needs gratified, a belief exacerbated by the isolation imposed in the military context:

Mikobe: [T]here's maybe a belief [that], people [probably meaning men] cannot go along for two, three months without having sex. And then, the moment they start being away from their partners, that causes problems. Because then they would need to have a woman [even] if they are [] attached to [] their original girlfriend. They will have women on the outside, simply to satisfy their normal way of life as they see it. Because they believe that you cannot go for three, four months without having sex.

These constructions of male identity and heterosexuality place soldiers at risk by encouraging them to prove and maintain themselves through frequent sexual encounters. Therefore, male sexuality is constructed as something which structures the life of its male subjects, motivating them to be ‘always on the look-out’ for the next female body (Shefer et al., 2002). Men are situated as being under the control of their sexual needs. Similar to what has been found in other studies about men in general, participants feel they are forced by ‘nature’ to seek sexual relationships with other women irrespective of any existing sexual relationship (Hollway, 1989; Rubin, 1993; Weeks, 1986). The need for

other sexual relationships with other women is more evident in the military, as soldiers are away from their existing sexual relationships for long periods (Archery, 2004; Bujra, 2002; Heinecken, 2000, 2002; Kristofferson, 2004). Furthermore, many young men in the age group 18 to 24 are more subject to peer pressure and the need to prove and establish their sexual identities (Heinecken, 2001; Shisana & Simbayi, 2002, UNAIDS, 1998). In the military this group of men is regarded as more deployable due to their physical strength and health status (Heinecken, 2002). During deployment, especially in African countries, opportunities to engage in risky sexual behaviour are much higher as these men are regarded as a sought-after group due to their physical power and financial means. On the soldiers' side there is the idea that they as men cannot be deprived of sex for too long as mentioned earlier. The dangers of this popular construction, the male sexual drive, have been well-documented nationally (Harris et al., 1995; Kottler & Long, 1997; Medical Association of South Africa's studies, n.d.). It has been argued that the determinist nature of this construction of male sexuality both rationalises and legitimates problematic male sexual practices which may include unsafe sex as well as coercive and abusive sexual behaviours. The discourse implies that men are stuck and cannot/will not be able to change or lose this obsession with having sex; that they are trapped by biologically driven needs/passions/desires. The subtext here is that women have to accept it as inevitable that men are victims of their biological drives and women cannot do much else but tolerate it. Men's drives are seen as immutable:

Mikobe: They cannot resist temptations.

Daniel: You will never change the fact that [] men love sex, and want a lot of it.

How does this discourse situate men as sexed subjects in relation to women as sexed subjects? In other words, how are men encouraged to relate to women (including their bodies) as sexualised beings? According to Daniel:

Women are objects that make us feel good. Men use their body as ... an object, to be satisfied. And, once we had our satisfaction, that ... body has ... no value any more.

In line with Flood's (2000) research findings, and reinforcing this construction of women as objects for men's pleasure, Tulani concurs that a woman's body may reach a stage where it becomes useless to men. For sexual gratification he relies on penile sensation which assesses vaginal tightness. In Tulani's construction, once a woman's body does not provide him with optimal sensation all the time, she becomes useless:

Tulani: When after a first round then we carry on to (a) second round and then I find now ... everything is too relaxed in such a way that I can't feel that I'm in or out, is where I'll decide [to leave the girl] ... the beautifulness of that girl diminishes ... I feel like having another girlfriend that is appetising.

In this discourse women's bodies are related to as an object of possession purely for the sake of men's satisfaction or pleasure. Also, the object/body is disposable after use. When its pleasure-giving value at a physiological level is exhausted, it loses its "value". In this way, women (as body objects) are interchangeable for men's sexual pleasure and are in some way devalued if they do not gratify men's sexual desires.

Linked with the construction of men's sexuality in relation to women, a discourse positioning men as different to women with respect to emotions also emerges. The assumption is that for men, emotions (for example, feelings of love) are disconnected from their bodies.

Daniel: Sex for a man is very unemotional ... because you're thinking of physical things. You're thinking of how big her breasts are. You're thinking about [her] bums.

Jeff has a similar focus on the body:

Jeff: She might have a great butt, she might have a great pair of breasts, but she's got it and you've noticed it ... compliment her. She's got it, why not, [] if it attracts your eye it's like a good painting, it's there, I mean, and if that feeling of yours become way stronger than, ja, it does.

The training and everyday business of the military focuses strongly on physical strength and appearance (Barrett, 1996; Presidential Commission, 1992). Bearing in mind the above excerpts the way soldiers regard women's bodies and sex appears to be a continuation of the way they normally think and operate: that is, regarding the body as a weapon and a tool.

In a related vein, Bongi (29) articulates the oft-repeated idea that men are encouraged to separate sexual intercourse from emotion, and then fixate on the intercourse and its pleasures grounded in and through the bodies of women. That is where 'the real action' is for men. That is where it begins and ends for them.

Bongi: Men are not taking sex as something that [has] to be emotional. They're just taking [sex] as a physical thing, and that's it. There you have it. Period. End of debate.

Because men are encouraged to construct male and female bodies and male and female sexualities as different and oppositional, this separation between 'emotion' (as in meaningful, sincere human connection) and sexual intercourse makes it easier for men to perpetrate sexual misuses/abuses. The discourse of separating love from sex is also found in other studies (Holland et al., 1991; Shefer, 1999). In this discourse on male and female, masculine/feminine sexualities and their expressions, women tend to offer men a 'relationship' when what men really want is physical/bodily pleasure. And when this happens men 'dive for cover':

Bongi: Many men tend to withdraw. Because, [they] see [they're] not getting what [they] want. What they want is a physical thing/a woman's body.

For some men being emotionally attached is viewed as problematic since this might signal his being (sexually) unavailable to other would-be 'lovers', as in this example:

Bongi: He can't be seen [] as having many women if he's ... emotionally involved with one.

In this discourse, what 'real' men really desire is:

Bongi: To be seen as somebody who can have as many 'chicks' as possible.

As highlighted in the previous chapter, this 'to-be-seen' aspect is important in the construction of male identity and is linked to traditional gendered sexual roles where men are encouraged to actively pursue sexuality and have multiple partners (NPPHCN, 1995; Wood & Foster, 1995). Irrespective of their marital status, men are not frowned upon by the society (in the same way as women are) if they leave their domestic terrains (wives/regular sexual partner) for other women's bodies in the public domain (together or in competition with other men) (Hollway, 1989).

Bongi: Maybe, there's that thing that tells me that, 'I'm a man ... so, I have to prove that I'm a man. And our culture does not require of women to 'prove' their womanhood in the way it requires of men to prove their manhood. And secondly, women are not out to prove their womanhood by cheating on their sexual partners. Indeed, in our culture, they prove it by staying sexually/emotionally faithful to their sexual partner. I have to prove that I am a man. But not my woman. She's a woman, she's supposed to be sleeping at home ... sticking to her man.

Int: Would you feel/think differently about women who cheat on their male sexual partners when they feel neglected by them?

Bongi: Being a man, I think I will feel differently. Men expect that they are the ones that are supposed to be ... cheating. Culturally, men are conditioned to not expect women to sleep around. There's also this thing about "my woman".

The discourse articulated in the above excerpt positions the participant in a culturally determinist framework, such as that offered by sex role theory, which argues that there are cultural precepts about how men and women should behave. Women are expected to express their sexuality in monogamous relationships while men can have many sexual partners (Hollway, 1989; Ratele, 2001a; Shefer, 1999). But what drives men's desire for multiple partners?

Daniel: A man's fantasies would be based on ... the physical, [on] younger girls, [or] more girls at one particular time.

Clearly in their fantasy lives – a realm of human experience not ordinarily subjected to the dictates and internal policing of the rational mind – the importance of multiple sexual conquering of women, particularly those not currently a partner, is evident:

Daniel: Some of my [male] fantasies might ... not involve her [the partner].

This again highlights that an imperative of successful masculinity is that both fantasies and practices reflect multiple sexual partners. Therefore, men perform within a discourse of proving their masculinity primarily to themselves and other men through using women's bodies for sexual pleasure. This is seen as a key component of 'manhood' or male sexuality. Further, it is argued that cultural precepts about women's and men's sexuality are different for the two as gendered/sexed groups, with women's more controlled such that 'proper' women only express their sexuality within the confines of the private sphere (Hollway, 1989).

In terms of the sexual double standard outlined above, women are neither allowed to initiate sex nor pursue their own sexual desires, but they are blamed for provoking men's desires (Cameron & Kulick, 2003). In this study, women are in some cases blamed for causing men to have many sexual partners. Some participants argue that men can be motivated to seek out other women if they feel sexually or emotionally neglected by their partners. For some, this would also serve as a way of testing whether they were neglected by their partners on the basis of their own inadequate sexual performance. Dowsett (2003) argues that while sexual practices are known to be pleasurable to men, they may also be an expression of psychological need or inadequacy. In having multiple partners, men may be looking for women to soothe their vulnerabilities by affirming their masculinity.

Notwithstanding the dominant discourse legitimising and prescribing multiple partners for men, there also appear to be some spaces for men who wish to have a single partner and who resist pressures on men to be promiscuous. This 'responsible man discourse' maintains that men may prove their manhood by sticking with one woman as a sexual partner. However, this is a marginalised discourse:

Bongi: Responsible men will prove their manhood by sticking with one woman. Others – irresponsible men – prove theirs by having multiple partners and showing off that they are ... masculine men.

Responsible men, however, also prove their 'manhood' by providing for the woman they have sexual relationships with. So, while resisting aspects of hegemonic masculinity, this discourse is still rooted in the traditional view of men as providers. Some participants in this study further state that responsible men are not only after the sex. They acknowledge there are other things such as companionship, trust and love in a long-term heterosexual relationship. It is also acknowledged, however, that they often do not seem to be taking those 'other things' as seriously as they take the gratification of their own sexual pleasure.

Regarding male resistance to women's equating of sex with relationship, Daniel argues that sex workers facilitate an easier sexual experience for men as they are clearly engaged in providing sex and have no emotional expectations of the act:

Women who sell their bodies, sell sex for money, make things easier for men, because there is no emotion.

This echoes Simon's earlier reference to his "purely sexual relationships" with women he met in nightclubs. Similarly, Sam argues that "easy" women facilitate easier sexual experiences. Finding "easy" women is much easier for soldiers especially during deployment. During deployment soldiers are reported to be living in close proximity to refugees and displaced people. Considering that they are paid well during deployment, they then exchange cash for sex (Foreman, 1999; Heinecken, 2000).

There is acknowledgement from participants that some of the "easy" women are not just passive slaves who heed men's sexual desires, and these women do express their sexual desires, which may serve to promote a positive discourse on women's sexuality. A positive construction of women's sexuality and desire has been found to be a marginalised discourse in talk on sexuality, both in the national (Shefer & Foster, 2001; Shefer et al., 2002; Wood & Foster, 1995) and international literature (Holland et al., 1996).

On the other hand, participants admit that many men would prefer it if women were simply passive slaves to men's needs:

Daniel: The perfectly constructed woman is someone you switch on, do your things, switch off.

This discourse is not without some self-reflexivity. Participants appear to be aware that the male desires of which they speak are a part of a masculinity that is dominant, self-centred and self-gratifying:

Daniel: Sex with women is very much centred on the male's needs ... All men want to do is conquer the whole time.

Tulani: Every time we are saying I'll have sex with her ... we don't say we'll have sex together. We don't ever say we'll have sex together ... We like actually to dominate.

Drawing on a popular gender stereotype of men as hunters and conquerors (Gray, 1992; Shefer, 1999), Daniel goes on to elaborate that the primary way in which men 'conquer' women is through having sexual intercourse. Should he succeed in doing so, then:

Daniel: The man has had her. He's conquered her [through sex]. He's got his prize, he feels like a man, he's King Kong.

Daniel alludes to a man as a powerful untamed/uncivilised beast who has to conquer/subdue/control a woman through sex. The latter's status as object, this time as trophy, is reinforced and confirmed. This is also highlighted in Nkosi's (1999) study that conquering for soldiers is not only articulated through military activities but also through the number of women a soldier can have sex with.

One of the 'strategies' open to men as 'sexual conquerors' is romantic courting, which is understood as a discourse that is attractive to women but used purely as a strategy by men. The participants were very open about the way in which they manipulated this discourse, a position highlighted in other studies (Getnet, 2005; Shefer, 1999):

Daniel: Being romantic, for a man, at the end of the day, is just to get the [woman] into bed.

Bongi: They are not taking sex seriously. They are taking sex as one of the things that one can do. Men therefore court women because you want an end result. The end result is that you want to have sex with this woman. So, if you take her out, and you're courting her, make her feel special, there is a possibility that you'll have sex with her. So, that's why you do it.

Some participants mention that men sometimes do "play with women's minds" so they can get to play with their bodies. Fun for (some) men equals pleasurable sexual intercourse/play with the body/ies of a woman/women involving coercion through deception.

Another key aspect of masculine sexuality emerging in Daniel's discourse relates to the "male ego" and the need to be in control. In this milieu, sex is used as a mechanism for extending control over a woman partner.

Daniel: [Through sex, the man] wants to mould her ... in his own ... way. He wants to take control of her.

Daniel adopts a popular psychology rationale for men's need to control a woman through sex, explaining that:

Men's egos are very fragile ... [] Our egos can get bruised very quickly. And when it comes to sexual relations ... more than anything else.

Through sexually controlling ('moulding') a woman to cater to his needs, a man seeks to protect his fragile sense of himself as a 'true', 'real' man. For Daniel, this refers to his own need for sexual fulfillment but apparently more important is that she sexually responds to him and is in need of him sexually. He elaborates:

Daniel: [When] he's giving her such pleasure, that she doesn't know how to control herself. [T]hat's part of the man, that's part of the ego. This sort of ... Tarzan ... We men think, many times, that we are really pleasing a woman in bed. It makes us feel good when we really blow their minds away. And, if we're not capable of doing that, we're just not man enough. Should a man fail to please a woman sexually, it tells him something about himself.

Simon: You just don't know, what? ... Your other girlfriends start to do jumping jacks, screaming and running around, then you think mhm! Is this one enjoying it?

Here participants see hegemonic masculinity (the definition of a 'proper' man) as being threatened if women are not satisfied sexually. Some literature argues that female sexuality is often silent or repressed (Lees, 1986; Lesch, 2000; Shefer, 1999). The discourse above values women's sexual response, but as a by-product of the male ego and does not imply a broader positive discourse on female sexual desire. The male identity is clearly tied to sexual performance:

Daniel: [He's] worried about his own ... image. 'What is wrong with me? Am I not man enough?'

Mtobeli: If she doesn't say anything you end up not knowing whether you are doing right.

Daniel: There is so much competition out there. [T]here's always somebody better. So, if your ego is wounded ... you're worried that ... there's somebody else ... with a better ego ... who's going to come after your wife.

In this discourse a man's relationship to other men is inevitably antagonistic: other men (who appear to have "better" egos) are always a potential threat in the conquering-quest for women's bodies. As highlighted earlier, this competition, as reported by a number of

participants, exists particularly between male soldiers and male civilians. The soldiers consider themselves to have more success with women because their bodies are well-formed as a result of their physical training.

Drawing again on a psychologised discourse, Daniel voices the popular construction of always "wanting to feel wanted". In this case, however, the universalised fear of rejection by significant others emerges as a narcissistic discourse in which emotional need is centred on women's sexual responses.

Daniel: A man always hopes and wishes that the woman [thinks] that's he's such a gorgeous person that, whenever they get into bed together ... she will immediately want to sleep with him, as he's irresistible.

In this discourse, men are positioned as machines that are always ready and able to perform sexually, in line with the well-documented male sexual drive discourse (Hollway, 1989). Daniel elaborates:

Daniel: Lying together in ... bed [with a woman] ... for a man ... the possibilities of sex are always there. [For] the woman ... not necessarily. He thinks automatically, once we're in bed together, that both of us have to be turned on, and we must, at least, have sex.

Kgao (31): If she can't get what she needs from me on the basis that I am not in the mood, then where else is she going to get it?

There is also the unrealistic assumption that women should also always be ready "to be turned on" by men. This masculine fantasy, which reproduces traditional constructions of an active male sexuality and a responsive female sexuality, has for Daniel assumed the status of a concrete lived reality to the extent that:

It just hurts to think ... that the woman is just not thinking about it [having sex].
Because, you are, most of the time.

The irrational image of the 'male sex machine' goes largely unchallenged by men who appear to identify either consciously or unconsciously with it. In this construction of male sexuality, a ('real') man will never pass up the chance to have sexual intercourse with a woman. If he does, this is taken (by himself and especially other men) as testimony to his lack of masculine status:

Daniel: As a man, I would ... be reluctant to just say no [to sex].

Participants also raised counter-arguments about how men respond to women and made some attempt to explain why some men are abusive to women or 'use' them sexually by drawing on notions of lack of awareness and non-intent:

Bongi: Maybe, some of them are not aware. You'll do something ... but you are not aware of the consequences. So, maybe, men do not have the intention, but in her eyes, or in the eyes of other people, you would be using her. Normally the intention [of the man] is not to use, but the end result happens to be using.

This lack of awareness is explained as the result of poor communication between partners. Some participants unpacked the embedded idea that sexual misuse/abuse is also in the eye of the beholder.

7.4 Discourses of culture, lack of communication and sexuality

The relationship between discourses of culture and sexuality emerged from the interviews. Participants identified constraints of culture as key elements in maintaining sexual differences between men and women. For example, it prevents men from asking women about their sexual needs and desires or restrains the manner in which men and women express their sexuality and sexual conduct. Men are characterised as lacking in

knowledge about women's sexuality or their bodies (though they may know a little about the latter's physical contours). This discourse is not surprising in a cultural context which defines and shapes heterosexual expression as male-centred, and more specifically centred around male bodily pleasure, itself the product of a particular sexualised relation to women's bodies.

According to participants, women claim that communicating with a man about sexual matters in the relationship is mostly problematic for the man (Shefer, 1999a; Van Wyk, 2004). Men are, it appears, subject to socio-historical restraints, as they are socialised to understand that communicating about sex is taboo in their culture.

Bongi: Men who were brought up [to] believe that, as men talking about it [sex] is taboo.

Sam: it all depends on how the guy was brought up, in which environment he was brought up, see. Like in any case, guys who come from the smaller, the smaller, the rural areas, or can I say, I would say the farm places, they got, also they got difficulty in approaching women. People from the farm, they stayed in old traditions. Some people who come into contact with, with, with females, or the opposite sex the time that they start when they were two years old. Other people from the city from 10 years they start doing things, 15 years they are able to communicate.

The result is that:

Bongi: Some ... men are not yet ready to start engaging with these questions of sex.

This discourse draws on the well-argued notion that socio-historical conditions are linked with human sexuality and sexual relationships. For instance, during the apartheid era, black families were often broken up due to migrant labour practices in which black

husbands and wives could not practice 'normal' heterosexual relationships because they mostly lived apart (Campbell, 2001). This may have impacted on current sexual practices among black men and women.

Bongi: Our history ... during the apartheid period. Sexuality also comes into play here, with the sexual relations and relationships between men and women in black societies radically disrupted.

These excerpts indicate that inequalities in sexual negotiation between men and women could well be the result of historical factors.

However, men's contradictory and ambivalent relationship towards women's sexuality has also to be understood in terms of their cultural situatedness whereby 'masculine sexuality' and 'feminine sexuality' are considered to be cultural constructs. This discourse recognises the possible diversity in how sexuality is lived, experienced and understood.

Mikobe: Other people ... well-informed, or civilised, so to say, you'll find that they talk about things like that. Other people read mass magazines, other people read women's magazines, and, depending on how they interact ... to what extent is their relationship developed? Then ... it will guide the way in which they ... What will be their topics and so on. And, if that topic is also included, obviously they're going to entertain it.

It is not common for men to ask women about their sexual needs, and participants concur that men are generally self-centred when it comes to sexual pleasure. According to the cultural situatedness discourse, both women and men live and express their sexuality within the discourses of cultural location which dictates that it is only appropriate for men (and not women) to initiate anything sexual between them (Caplan, 1987; Gagnon, 1973; Scott & Jackson, 1996; Tiefer, 1995). This cultural prescription concerning appropriate

sexual etiquette constrains women from being (too) open about their sexual desires and needs towards men. Men are expected to take the initiative:

Bongi: [There is a] mentality that says men ... are supposed to be superior and everything must be suggested, or must come ... from a man.

By adhering to this cultural stereotype, women contribute to men's lack of knowledge about their sexual needs and desires.

Bongi: Normally ... they just keep quiet, as they will be afraid [to] come out and say, 'listen, I'm not satisfied'.

Here cultural discourse has blocked communication and is used to explain and legitimise women's sexual subordination. Underlying such discourses are the (internalised and 'external') beliefs, codes and etiquette constraining and regulating male and female sexuality and its expression. In sum, men and women do not share their sexual needs and desires openly with one another because of socio-cultural constraints and regulations which discourage open communication on sexual issues. In this discourse, when a man appears sexually self-centred, this is partly a result of cultural socialisation and gendering. If no cultural taboo existed, men (and women) would ideally be more open.

What should be questioned is the functionality of any taboo that discourages reflection on sexuality, at any historical juncture. More specifically, what taboo would discourage its male members from reflecting on and talking about their own and their female sex partners' sexual lives? Clearly, however, cultural pressures play a role through concrete and enforceable precepts about how its male and female members should relate to their own and each other's sexual beings. Theorists argue that discourses of culture help to constitute male and female sexual subjectivity; and cultural institutions, processes and practices regulate the sexual lives and expressions of its citizens (Foucault, 1978; Lees, 1986; Vance, 1989). What should be unpicked is how cultures ensure this kind of sexual conformity from both male and female citizens, assuming that such conformity is in the

best interests of governance. On the other hand, do men appropriate cultural discourse as a way of rationalising and foreclosing debate about normative sexual practices?

7.5 Discourses of change

Connell (2000, 2001) argues that male identities are fluid and therefore changeable. While participants clearly draw on traditional constructions of male and female sexuality, they also draw on a discourse of culture and change, speaking about notions of a cultural shift over time in how sexuality is perceived, constructed and responded to. This change is set up as a response to a woman's way of being sexual and shows an attempt by men to be more responsive to women's apparent needs.

Daniel: The modern man ... in general, cares a lot more about ... what women feel ... Men's magazines [show] how to make her feel better or more special. In general, men are, compared to 50, 60 years ago, far more preoccupied with trying to make women ... feel better or enjoy what they do to them.

This apparent shift in masculine thinking about women's (and by implication men's) sexuality involves a move for men from 'sex as physical pleasure' (the male model) to 'sex as relation' (the female model). Both Jeff and Daniel imply that while they are aware of this alternative discourse, the significance, extent and degree of this reported shift is doubtful:

Daniel: [On] average, few men ... actually ... think about it [women's feelings about sex and sexuality]. I haven't met many men like that.

Jeff: Mmm? From my experience – no. It's about their (men's) own pleasure, it's about their own satisfaction, and secondary, even thirdly maybe, the woman's pleasures thereafter ... I think once again it's just a matter of a

individual, a individual's development outside the sexual context. If you still see an individual as male, female, black, white.

Bongi: [Men] do care, but they cannot express ... their caring ... by talking.

Given these discourses, what is the potential for men and women to break out of limiting and constraining cultural stereotypes pertaining to their sexuality and its expression? All participants advocated communication as a means to redefine and transform socio-cultural stereotypes. However, as men see themselves as the initiators in their sexual relations with women, a constraint to potential change is that men have a vested interest (due to patriarchy and its historical development) in the status quo. Clearly, if socio-cultural/structural processes and practices regulating human sexuality (e.g. 'the family') and its expression are not challenged in change and transformation efforts – which tends to happen if only men become the bearers of change – then social attitudes and practices are likely to remain relatively intact. A challenge in any intervention is to open and maintain communication broadly, rather than locating change at a purely interpersonal level.

7.6 Discourses of 'other' in safer sex

As informing the development of HIV/AIDS interventions is a key goal of this study, participants were closely questioned on their ideas, thoughts and feelings about the pandemic, and about constructions of masculinity that promote sexual risk-taking. This section of the chapter focuses specifically on forces inhibiting condom use and explores issues of responsibility for safe sex practices to prevent infection.

Most participants used the politically correct discourse that safe sex practices (specifically condom use) should be everybody's responsibility (Masibambisane Programme, n.d.). A notion of male responsibility did emerge more strongly, though women were in some cases portrayed as resisting condoms:

Johan: Well, I think there are women who don't sometimes want condoms. I know some women are allergic to condoms, so it's an attitude. I think it's a man's responsibility to make sure that he uses a condom as far as possible.

Mtobeli: Some of them (women) they don't want to use condoms because I was once in a situation, whereby I went out with a woman she didn't want to use a condom and we end up not having sex. [The reason stated by the woman was] she is not having a relationship with anyone.

In the latter excerpt women are constructed as resisting using condoms if they are involved with one sexual partner at a time. Women's adoption of safe sex practices is seen as determined by a belief in love and trust as factors that frame intimate monogamous relationships. International and national empirical findings support this view, but for both men and women (Bremridge, 2000; Flood, 2000; Lesch, 2000; Varga & Makubalo, 1996; Wood & Foster, 1995). The two excerpts above also demonstrate that men are privileged in decisions on whether or not to use condoms (Foreman, 1999; Lesch, 2000; Varga & Makubalo, 1996). This power can be channeled to facilitate prevention of HIV/AIDS. Men can introduce condom use as illustrated by Mtobeli above.

Simon: You'll be surprised how many girls don't want condoms. All the TV adverts always portray guys as being evil shit but plenty times when you want to use it, girls will say 'you don't have to use it' (imitating how girls talk with a soft voice). Condoms are very important. Guys talk about this but its amazing how many chicks don't want to use condoms, and it really is ... then of course, as soon as the girl start to say no, then your head start wondering, why?

This excerpt alludes to the role of media in reproducing discourses of 'other' in relation to the spread of HIV. Simon further stated that women also resist other contraceptives so as to blackmail men:

Simon: There are lot of girls that are weird in the sense that ... I know few cases in [name of the unit], like the girls start to fall in love with the guy as soon as the guy starts to threaten to leave her, she leaves the pills and say I am pregnant and shit like that.

In contrast to the assumption that women rebuff condom use in heterosexual sex due to their investment in notions of trust, love and dependence (Flood, 2000), some participants felt that men play a major role in impeding or discouraging condom use (see Waldby, Kippax, & Crawford, 1990).

John: What I know it's usually the guys that resist condoms.

Kgao: I have never. I've never seen a situation whereby women do not want to use condoms. It is, it is less likely that they will do that.

There were contradictory views on the stage at which sexual partners could legitimately terminate the use of condoms. I found that a sense of trust and sexual safety is established through assumptions about a woman's sexual history and after the relationship has lasted four to six months. This is similar to Flood's (2000) study where he found a three- to five-month range. Surprisingly, participants did not discuss the three-month 'window' period irrespective of their knowledge of HIV/AIDS. Most participants voiced notions of trust and faithfulness as reason enough to terminate condom use in monogamous relationship (Flood, 2000). Only two participants felt that condoms should be used if partners are unmarried.

Another interesting discourse highlighted how men and women are subject to different versions of morality and power; and ambivalence emerged towards women as initiators of condom use. Some participants expressed anxiety when women began initiating condom use after being in a relationship for some time without using them. This was associated with dishonesty and a concern with women's fidelity, reflecting men's insecurity about women taking over a role that had previously been their domain. This

shift evoked discomfort, panic and resistance in men as it indicates a breaking of the moral codes of fidelity and engagement in a 'male' practice. The underlying discourse is resistance to women's agency in sexual practices (Alcántar, 2005; Andil, 2005; Shefer, 1999; Van Wyk, 2004; Waldby, Kippax, & Crawford, 1993b).

Tshepo: I'm saying you can't worry about risk, we are sleeping together here. Suddenly you can't take out a condom, and [say] 'now I have to use this'.

Gerhard: The Aids thing would be a bit more difficult for me to understand because I would like to believe that she is faithful to me and I am faithful to her. So I would immediately ask her, okay, listen I don't have a problem with the condom thing but the Aids thing, um er I am faithful to you so you must tell me now if you are having something *skelmpie* on the side or whatever.

Kgao: According to me, yeah it will raise a lot of questions as to why, why is it now. [I] know that she's the only one then if she now come and say let us use condoms ... I'll say why, has she been unfaithful? Or is it a matter of being responsible, but then, even if that is the case, the question is, it has happened after some several occasions.

Thando: For the issue of HIV/AIDS that's a difficult part because then you need to find out, but the other thing is if we find out that we are both still negative for instance then we are still safe it means we can still continue.

These excerpts support the argument that men are resistant to safe sex under a range of circumstances, but also underline that notions of trust are a concern not only to women but to men as well.

Another inhibitor of condom use is the discourse of 'other' responsible person, which is linked not only to gender, but also to race and ethnicity. White participant Gerhard put it like this:

From what I understand, some of the things that I heard is that some black cultures prefer, prefer, and I'm, I'm quoting now directly from what I heard, flesh to flesh, that is what they want, and I don't know, er I, I've never talked to someone that could tell me that, but, maybe I think I've read it somewhere that there's some cultures that believe that, either they don't believe in AIDS, or they don't believe in the way that AIDS are spreading or they just think they are immune to the disease. They think maybe if I swallow a bit of garlic and I don't know what else, then, then I will be cured of this thing and um I think maybe culture has got definitely a role to play in that. But there's also a lot of people that is ignorant, I think ignorance also play a very large role in it, and then also one must remember maybe things that to a lesser extent, things like alcohol, I mean if I'm drunk and I'm in the mood, then I'm not going to, condoms and protection is going to be the last thing that I worry about.

Int: Right, and from the stories that you've heard, what happens to other racial groups?

Gerhard: Okay, I think maybe, I think maybe the black culture, and then, once again, you have to make a distinction between Zulus and Xhosas and the Sothos, those people. I'm not, as I say I'm I'm I'm not really qualified to say because I haven't, I don't have the facts um to prove it or to support, support anything that anyone has said. But I think maybe in in the black culture within those different, different ethnic groups once again, there is probably certain groups that believe, or don't believe in Aids. Among the whites and coloureds and maybe to a certain extent the Indians, I would say it's more a matter or a question of ignorance or alcohol or rape or something in that direction.

The 'othering' notion here is that Africans are more at risk of HIV/AIDS, because of their cultural beliefs and negative attitudes towards condom use.

7.7 Military men and sexual practices

This section of the chapter explores how military organisational culture could contribute to risky sexual practices. An association has been established between work in the military and high-risk sexual activities (Bujra, 2002; Heineken, 2000; Okee-Obereng, 2001). Participants in this study place African soldiers at greatest risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, further associating this racial scale of susceptibility with the rank occupied by individuals in the military. Behaviour patterns evoking this discourse are particularly apparent during deployment, as this excerpt shows:

Int: Do you think soldiers are more likely to take sexual risks?

Simon: Jesus (blowing a whistle).

Int: Than other men?

Simon: Oh! Than other men. I don't know about the civilians if they would or whatever. But guaranteed, soldiers take sexual risks (nodding the head) ... Men, shit. The Rwandans sent [most] whores to the hotels. There was a hotel just across [from] the base and the sluts will be there. And God, I wanted to take my troops, I wanted to murder them because they lined up ... 10 guys and 10 guys will do this girl in one of the room and most of them would tell me because most of blacks have a phobia ... and especially your older blacks have a phobia about condoms and I will take a box with me and say 'guys, just use this'. I can't understand how guys get a sexual pleasure from a lady that just got sex with other guys before it's you. I can't explain how people can actually find pleasure in that but they start to walk around the corners and then you give them condoms in those corners, they say no to condoms. How can you say no (voice raised)?

The manner in which soldiers are described to have unsafe and abusive sexual practices is paralleled by the way troops deployed in Bosnia-Herzegovina, both male and female, are

viewed to be desperate for sex judging from the fact they have sex anywhere they can, from tents to underground bunkers and latrines (Gutmann, 1997).

Int: But if they go there ... if they go and line up, is it both black and white candidates?

Simon: No, check, remember there is very few whites ... in the Defence Force these days. Look I'm not talking politics now... but there is very few whites and lot of whites have left. It just becomes too difficult to be a white man in the army these days. So a lot of them have left and a lot of ... my generation-type guys and a lot of them do not really want to work with the blacks.

Even though Simon did not answer the question his response is powerful support for Barrett's (1996) argument that militaries are stratified according to race. White participants express difficulty with the change in the military power regime from white to racial diversity (Enloe, 1975). Considering that participants operate within racial discourses, as Dowsett (2003) points out, an examination of HIV/AIDS must take cognisance of how the complexities of structural indicators such as race intersect with constructions of sexuality and masculinity.

When asked about how troops behaved during deployment in the period before transformation to the SANDF, Simon replied:

We had stricter measures in '94 and in my experience between 1989 and 1993 you couldn't let a guy go out to the shebeen or to the prostitutes because ... he will be murdered. That was a completely different time in South Africa, you know that. [] We take them out of our areas of operations and you take them to another area and tell them, you guys have a day and those they can go and have prostitutes and it's not a secret.

The underlying comment being made here is that under apartheid when whites were dominant in the military, stricter controls were placed on soldiers. The intimation is that there was some notion of a superior moral context, while now there has been a loosening of morals. Somehow this is racialised, with an association of blackness with lower morality and promiscuity, which feeds into the stigmatisation of those living with HIV/AIDS (Cohen, 1999; Whiteside & Sunter, 2000). Both Gerhard and Simon talked about 'other' racial groups when they were probed in this respect. In their excerpts the links between blackness and promiscuity are associated with lack of education and lower rank. Therefore AIDS is still strongly characterised as a disease of blacks, of the uneducated and the poor. Those living with HIV/AIDS are still being stigmatised, 'blamed' (through promiscuity) and assumed to be racially 'other'. This underlines ongoing racism in the military regarding constructions of morality and sexuality, reproducing racism in the organisation and potentially impacting on the sexual practices of white military men who by this process of projection reproduce the assumption that they are sexually safe. Interestingly, African participants (who are officers, and thus of higher rank) acknowledged the risky sexual practices of fellow officers although they did not racialise it.

During the interview, Simon stated that in the early 1990s he did not use condoms, but now uses them as he sometimes has "purely sexual relationships" and "one-night stands". He added that before 1994 white soldiers had sex with prostitutes, just as black soldiers are now doing. In this discourse Simon is racialising sexual behaviour, as if to imply that black men lag behind white men in their sexual practices.

Simon also mentions that in his experience condom use decreases penile sensation. The implication is that if he perceives condoms negatively, he might also be engaging in, or be tempted to engage in, risky sexual practices.

Along with the 'othering' discourse is one in which participants associate soldiers' sexual practices with the dictates of their work. Those who work with refugee communities speak of the temptation to ask for sexual favours because of their loneliness, the frustration of being far from home and the access to sex. In many instances women are

given food parcels in exchange for sex. Some participants further rationalise their unsafe sexual practices by arguing that their jobs 'force' them to sleep with women in the community especially if these women can provide information which might be useful to the military.

It is worth noting that, even though the reported risky sexual practices are mostly said to happen during deployment, participants were also aware that these actions are not supported by military authorities:

Tulani: We were always told that you are always in the public eye. When you do things like this, then you don't only put yourself in danger but the whole organisation.

Again, the emphasis is on the relationship between rank and risky sexual practice. Officers are perceived as at less risk than troops, underlining the notion that senior soldiers (more educated) are more responsible than those in junior positions. This perception also appears to be related to the fact that soldiers are obliged to undergo a medical examination before they can attend an officer's formative course.

Thando: But I know it's when you look at a certain group and then you start judging ... these people are ... free ... they don't have HIV/AIDS. And I know for instance some of them [girls] ... some of them for instance they look at us for instance ... we officers ... and think that doesn't affect ... you end up now with both parties now engaging in unprotected sex because she saw you as less risky ... and you see her as less risky.

Int: Ok, so for you officers at the [name of the unit], what makes you less risky?

Thando: I think it's the education and the fact that when you come to the [name of the unit] there's certain medical classifications and I think it's more ... I know for

instance in our instance we had to do medical examinations after ... just wanting to become officers.

The above excerpts show various ways in which perceptions of and within the military could exacerbate unsafe sexual practices. Heterosexual men and women's adoption of condom use is clearly hindered by the identification of some military personnel as safe from HIV/AIDS. This mirrors both international and national findings that class differences play a role in differential stigmatisation of HIV/AIDS. Moreover, men across global contexts have been shown to distinguish between 'clean' and 'unclean' women (Bremridge, 2000; Flood, 2000; Waldby et al., 1993a). The 'cleanliness' distinction in the military context is based on participants' understanding of how the military structures occupation and class:

Thando: I think its more like looking at a class of people and then say these people are ... negative. Like for instance I know ... most people like look at ... [mentioned a certain category of recruits] girls for instance ... and think; nothing for sure ... ja, nothing for sure ... they are HIV ... negative because they wouldn't have been accepted in the system.

Some participants, however, expressed a positive attitude towards condoms, and had no reservations about women initiating condom use. For example:

Sam: I would totally agree with her, I'd use a condom ... I think she was asking him to put a condom on because of pregnancy and Aids. I mean she's involved so ... she's doing the right thing.

It was interesting to find from Jeff that a man:

Would brag that he's got a box of condoms in his room.

Int: So the intention is there, but whether people use it or not ...

Jeff: I wouldn't say the intention, I would say the flamboyantness thereof. The bragging, the image of having used a condom. It goes back, it goes back to with regard to the boasting ... You know, the more condoms I've got in my drawer, the more manly I am.

This suggests that using condoms is not always seen as negative, as it can be seen to draw on the traditional male sexual drive discourse. Bragging about having condoms may reflect a more positive discourse on condoms which draws on traditional male sexuality patterns to underwrite the importance of safe sexual practices.

7.8 Conclusions

The findings discussed in this chapter highlight many traditional and popular discourses of the ways in which men construct male and female sexuality. While there are clearly aspects of the military that emphasise and exaggerate traditional male sexual practices and generally unsafe sexual practices, there are also many that appear unrelated to the military environment. Even when participants' discourses are not directly embedded in a military context, we have to assume that the imperative to uphold hegemonic forms of male sexuality is embedded in that cultural context. On the other hand, the discourses they locate themselves in have emerged in many other contexts nationally and internationally and speak to a more globalised construction of normative (hetero)sexuality and gender/sexual performance. Therefore, men's stories show how dominant gender positioning is constructed and hegemonic masculinity is achieved.

Key to participants' explanations of sexuality between men and women is the oppositional binarism of male and female sexuality and desire. Male sexuality is equated with sexual/bodily pleasure, while women are perceived to equate sexuality with relationship and notions of love. What is central is the old notion of men as sexual and women as relational. However, what also emerges is male vulnerability to women's sexuality, knowledge and understanding of male needs. In other words, men need

women's affirmation. This is evident, as visible achievement of successful masculinity hinges around being highly sexual and having multiple sexual partners. It also underpins an understanding that popular constructions of masculinity and male sexuality are central to continued unsafe sex practices and contribute to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Risky sex practices appear to continue regardless of people's knowledge of HIV/AIDS or the tangible proof of seeing people living and dying of AIDS, as participants' sexual practices are shaped by the social meanings attributed to the intimate relationships within which sex occurs. Condom use, for example, is constructed as unnecessary and inappropriate in long-term relationships which are assumed to be trustworthy. The contradictions for participants are also evident as many acknowledge at a rational level that their actions are risky.

The findings of this study also highlight the emergence of alternative, challenging discourses on masculinity and male sexuality as some participants distance themselves from the discourse of biologically determined masculinity and male sexuality, and speak instead of a masculinity that accommodates equality and love. While there are many contradictions among participants and within their own discourses, the presence of discourses on masculinity that transgress traditional constructions of men as macho and not interested in love, may be seen as holding potential for change/transformation in socio-cultural stereotypes and their practices concerning sexuality and gender. Such changes, in particular the move to more concern with the body and health, may indicate that men have access to a discourse of responsibility for reproductive health and therefore condom use. Similarly, the emergence of a discourse of love for men, may also shift the terrain of male sexuality to allow for more fluid, diverse male sexualities. On the other hand, the investment that men have in the status quo, and the continued domination of traditional notions of male sexuality within the male sexual drive discourse, is a major challenge for any attempts to shift male sexual behaviour towards more equitable, safe practices.

CHAPTER 8: CONSTRUCTIONS OF FEMALE SEXUALITY THROUGH THE LENS OF MASCULINITY

8.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the way in which participants draw on notions of female sexuality and morality in constructions of their identity and heterosexual sexuality. Many of the popular discourses emerging around HIV/AIDS in South Africa and elsewhere have highlighted the centrality of morality discourses, many of them problematic, in the response to the pandemic. In North America, the moral critique focused on gay sexuality, fuelled by homophobia (Herdt, 2005). In Africa, the primacy of heterosexual modes of HIV transmission has meant the moral gaze has turned more to heterosexual practices (Campbell, 2001; Pleck et al., 1993; Shefer, 1999). As a result, there is a level of moral panic, centred on heterosexual practices, around HIV/AIDS in South Africa and this appears to be particularly evident in the military where the rate of HIV is high.

In response, participants draw on particular discourses that reflect on sexual rights for men and women, and use moralising discourses with respect to sexuality, especially women's sexuality.

8.2 Masculine constructions of female/feminine sexuality and sexual behaviour

A typical male discourse positions women as using sexual intercourse as a means to achieve emotional involvement in intimate relationships. In this discourse women are situated as primarily emotion-oriented in their heterosexual relationships (Hollway, 1989; Lesch, 2000; Shefer, 1999; Wood et al., 1996). This is so because they are reported to be deriving a sense of security to offset feelings of vulnerability as evident in the above research. This has been termed the 'have/hold' discourse and is seen as dominant in the construction of female sexuality (see Hollway, 1989). According to several participants, when it comes to sexual behaviour:

Daniel: Women ... look at different things. [While] men think sex, sex, and more sex, what's going through the mind of a woman is ... somebody that made her feel good, that was nice, that seemed trustworthy.

Bongi: Women tend to be very vulnerable and will want some security from her sex partner ... She wants to be seen as somebody who is capable [of having] a relationship.

Mtobeli: I believe [that] women will want some things to be safe ... she must have someone for [the] security in that case.

In line with other research, participants link female sexual practices with discourses of security and commitment (Varga & Makubalo, 1996; Wood, Maforah, & Jewkes, 1996), but do not necessarily exclude women's orientation to sexual pleasure:

Daniel: Men are satisfied with that ... one type of pleasure, women ... enjoy that pleasure too, but there are many things interconnected with that type of [sexual pleasure for women].

What is emphasised again is that while men equate sex simply with pleasure, women are located within a discourse of sex equated with relationship (emotional pleasure-producing) and meaningful inter-connectedness. Participants underscore the have/hold discourse with the notion that for a woman sexual intercourse means something different from what it means for a man. The view is that through sexual intercourse women not only desire to give and receive pleasure, but more importantly, desire to establish and explore the pleasures associated with relatedness. Daniel elaborates that what women are saying to men through their sexual behaviour is:

Daniel: 'Listen to me. Because I've allowed you [to have sex with me] there are certain things you [the man] have to accept about ... how I'm going to act afterwards.'

When men listen, they will hear that what women want out of a relationship other than just sex, are 'a number of things', which include:

Daniel: An interest in her life; security, [that the man is] being caring, understanding, [and willing] to listen to all her problems. [For] a lot of women, it's important that the male can financially [look after her], [that] the person is a provider; [and that there are] emotional qualities ... that she needs to be satisfied with. Women also want men to try make her feel special as often as he can, to make her feel ... wanted, [and] that she feels sexy about herself. It's important that you make her feel good, that you find her attractive. It's very important for her.

Mikobe: Women want to be taken care of in a certain way. They desire to be appreciated by their male sexual partners as people/women. They always like to be protected.

This discourse describes women's sexuality as involving far more than men's sexuality. Men's sexuality appears as something to be gathered and harnessed as it converges towards one end point: obtaining pleasure from a woman's body. Women's sexuality, on the other hand, does not 'end' in sexual intimacy. Sexual intercourse with a man as 'the other' is constructed instead as a beginning point, a point of becoming through relation and relatedness.

In the context of intimate heterosexual relationships, other participants also share how men's sexuality is predicated on the use of women and their bodies for their own sexual gratification. This has also been well documented and theorised (Shefer & Foster, 2001; Strelbel, 1993; Wood & Foster, 1995). In this context, it has been illustrated that men frequently use women's concern with love and relationship as a way of achieving sexual intimacy. In this discourse men are prone to making women believe that their motivation for indulging in sexual intercourse is borne out of love and romance. As examples from

Chapter 7 show, a man will tend to (ab)use his 'love' for a woman as a means to convince her to have sexual relations with him. While the woman involved is situated as 'using' sex as a means of securing emotional attachment with the man, the man is constructed as preferring uncomplicated, no-strings-attached sex with as many other 'lovers' as possible:

Bongi: Once they have [a] sexual encounter with their partner, women will tend to be emotionally involved in that relationship. Normally, the guys aren't. You find a guy having ... multiple sexual partners, of which maybe none of them is emotionally attached to him.

Simon: We had [a] purely sexual relationship ... and we just had sex. She had her life, and I had my life. That was convenient for both of us.

Even though the latter excerpt also shows the pleasure men derive from having emotion-free sexual experiences, they also appear to acknowledge that some women have a similar view of casual sex. This is confirmed in Van Wyk's (2004) study on the sexuality of a group of heterosexual white Afrikaner women. However, the experience women have of men who pretend to be caring, has led many women to regard male sexuality and love as suspicious, something not to be (easily) trusted:

Mikobe: There are ladies who've been involved in situations whereby they realise that [men claiming 'love' but only wanting sex] more often. And as result, even if they cannot read whether you ... are looking for sex or not, they are always cautious ... Nowadays in South Africa many women want to be on their own. They don't want to beg. They want to be involved in things that many used to think are only for men. Generally speaking, women always want to be taken a bit more ... seriously than ... what men ... expect from them.

The construction of female sexuality is also racialised (Collins, 2004). Participants viewed coloured women as more sexually outgoing, and reported that they were sexually attracted more to African men than coloured men:

John: Especially in Saldanha, the ladies have a tendency to go for the black guys. Now we are talking about coloured ladies, they have a tendency of going for the black guys.

Tshepo: Take a coloured lady, a coloured lady is more flexible.

Although some white participants drew on racist discourses in various aspects of their lives in the previous chapters, African men are not exempted from similar racialising processes. For these participants, constructs of female sexual incompetence are exacerbated by race. Race either qualifies or disqualifies females as sexual entities. These excerpts also indicate the uncertainties men harbour about female sexuality. On the one hand, they want to control relationships and therefore female behaviour. On the other hand they like women who are 'easygoing' ('coloured ladies are more flexible').

A question at the heart of negotiation in heterosexual relationship is why women are unable to say 'no' to sex even if they do not want it. Women are believed to fear the consequences of refusing sex to their male partners (Shefer, 1999). One unwanted consequence for the woman may be that her male partner might feel unloved and therefore be encouraged to seek sex from other women outside the relationship. In this discourse women are constructed as wanting to please men all the time for the sake of love:

Bongi: She'll be afraid to tell him because she wants to please him ... maybe they believe that, by doing so, their men will love them better. Because they are giving them sex. They think love and sex is one [the same] thing.

In some cases, unwanted sexual intercourse is constructed as occurring out of fear and the fear of creating suspicion in a man's mind:

Bongi: [Women] are into sex to please men, not to please herself ... Maybe she's afraid that the guy will think other things of her. 'Why doesn't she want to have sex? What was she trying?'

South African studies illustrate that cultural prescriptions that expect women to be submissive contribute to women's lack of negotiation around sex (NPPHCN, 1995; Shefer, 1999; Simbayi et al., 1999). At a national level a large body of work highlights how gender roles and socio-economic factors play a significant role in women's lack of negotiation in sexual practice (Getnet, 2005; Miles, 1992; Shefer, 1999; Strebel, 1993). International researchers also emphasise women's difficulties in negotiating (hetero)sex and expressing sexual desires (Holland et al., 1991; Hollway, 1996). In this study women are viewed as having no control over their sexual practices as they not only have to, but prefer to submit to men's sexual needs. Therefore, when women refuse to have sex, participants interpret this as a 'blow' to their masculinity:

Daniel: I would feel a bit less of a man, because obviously, I'm not much ... of a turn-on for her.

Simon: The guy starts ... ok. 'Now, what now? Don't I do it for you anymore, is there someone else?' You know that starts to destroy a relationship and that's it. Bye-bye.

This construction of male (hetero)sexuality and sexual performance predisposes its subjects to become inevitable victims of their own idealised images of their sexuality. These images are often constructed in relation to other potential male opponents, which may provoke paranoia and anxiety:

Daniel: You are really worried that somebody else ... is in your territory [when the woman doesn't want to have sex with you]. You start questioning your ego, because you are obviously now not good enough for her. So, she has to find somebody else.

This quote highlights the way in which female sexual partners are set up as male possessions ('your territory'), reinforcing the primitive metaphor of men as hunters in pursuit of women and always in opposition to each other. One way in which men deal with these anxieties is by seeking out the bodies of other/more women:

Tshepo: If you want to feel like a man, find another woman who's going to ... fulfill your manhood.

In this sense, men thus need and (mis/ab)use women bodies to win back their 'real manhood' if it is threatened.

8.3 Female sexuality and male anxiety

Irrespective of how female sexuality is constructed as controlled by men, it also emerges that women seem to have control of men in more subtle, unspoken ways. This argument is echoed in a study of men's talk about gender by Harris et al. (1995) in which women's agency and power are regarded as articulated in less visible, less obvious ways than men's. Further, that the way women relate to men situates women's sexuality as based on their knowledge of male sexuality, which is mystified in some ways. Participants in this study also reflect men's constructions of women as intuitive, more sensitive to the emotional realm and closer to the unconscious (therefore also less rational) than men:

Daniel: Women know what men want.

Such knowledge is believed to facilitate women's ability to regulate how they relate to men sexually. According to participants, women can and sometimes do use their knowledge about male sexuality to their own (if somewhat insincere) advantage:

Daniel: [Women know] that sex, generally, is going to be the thing that's going to attract ... the men to them. Knowing this, sex is often used as a tool ... to get the man. Women realise ... a lot of our [men's] self-esteem is tied up with sex and sexual performance, that's why they fake it ... more. That's why they fake the ... extreme pleasure.

In this discourse, women's intuitive knowledge about men's sexuality is potentially anxiety-provoking to men. It leaves them feeling at times over-conscious about their own sexuality and confused about women's sexuality (and as such sexuality in general). When women express their sexual pleasure, their sexuality becomes a mirror in which the conquering "King Kong" or "Tarzan" sees an image of his ideal self. Women can therefore orient their sexuality and its expression so that it serves to bolster the fragile and anxiety-prone male sexual ego. This also makes women's sexuality and its expression a potentially dangerous experience for men (while it simultaneously exists as the site of potential pleasure) as one bound up with a lack of trust and expectations of duplicity. For women can also 'use' their sexuality to undermine the male ego by putting sexual potency up for scrutiny.

This discourse situates men's sexuality in an impossible position in relation to women's sexuality as men both desire and fear women's sexual power. Therefore, sex with a woman can potentially bolster men's sense of themselves as 'real' men, yet on the other hand can serve as an emasculating/castrating experience.

The obligation to please women sexually reinforces men's perceptions of women's sexuality as dangerous. However, men are situated as wanting to please women sexually only in so far as it refers back to them. The importance of affirming the male image of being sexually potent, and hence 'masculine', remains key to this pursuit. For example:

Mikobe: You'll find that men say ... I had her in such a way that, even if she ... get in contact with someone, she must always think back of me. She must always see me as the best one. The one person that makes her completely satisfied.

Even though men want to sexually satisfy women, their egos and fears appear to prevent them from asking women about their sexuality and sexual needs:

Bongi: Sometimes, your ego will prevent you from ... asking whether the woman is satisfied or not. Because if you happen to find out that she is not [sexually satisfied by you] then your ego will be damaged.

Tulani: Certainly you cannot ask her, you have to find out yourself ... We normally do not ask, because it'll seem as if you want to get things easy, you don't want to work for them ... It's like in the class, if they give you test papers, you cannot ask for the answers. You must find out for yourself because that is actually an evaluation and even to ask it's a sin. We prefer not to talk much about the points that we know ... We like to search for ourselves.

Both excerpts highlight a discourse on the vulnerability of the male ego and the centrality of women and their responses in propping up the male ego. Tulani, for instance, equates sexual intercourse with writing a test, putting forward the notion that his performance is under scrutiny. Interestingly, women are not seen as active role players in the sex exam, though they have the dual role of being 'papers' to be written on and 'examiners' marking the work done by men. Thus women's sexual response can potentially castrate/emasculate the male/masculine sexual ego. Women's concrete bodies as pleasure-giving sources or possibilities are simultaneously sources of potential damage to male sexuality and sexual subjectivity. By specifically not talking about sex and sexuality with women, men pre-emptively protect their egos against possible 'damage'. In this discourse, heterosexual men attribute a modicum of power (at the levels of

personal, interpersonal, social, and also unconsciously/intrapsychic) to women, especially in relation to their sexuality as it is perceived, experienced and constructed by these men.

Another component of men's reported confusion and anxiety in relation to women relates to traditional notions of women as irrational and inconsistent (Potts, 2001). Participants speak about how women sometimes do things that leave men feeling confused about what it is they want or desire. Some women may surprise men by contradicting, through their responses, the expectations about what women value and appreciate. For instance, she may appreciate a gift that has little value in the man's eyes:

Mikobe: You can buy something, for your girlfriend ... or your wife. Saying that ... hoping that it will please her, but you don't get the kind of reaction that you expected. But, some other time, you buy something which you think it's even ... a bit less, in terms of value, to what you got the previous time. And, you are expecting the worst. And, you get surprised, if she appreciates it very well. It's kind of like, 'Wow! What is it that pleases this person?'

Women's sexual fantasy expression and elaboration is also positioned as potentially deviant/dangerous to male/men's sexuality when it is perceived/experienced as transgressing the normative boundaries of female sexuality and desire. Daniel draws attention to the existence of a group of dangerous women who "have similar fantasies to men", as well as those who "think about pornographic magazines". Such women are perceived as sexually deviant because in this discourse pornography is regarded as part of the man's "world of fantasies" and as belonging to "the man's realm".

Thus, 'proper' female sexual conduct dictates that women do not appropriate for themselves aspects of what is perceived as belonging to male sexuality, even if such appropriation happens in their fantasy lives. Such women are discomforting to men, for example:

Tulani: I don't like women who watch pornography.

Daniel: [I don't] want to have a woman ... who is comfortable watching pornographic movies with me. I don't want to have a woman like that. Women who like pornography are not confident about [their] own sexuality.

In the latter quote, the participant uses a pathologising discourse to undermine women who show an interest in pornography. Such 'deviant' women are further problematised through Daniel's suggestion that they form a minority:

Daniel: [I] doubt that very many women ... as men like pornography.

What is noteworthy about this construction of male and female sexuality is that male sexuality is assumed as the standard prescribing 'proper' sexual conduct (including 'proper' sexual fantasies!) for both men and women. The use of psychological discourses to reinforce traditional gender stereotypes and legitimise male sexuality have been noted elsewhere (Gough, 1998; Shefer & Strebel, 2001). Similarly, in Kaminer's (1993) study of men's drinking talk, women are labeled negatively if they drink excessively as men do. These traditional gender and sexual identities are exaggerated in the military.

8.4 Lack of communication on sexuality issues

As highlighted above, men do not talk to female sexual partners about sex and sexuality, and particularly do not discuss their sexual needs and desires. Why this gap in communication? Besides the discourses of cultural constructions discussed in the previous chapter, one of the reasons shared by participants is sheer anxiety. The topic leaves men 'uncomfortable' and 'awkward'. The point here is the positioning of men as being in a state of tension (anxiety) with respect to women's sexuality:

Bongi: Most of the time ... guys would be afraid to ... communicate with the ladies, in terms of sex, and ask what it is that they want. It's sometimes ... awkward, or uncomfortable.

Contradictory views related to men's distance from wanting knowledge about women's desire have to do with the nature of the relationship between sexual partners; more specifically, how men construct those relationships. The first view is that if a man cares about the woman as a sexual partner, he will be more likely to ask her about her sexual needs and wants. Conversely, if a man does not care for the woman he has sexual relationships with, he is unlikely to want to know more about her and/or her sexuality.

Mikobe: Maybe you just want to have sex, and your objective is simply to have sex, then you don't worry whether she's enjoying it or not. Because, you just want to have sex. But, if you care for the person, you are involved in more ... moral relationship, where you care for each other, you will tend to be concerned. you need to find a way of addressing it [her sexual desires and needs, especially if these are not satisfied].

Simon: It is not that much of a pressure when it is a one-night stand. But if you like a girl, you really have to do it right. You have to put some effort.

The alternative discourse, that it is difficult for men to communicate with their long-standing female partners about their sexual needs and desires, hinges more around the notion that they should know each other already – they are not strangers. Bongi indicates that the fact one lives with a long-term female partner somehow complicates matters for the man. But if it is a strange woman, somebody 'other', it might be easier to talk in more blatant sexual terms, again highlighting the whore/Madonna or good/bad women divide. This underlines the way men on some level feel more comfortable being sexual with women who are 'other' (Shefer, 1999) and suggests that men can be more open and communicative outside of their relationships.

Bongi: Some lady that you maybe see ... once and maybe never again, it somehow makes it easier for men to talk [and ask] about [her] sexual needs and desires. Whatever you say to her ... won't affect you, because you hardly see that

person. So, whatever you'll be saying ... won't have any effect [on] your relationship with her.

In this discourse, the lack of a relationship, and a partner's strangeness, serves as an encouragement to be open about sex and sexuality. What makes it easier for men in this discourse to be open in their talk about sexual needs and desires with strange women is also the fact that "you don't care" (Bongi) about her or what she says. But since you do, or have to, care about what your long-standing partner thinks and feels, it makes it difficult for men to raise issues of sexual needs and desires. It also signifies that for men a non-caring emotional connection means openness about sexuality, sexual needs and desires; while a caring emotional relation with a particular woman means non-openness about these matters.

Some participants express a different view on sex with strangers, reporting confusion and anxiety at the beginning of a relationship or during a one-night stand, as sexual partners are keenly observing each other. Men rely on women's bodily responses, such as sounds, facial expressions and body movements, rather than asking how a woman feels.

Simon: You listen to the sounds, look at facial expressions or something and you don't know what that means but, but when the girls starts falling with you in bed, then it's great and it's relaxed.

Thulani: If you kiss, the kiss that is called French kiss. You first feel in her body, there are places, that when you touch, you'll feel her collapse. When she collapses then it means that is a soft spot, that I must always use it if I want her to be fast.

That men act out different practices towards female partners depending on the circumstances of their relationships with these partners is reminiscent of discourses emerging in relation to HIV/AIDS, for example the way men will use condoms with 'unsafe' women but not women they are 'serious' about or would like to be in

relationship with (Waldby, Kippax, & Crawford, 1993a). What is important about this discourse is that the degree/extent of care men show their sexual partners is closely linked to how they relate to women's sexuality.

Reading the excerpts, it seems that men's supposed fear of or reluctance to find out about women's sexual desires and needs also stems from the fact that they have very little interest in wanting to know about it. Cultural prescriptions and the practices of both men and women encourage women to defer to male sexuality, hence women are expected to know about male sexual needs, not the other way around (Lesch, 2000; Strebel, 1993).

Mikobe: For example ... the women, in some of the African societies, [who] are ... staying in ... poorly developed ... areas [are] still practising all the traditions.

The excerpts above show how unquestioned traditions are evoked to legitimate a particular form of hegemonic masculinity which involves control over women's sexuality and much of their lives. What is also shown is that men, situated in these discourses, feel they don't need to know about or explore women's sexuality and its concomitant desires. In terms of how masculine sexuality is constructed from these different views, sex in the context of an emotional relationship is complicated, while sex where there is no emotional connection holds anxieties, yet is largely uncomplicated.

8.4 Women soldiers' sexuality: a challenge in the military

Stereotypical gender role constructions and sexual expectations of women emerged as central threads of participant opinion about women joining the military. As discussed in Chapter 6, there was particular discomfort about the sexual practices of women on deployment and on courses. This is evident in the following extracts:

Mtobeli: For things like relationships, it's not good in the military for women, especially in combat. For them to be in combat for me, I don't think so. Because let's say, [your wife is] moved from Cape Town, with a ship to India ... it's

possible that your wife will get tempted somewhere on the way. She will want security, then maybe take one of the guys.

Thando: Say for instance you have a relationship and then she goes on military deployment, chances are she might have a relationship there. All military ladies are like ... when they go on deployment they start relationships.

There is clearly a construction of military women's sexuality as 'deviant'. This is emphasised by Sam who compares their behaviour with that of civilian women in order to problematise their sexual practices:

Sam: I say again I think it's a good thing with bad consequences in some cases. As I said earlier I saw a lot, I mean a lot, of women in uniform, in the military getting involved in intimate relationships, quite easily, you understand. I don't know why, but quite easily. And you will see when you go to a function or a social event, take women soldiers and civilian ladies together with men [and] you'll see who's the woman ... misbehaving the most.

Women soldiers' sexuality is therefore constructed as breaking from the traditional discourse and morality of the day, and may be interpreted as a rejection of women who enter into the military in the first place. Their sexuality is placed in question precisely because their very presence in a male world represents a challenge and a threat. According to Cohen (2005), women's sexual deviance is threatening to men and the broader social system. There is also a concern that women soldiers' sexuality will impact negatively on the broader cultural context of the military. This is consistent with Guttman's (1997) argument that sex and sex differences will continue to be a disruptive force in the military despite dedication to the full integration of women. According to John, intimate relationships between military instructors and recruits have catastrophic consequences for military principles such as discipline and respect. John further reported that women do not seem bothered by the sexual attentions of some instructors, and may even provoke this attention to cover their vulnerabilities related to physical fitness. This

man's view is contrary to the frustrations reported by women around the country, where they accuse drill instructors of rape and sexual harassment (Guttman, 1997).

For participants, intimate relationships with senior personnel are used to the benefit of women who are struggling to achieve success in the system on their own:

Simon: Guys are strange creatures. Guys do that because they need something in return, and woman know that, so they use power and they get qualifications. There are captains and majors in the infantry who have never, ever had even a section under them. They never had a platoon, they never had anything. All they do [is] make coffee and have sex with their seniors. I'm not saying all females. Don't get me wrong. There [are] a lot of good female soldiers. Unfortunately there is an element of ladies who [are] absolutely using the system.

The following quote illustrates the skepticism with which women in the military are viewed and how their sexuality is problematised in order to undermine their authority:

Gerhard: Let me give you an example. I was in a course and the person who was in charge of the course, the instructor, she was a captain, she was not part of the training but she organised the whole exercise. She kept control over the whole exercise. She had a reputation for sleeping around. She wasn't a bad person but she had loose sexual relationships. And ... looking at our constitution there's nothing wrong with it because she didn't ... do what was wrong in terms of the military disciplinary code. It creates such a bad situation among all the guys who were on course [who] thought she was a joke. They undermined her authority under her nose and they made jokes in her face about it in a very subtle way that she couldn't take, but it wasn't good for discipline. Even looking at the way they operate on the fighting, running and shooting ... few of them have the ability to keep that up and [from] what I hear at (name of a military training unit) they have a squad for the ladies and a squad for the men, because the ladies can't keep up with them. There's nothing wrong with ... women in fighting roles but my

feeling is that we're trying to push this thing and we're not trying to make it scientific. There are few girls who are good ... A lot of the ladies who stay in the force we don't really require on the fighting line. They are not aspirant as the guys are.

Underlying the problematising of military sexuality is the traditional construction of men as sexually active and instinctively unfaithful, and expectations that women should have only one partner. Military women who do not behave in this mould are labelled negatively and undermined. The literature abounds with examples of this negative labelling of civilian women, underscoring the sexual double standard that applies internationally (Hollway, 1989; Holland et al., 1991). However, according to participants in this study, women in the military are more sexually active than civilians and appear to 'break' far more often with their traditional sexual roles. Men are therefore hesitant to have a relationship with women in the military. The following excerpt illustrates:

Thando: She goes on deployment somewhere and her boyfriend is staying. She's going to have a relationship or chances are she might have a relationship. And the fact that the military is like a little ... small and almost all the relationships you have its ... like everybody knows. They start getting names as prostitutes.

An interesting aspect of this discourse is that when female soldiers are away from their home, their reasons for having extra-marital or 'outside' intimate relationships are challenged, whereas for men it is accepted and understood as loneliness, or a result of being away from their families. Women, however, are labeled as sluts, prostitutes and "state mattresses" (everybody can sleep on that mattress).

John: For me it's not, it's not well if a lady goes out with a lot of guys. There's this, we carry this picture [that] a woman must be ladylike. And, I don't know, it's just, it's bad character. I don't know why, but then again for men it's different. I don't have a particular reason. I don't know if it's just a male thing, but I, okay I realise I'm a feeling person. What I feel is right, or my emotions

help me think this is right and I go with that. The thing is, when I think about a lady doing it, I feel, no. But when I hear about the guy doing that, that feeling don't come.

During the interviews a moralistic discourse was revealed that appears to imply that married men and women should not have extra-marital affairs:

John: We were talking about women and how they are. This guy told me that 90% of the ladies ... slept with several guys while being on course. I don't know why, but I've also experienced that, er, there's a loose, a loose tendency and ladies will easily submit to ... having sex with guys, even when they're married. Um, I can't say why, but um there's a easy tendency to have sex ... I mean a married girl's on course, they're married [but] they still have sex with another guy.

Married men are also expected to be morally right, and while it was accepted that because they are men they can have lust, they are not encouraged to follow those instincts. This view came from both married and unmarried men. As the quotes illustrate, however, any stigma associated with having extra-marital or 'outside' intimate relationships is acute for women, but does not apply to sexually active men. Such constructions emerge out of gendered constructions of sexuality (Shefer et al., 2000). A number of participants revealed how men who go on courses actively plan to have "*kursusliefdes*" (course romances) with their colleagues or civilian women, highlighting how such practices are normative and expected for male soldiers, while women soldiers who attempt such practices are rejected and stigmatised.

It also appears that military men prefer not to have relationships with military women as it may complicate their lives in the work environment. Military women in this context are further problematised as being potentially dangerous to men's domestic and work lives:

Sam: Some guys think that if I keep this thing ... outside its better. Maybe inside the camp there's somebody who knows my wife or my girlfriend, so I'd rather keep it outside, you see.

According to Tshepo, the reason why men choose women in the community is that women in the military know one another, which restricts men's opportunities for having different women at different courses. This suggests that a group of women of a particular rank might communicate with each other and share not only the content of the course or courses but also details about intimate relationships during these times.

On the other hand, there are also some benefits in having female sexual partners in the military for men. In particular, having a sexual relationship with a woman of senior rank (especially if it involves other historical power differences such as race) is reported by participants as signifying success for men. It is seen as a sign of masculinity:

Sam: I was a sergeant. I was in love with a captain, and she was white ... We have to keep that thing secret. If the bosses ever found out that this white captain was going out with a coloured sergeant, they would have give[n] her gas (tough time) all the time, you see.

Keeping the secret was reported as exciting and challenging because the couple could not be seen in some public places together:

You really, you ... can't wait for the next time you see her again, you see. So it was actually boosting the ego. It didn't last for that long. It was, it was ... nice.

Ratele (2005) explains the secrecy of a sexual relationship between a black man and a white woman as developing out of a psychic and social reaction to the apartheid regime. For Simon to have a sexual relationship with a senior woman is articulated as a challenge which proves his masculinity:

I was a sergeant and I had a sexual encounter with a major and that was purely a challenge, that was to see if I can sleep with a major.

8.5 Sexual violation of women

In this section I explore participants' understanding of sexual violence, attempting to identify discourses that provide insight into male sexual violence towards women. Understanding how participants make meaning of their behaviour may suggest recommendations to reduce coercive and risky sexual practices and facilitate participants' acknowledgement of responsibility for their violence and conscious efforts to exert power over women. A key question is: how are men's and women's sexualities located in relation to sexual violence (or violations) in general and to rape specifically?

In reflecting on sexual violence, the dominant discourse of participants was that rape and rapists are abnormal and pathological. Rape is seen as problematic and differentiated from 'normal' male sexuality. However, what emerged strongly was that some situations may be defined as rape while others are in question, highlighting a popular notion that women are not always believable when they say they have been raped:

Mikobe: There is argument for, and argument against. There are things that can make you believe she was raped. There are things that can counter [those] beliefs, as well.

What are those 'things' that can support a woman's claim, and what are those that do not? In this discourse, the woman is regarded as raped or sexually violated by the male when the actual act of violation/intercourse is preceded by some form of physical violence or persuasion:

Mikobe: She might have been forced. She was thrown across the bed. That's why she wanted to stop him.

What detracts from a woman's claim of rape is when she is perceived as having played a part in it:

Mikobe: [] especially if she was not sure whether she wanted it, whether she wanted him to really stop.

Further doubt is cast on her claim by questioning her 'sexual signals', again illustrating male suspicion of women's claims of rape. This echoes the popular discourse questioning whether she really meant 'no' when she said 'no':

Mikobe: Maybe she just acted in one of those things where people say, when a 'no' means exactly the opposite of it. The words are 'no', but the whole idea [and the] actions being portrayed say, 'yes, yes,' and just go on.

Bongi: They then normally think a 'no' is a 'yes'. Men will hear 'no', but then proceed as if it is a 'yes', because they see that this person does not mean ['no'].

In short, women are positioned as being at times responsible for being sexually violated when they are not "clear" and "strong" enough in their protests against men's unwanted sexual attention. If a woman's protests against a man's unwanted sexual advances are interpreted by men (and others) as "weak", they will be blamed for the consequences. Therefore a woman's 'no', perceived as 'uncertain' and 'weak' by a man, may be interpreted as a disguised 'yes' because it could be her way of "testing" the man to see how strongly he wanted her.

Bongi: She didn't want to appear ... easy or easily available for sexual intercourse.

The following quote even more clearly outlines men's lack of acknowledgement of women's experience of sexual coercion:

Mikobe: I don't really understand how you can just be raped, and you are there without doing anything, without a small fight of some kind? I mean, I don't understand ... how does a person get to get in between you, when you don't want it? And, there's no sign of any struggle there. Unless [] you are gun-handled. But when I'm just pushing you?

Even a little force ("pushing") by men seems justified in this discourse as something relatively trivial and not constituting sexual violence. It appears that only extreme forms of men's violence qualify as contributing to sexual violence (being "gun-handled"). But what motivates men to rape/sexually violate women? In this discourse, one possible motivating factor stems from men's supposed "weakness" when it comes to women and sex, again highlighting the salience of the male sexual drive discourse:

Bongi: In most cases, men tend to be very, very weak, when it comes to ... women and sex. They simply cannot resist.

According to participants, men tend to take sexual advantage of women with whom there is some degree of familiarity (through direct or mutual friendship, and/or immediate or distant family ties, for instance). Such familiarity tends to generate a measure of trust which the would-be rapist/violator exploits to his own sexual advantage. In these circumstances, women tend to be "free" in the sense of being relaxed or unguarded. In this discourse most, if not all, men are positioned as potential sexual violators.

In reflecting on coercive sexuality, some participants invoked the popular discourse that women 'cry rape' and that some women make accusations of rape to manipulate or punish men. They maintained that when women feel 'used' and then rejected, they will cry 'rape!' as a way of venting anger against the man. More disturbing is the claim by participants that even if a woman was raped, she would not be upset about the sexual coercion per se but rather about being 'used' by a man and then emotionally rejected:

Mikobe: She ... was not cross that he raped her. She was cross that ... he used her. Because [of] the way she read the smile. The smile saying, 'No, I didn't actually need you. I don't have feelings for you. I just did it simply because I knew I could ... walk over you just like that'. Then she felt treated like a bitch, or small, and stuff like that. That's when she started to get angry ... So, there was no sign of ... outcry against the manner in which it was done. She only admitted that she was a loser in the end. She was played with.

In this discourse, women regularly find themselves in situations in which they do not want to have sexual intercourse with a man, but reportedly put up little resistance. The spotlight is thus shifted from (the violence of) male sexuality to the woman's female/feminine sexuality, and what is scrutinised is how she may have contributed to her own sexual objectification/demise/violation/rape. Thus, men perceive and treat female sexuality as (at least partly) responsible for women's violation by men. These findings mirror that of Harris et al. (1995) in which power relations between males and females are indexed using sexuality as a site for such power play. Researchers suggest that to avoid such marginalising of women, there has to be open challenge of the dominant discourses of gender violence/aggression that men adhere to (Harris et al., 1995).

Participants also refer to social spaces/places (such as taverns and nightclubs) that are dangerous to women, reflecting popular mythology about rape that sets up blaming discourses towards women. In these spaces women are more "vulnerable" to male sexuality in its predatory manifestations, particularly when alcohol is involved:

Mikobe: Those [women] who drink, especially in risky areas like taverns and nightclubs and stuff like that. They are more vulnerable to find themselves trapped in that situation of having to resist men's unwanted sexual advances.

Many participants subscribe to popular discourses on rape which blame women for not asserting their needs or desires. Only Sam demonstrated a progressive discourse,

challenging the status quo of sexual violation. He insists that people should take note of South African policy:

Sam: In the South African context rape is anything without consent, and ... this is slightly off the track ... I even heard some time ago about a story about a woman who insisted this guy just put on a condom, you see, so now she was just trying to protect herself in the long run, while he thought that she was giving him consent, by saying put on a condom ... You understand. So its two different thoughts but rape is rape. In this case, its clear enough, clearly rape. Like this guy, he thought because she was weak and saying that she trusting him like in fully trust him, and he just carry, does his own thing without her consent, she ... while he was married in any case, so in my opinion its pure rape.

Sam: Many, many men ... like I know about these two friends of mine in Gauteng, they did the same thing, but in a very well-planned manner.

Int: And they don't view it as rape?

Sam: No, they don't view it as rape, see. Because, um, could I tell you the story about one fellow in my life? Because he was having a steam room, and she was a coloured lady, he was instructor so ... and she was having an affair on this course with him, with a black guy. So this coloured lady thought that, what I saw from the outside, see, he thought that the coloured lady can have an affair with a black guy, then she must be weak, you understand, that he can try her luck. Under the command of this instructor guy. The instructor is a coloured guy. So this instructor was ... in need of this lady, you see, but she's not for him, because she was involved with this other guy. So, he thought that, and he told me, he told us afterwards that, if she can have a black guy, then she gonna have me, that was his, how he thought, see.

In this example, racialised discourses are interwoven with constructions of rape. 'Coloured' women are labelled as 'easy' if they are sexually involved with blacks, reflecting the classic apartheid hierarchy of white, coloured, and black with black as the most subordinate group (Du Pisani, 2001; Enloe, 1975, 1988).

Given the way rape is defined and discussed by most participants, it is possible that they might have sexually coerced or raped women but would deny the level of their coercion. This is evident through their contradictory discourses on women's right to assert their sexual preferences, particularly the right to say no. Most participants draw on a human rights discourse in which women have the right to refuse sexual intercourse and control their own sexuality and its expression if they want to. Yet women in heterosexual sexual relationships are situated as having to account for their refusal to have sex with their male sexual partner:

Bongi: [The man has to] understand ... why she doesn't want it. She cannot just say 'I don't want to make love', and that's it. She must explain to the guy, why she doesn't want to make love, so that the guy will understand. Whether or not they are in a marital relationship, as long as they are in relationship.

This participant positioned himself within contradictory discourses: one acknowledging a woman's human right to refuse with her body; another controlling, in which a woman is seen as ultimately accountable to a man in relationship.

8.6 Conclusions

Key issues emerging in this chapter relate to the salience of continued moral discourses on sexuality, particularly female sexuality. Women are viewed as the repositories for moral standards. It is women who must maintain morality in sexuality by being faithful, while it is expected and even rewarded when men break moral codes. Thus women will be punished for breaking out of their expected roles and the morality of the day, while men need to do so in order to achieve masculinity. Also significant is the way in which

the human rights discourse conflicts with traditional gender discourses. Thus men know that women have a right over their bodies and sexuality, yet they resist this as it conflicts with their achievement of traditional male sexuality. They find it hard to accept, for example, that women can say no to sex with a male partner. They must still, somehow, account for this to men and, while men accept they have a right to insist on a condom, they cannot help but interpret this as a slur on women's morality. They assume she must have been unfaithful. Such panic may be facilitative of change if it can be constructively brought to men's consciousness, as men in the status quo make most decisions about when, where, and how to have sex, leaving women little decision-making power.

While women are expected to yield to male sexuality, this chapter also highlights how women are also perceived as wielding their own power in being able to manipulate men and impact on the male ego. Despite the dominant influence of male sexuality, an awareness that women are sexual does represent a space for change and resistance, as does participants' awareness that there are shifting pressures on men to become more responsive to women's 'ways' of being sexually intimate. However, a more positive discourse on female sexuality and desire is rapidly repressed in participants' narratives using pathologising discourses on women who transgress traditional female sexuality. This response appears to be particularly vehement in the masculinist context of the military where women's presence, let alone their sexuality, is questioned.

CHAPTER 9: REFLECTIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

9.1 Introduction

This study argues that a fuller understanding of the HIV/AIDS pandemic has to move beyond the influence of structural forces, political interplays and issues of globalisation (mentioned in Section 1.2 of this study) and incorporate an expanded notion of gender. The simplistic way of thinking about gender as a distinction between men and women will not help us to fight HIV/AIDS (Dowsett, 2003). Rather, any attempts to understand or intervene with traditional forms of male and female (hetero)sexuality need to take into account a gendered view of social and structural forces. This study has sought to deepen the understanding of how dominant constructions of masculinity and sexuality impact on soldiers' risky sexual practices. The focus is on the perspectives of male soldiers as described in the sample, while the military context is explored with respect to the particular role it plays in framing and reinforcing hegemonic forms of male (hetero)sexuality which may facilitate unsafe sexual practices. In this final chapter, I reflect on this study's central findings and the implications these may have for knowledge in the area of masculinities, gender and sexuality, as well as their potential worth in developing HIV/AIDS intervention programmes. Specific recommendations are also made that could be relevant for addressing HIV/AIDS within the military.

Although a concluding chapter is standard procedure to summarise the findings of a study and to reflect on its significance, within a social constructionist framework and discourse analysis the concluding chapter can only be seen to provide artificial closure (Shefer 1999). Social constructionist frameworks do not allow for static closure as pointed out in Chapter 5. Interpreting and bringing meaning is always a partial act predisposed to ongoing acts and change. Notwithstanding the methodological constraints present in this study, it is still useful to relate its findings to other studies for purposes of comparison and to produce new insights and knowledge.

Recommendations for future research are presented, using ideas drawn from this study and from debates I have engaged in with colleagues in various forums including professional meetings and academic conferences. Finally, the limitations of the present study are discussed, and a call is made to broaden the methodological framework by incorporating interdisciplinary analysis.

9.2 Central findings about masculinity and masculinity in the military

Both national and international critical studies emphasise the importance of looking at both local and global contexts when exploring masculinities. This study, though not discarding the importance of global contexts, privileges the local institutional context. Interpretation is focused on the manner in which soldiers in the SANDF construct masculine identities and sexuality within their individual lives, which in turn are located within the military context and are directed by the various military activities they perform.

Core discourses on masculinity that emerged from study participants were predicated on an understanding that men should provide financial and physical security to women and family. It was found that men seek to be independent decision-makers in their work and personal lives. This study found that a key symbol of masculinity is heterosexual practice, comprising well established discourses including the male sexual drive discourse; a rejection and stigmatisation of alternative sexualities; double standards between men and women; and the denial of female sexuality. These discourses have been identified in both national and international studies (for example, Connell, 1995, 2001; Durrheim & Lindegger, 2001; Foreman, 1999; Hearn, 1996; Hollway, 1989; Morrell, 1998; Shefer, 1999). What emerged as different is the particularity of the military context and its role in framing and exaggerating dominant practices of 'doing' masculinity.

The literature portrays a distinct correlation between the military and masculinity (Enloe, 1988; Sasson-Levy, 2003). Masculinity is deeply embedded in military practices and

ideologies (Barrett, 1996). This study's findings concur that the military plays a crucial role in constructing and replicating hegemonic forms of masculinity and male sexual performance. Understanding the salience of the military context in reproducing normative forms of masculinity and sexual practice underscores the power institutions in general have in directing the way gender roles are performed.

War is the central function of the military, and this study confirms that the institutional context of the military legitimises and idealises violence, even rationalises male violence towards women. Participants mentioned that carrying rifles and wearing military uniform are explicit symbols of aggression and ultimately power. These material conditions exaggerate hegemonic masculinities and silence dissenting masculinities, leaving little space for tolerating alternative forms of masculinity or femininity.

Logistical and material aspects of the military context also appear to facilitate traditional male roles and related risky sexual practices. For example, the fact that soldiers are frequently deployed far from their partners serves to rationalise 'typical' male behaviour such as seeking multiple sexual encounters. Further, many military contexts involve soldiers being in a position of socio-economic power, giving soldiers a traditionally male gender advantage in relation to refugees and opening spaces for male forms of sexual control and coercion. Female refugees are typically economically vulnerable and may engage in unwanted and unsafe sexual activities to secure the food parcels they are offered in return. These examples suggest that sexual practices are indeed influenced by gender and socio-economic status, which interlink and even bolster constructions of masculinity and male sexuality.

In this study the reasons why whites and why Africans join the military are noted as different. For whites it was a means to prove masculinity, while for Africans the military presented a work opportunity, which also symbolised an element of masculinity. The end result, despite a different departure point, is that masculine identity is strengthened by the common culture of the military.

In this study, I also found a compelling link between African, particularly Xhosa, initiation rites and military culture. Initiation rituals represent a transition to manhood and are considered a defining precondition for masculinity by those African cultures practicing initiation. In the past, however, military conscription (see Chapter 2) represented an expression of white masculinity (Enloe, 1975). In this study, data indicates that circumcised African men find it difficult to relate to or submit to other (uncircumcised) men in the military who are their seniors in rank. However, hegemonic masculinity silences other masculinities which are ethnically different (Kometsi, 2004) and in the military, institutional rank is accorded the highest respect.

This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by engaging the debate that counterpoints notions of universal hegemonies of masculinity against the influence of social and institutional contexts. I explore the extent to which an overtly masculine institution like the military exaggerates traditional identities and sexual practices for men, thus reinforcing stereotyped, heterosexual masculinity. This study indeed confirms that certain global masculinities are articulated and exaggerated in the military, and that military culture emphasises hegemonic masculinity, but also that soldiers have much in common with men outside the military.

9.3 The binary construction of male and female sexuality

I have found in this study and in the literature that constructions of both masculinity and sexuality are predicated on an understanding of men and women as inherently different (Rubin, 1993; Weeks, 1986). This discourse of difference underlies much of the way in which participants in this study construct their masculinity and negotiate heterosexual practices. Men are constructed, in this and other studies, as forced by 'nature' to seek sex with women (Hollway, 1989; Lesch, 2000; Shefer, 1999; Weeks, 1986). Their sexual relationships are constructed as not based primarily on love but centred on physical pleasure. This is in contrast to the female emphasis on emotional commitment, economic dependency, and physical and social safety. This construction of both male and female sexuality is seen as immutable as it is believed to be natural and normal.

Participants also draw on discourses of culture to explain male and female sexuality and its expression, a finding highlighted in a number of other local discursive studies (Miles, 1992; Shefer, 1999; Strebel, 1993; Van Wyk, 2004). For example, participants attribute the lack of communication between men and women about sexual needs and desires to socio-cultural constraints and regulations. Other South African studies find adherence to these traditional versions of masculinity and femininity (Miles, 1992; Shefer, 1999).

Women are constructed as sexually passive, with participants finding contradictory discourses of active female sexuality a challenge. On the one hand, men encourage women to be in control of their sexuality, and to be assertive about their sexual needs, employing a human rights discourse which enshrines women's right to refuse sex with their male partners. On the other hand, there is a pervasive discourse that questions a woman's refusal of sex. A female partner's assertion of 'no' to sex is interpreted as questioning a man's sexual abilities and performance, and represents a challenge to his power to control a woman's sexuality. Women are expected to explain to men why they lack the desire to engage in sexual activity.

This study reveals 'double standards' in which men question women's rights to sexual desire and pleasure (see Holland et al., 1996; Shefer 1999; Shefer & Foster, 2001), yet continue to rationalise their own sexual practices through biologically determinist notions of inherent, urgent, uncontrollable male sexuality, coined by Hollway (1989) as the 'male sexual drive discourse'. This has been shown by many to underpin men's rationalisation of coercive and violent sexual practices, including rape (Kottler & Long, 1997; Strebel, 1993). For example, soldiers who work with communities of refugees speak of the temptation to ask for sexual favours because of their loneliness and the frustration of being far from home. Underlying such a narrative is the notion that men 'need' sex, and cannot survive without a sexual partner. Because women in these situations are economically vulnerable (and are lured by food parcels), such practices may even be coercive, yet are rationalised by soldiers on the basis of the male sexual drive discourse.

There is a lack of positive discourse on women's sexuality and their sexual desires (Holland et al., 1996; Shefer, 1999; Shefer & Foster, 2001; Shefer et al., 2002; Van Wyk, 2004; Wood & Foster, 1995). In this study the silencing of women's sexual desires is particularly evident for female soldiers whose sexuality is reported to be 'deviant' compared to civilian women. This position highlights a subtext in which the very presence of women in a masculinist world is a transgression of normative gender roles.

Daniel: What I mean being in the military is that ... you get socialised into a specific way in the military. And ... women in the military, to be honest with you are sometimes not very ... feminine. So, maybe that's why ... sexual behavior in the military is a bit different to sexual behavior outside.

Cohen (2005) points out that women's sexual deviance is threatening to men and the broader social system. In this study, participants further perceive female soldiers' sexual desires as dangerous not only to men, but to the broader institutional context of the military. For example, intimate relationships between senior and junior personnel are classified as potentially disruptive of military principles such as discipline and respect. Blame for this is attributed to women joining the military, especially those who have stepped outside the traditional discourse that prescribes moral values for women. Guttman (1997) argues that due to the implications of sex and sexual differences of men and women, the integration of women in the military may continue to challenge working relationships. Similarly, while participants in this study expressed commitment to integration, they also expressed concerns about it.

What underpins these gendered views is a traditional construction of men as instinctively unfaithful and continually sexually active. Female sexuality in the military milieu is expected to be 'morally correct'. If women behave otherwise, they are labelled negatively. This stigma also applies to female civilians (Holland et al., 1991; Hollway, 1989, 1996; Lesch, 2000, Shefer, 1999).

Contradicting the dominant discourse that denies women sexuality and desire is a discourse that portrays women's sexual response as significant for men, primarily as an index of male sexual prowess. As a result, knowledge about women's sexual desire is necessary for men to secure their sense of successful masculinity. This liberal discourse encouraging women to be sexually active does not take into account the power inequalities inherent in constructions of masculinity and femininity (Hollway, 1989; Van Wyk, 2004).

Although men are typically set up as sexual predators, a number of studies indicate a shift toward men resisting or at least not being so comfortable with hegemonic masculinities (Lindegger & Maxwell, 2005; Shefer et al., 2002). While participants in this study primarily endorsed constructions of hegemonic masculinity, in some instances traditional masculinities were questioned. Our work as researchers is to make these alternative discourses visible, as they offer the possibility of change. Shefer (1999), for example, raises the need for discourses that challenge the negative construction of female sexuality and acknowledge women as sexual agents. Though participants showed ambivalence about women who initiated condom use, the acknowledgement that women should also be in control of contraception shows a less rigid discourse on female sexuality. The existing military educational intervention could play a key role in reinforcing this reconstructed view.

9.4 Discourses of the 'other' in relation to safe sex and HIV/AIDS

All the participants acknowledged the importance of safe sex. Interestingly, even though men seek to control female sexuality, some participants accused women of resisting condoms. This study finds discourses of trust and love are identified as barriers to safe sex for both males and females, in line with international and national findings that men distinguish between 'clean' and 'unclean' women and view their love relationships as a site of safety (Bremridge, 2000; Flood, 2000; Waldby et al., 1993a; Shefer, 1999). In the military, this definition of 'cleanliness' and perception of risk in terms of HIV/AIDS status is stratified according to occupation within the military hierarchy. All military

personnel undergo regular health assessments and are thereby classified in terms of their health status. A further perception is that officers are more 'clean' than non-commissioned officers, and new recruits and officers who pursue tertiary studies are even 'cleaner'.

Stigmatisation of the 'other' in relation to safe sex has been shown to be racialised (Whiteside & Sunter, 2000). As documented by a wide range of studies, HIV/AIDS is a politicised disease (Cohen, 1999, 2005; Collins, 2004; Ratele, 2001b). It has been illustrated that HIV/AIDS is still strongly characterised as a disease of blacks, of the uneducated and the poor. HIV/AIDS is perceived as a moral issue, and morality, as participants highlighted above, is linked with education, race, class and military rank. This perception is contradicted by a different understanding of reality in the military. As detailed in Chapter 8, female soldiers are perceived to be inevitably sexually active, and senior military women are reported to have intimate relationships with their subordinates even if subordinates are from different racial groups. The other issue raised of officers planning course romances (*kursusliefdes*) during tertiary training courses undermines the notion of safety among the higher institutional strata, while the notion that white military men are safe from HIV/AIDS infection is undermined by their acknowledging casual sexual practices with colleagues and women they meet at nightclubs.

At the same time, it was found that for some men condoms symbolise masculinity, and that the more condoms you have and use signals masculine sexual tendencies. This bragging may be a precursor to a more positive discourse on condoms that draws on traditional male sexuality to stress the importance of safe sexual practices.

9.5 Female inclusion in the military as a source for male anxiety

Women in the military are not welcomed for three reasons. Firstly, the military is viewed as a traditional male environment because it is risky and not suitable for women, who are tolerated mainly in low-ranked administrative posts which are 'safer'. Some participants blamed government for allowing women in high-ranking positions which require

qualities, perceived to be lacking in women, such as physical strength, braveness and leadership. This study echoes similar studies that find gender and sex differences serve to explain different gender roles and power inequalities (Collinson & Hearn, 1994; Flood, 2000; Shefer, 1999; Van Wyk, 2004). Secondly, women's active sexuality is perceived as problematic in the military as it affects the morale and discipline of soldiers. Female soldiers are accused of provoking men's sexual desires, especially those of seniors, in exchange for promotional favours. They are also blamed for putting the military at risk, because if they are in command and they have sexual relationships, this tends to undermine their leadership. Thirdly the discourse of women needing to be protected, as child-bearers, presents a paradox in the military context.

9.6 Overall summary

The findings of this research show similarities with key national and international studies. They also show that we should not assume that masculinity and sexuality are universal phenomena that can be understood in the same way across the world. Local and institutional contexts play a crucial role in constructions of masculinity and sexuality. Patriarchal culture, for example, is deeply embedded in South Africa and cuts across racial and ethnic groups (Shefer, 1999). Further, our political climate has an impact. This is particularly true for the military, which has historically been divided along lines of racial and gender inequality (Enloe, 1975; Frankel, 2000). This study shows associations of soldiering with apartheid and gender inequality, articulated by white participants who find it hard to be in a racially integrated military, and male soldiers who generally find it difficult to submit to the authority of women and accept the equality of women.

This study's primary contribution is to reflect the debate on notions of universal hegemonies of masculinity versus the salience of social and institutional contexts. It questions the extent to which a masculinised institution like the military plays a role in exaggerating traditional male identities and sexual practices. It confirms that military context and culture exaggerate and emphasise hegemonic masculinity and male sexuality, but also draws strong parallels with men outside the military.

9.7 Recommendations for HIV/AIDS intervention in the military

Notwithstanding a recognition of the commonalities of male sexuality that appears to permeate multiple contexts and cultures in South Africa, as elsewhere, it is suggested that tackling HIV/Aids in the military needs to involve the examination of multiple constructions of masculinity and how the military context may pressure men to adhere to traditional models of being a man with its attendant sexual practices. Therefore we cannot work with prevention without looking at the specifics of men in the military. When soldiers are on deployment, for example, they subscribe more to hegemonic forms of male sexuality. This underlines the need for prevention programmes to address the realm of social context, both at the level of discourse and at the level of material context, taking cognisance of particular work conditions that may facilitate unsafe sexual practices.

Considering that the military is a male-dominated institution, and men are generally known to be sexual initiators (Foreman, 1999), men should then be encouraged to take more responsibility for reproductive health and safer sex practices. The military has an obligation to develop and advocate projects that target male soldiers in the fight against HIV/AIDS. An abstinence and faithfulness (A&B) approach is well received by the more religious participants, but this model should be applied with caution to avoid moralising and stigmatising discourses on sexuality.

Religion in general is an important aspect in the military. The SANDF should be encouraged to promulgate a flexible conception of gender and sexuality and to explore the tensions and threats that connect sexuality and spirituality. Considering that there are multiple voices and multiple beliefs on sexuality and masculinity, ways should be found to negotiate such multiplicity and create space for alternative sexual practices and forms of male sexuality, including those that do not necessarily centre around sex, but may involve a focus on love relationships. Therefore, alternative models of masculinity and femininity should be recognised and promoted. The South African Constitution enshrines the protection of human rights, sexual rights and equality. Within the SANDF

Code of Conduct for uniformed members and civilians it is stated that all people will be treated fairly and their rights respected regardless of sexual orientation. These statements should be clearly and visibly reflected in educational programmes and interventions, which should facilitate dialogue that addresses perceptions and attitudes in this regard.

Study findings revealed the critical role of a holistic and ongoing HIV prevention programme as opposed to quick information-based inputs. Healthcare professionals were criticised for allowing long intervals between bouts of information-giving, and for not giving practical suggestions for change. According to study participant Jeff:

They give that HIV lecture, but it is not followed up, it's not constantly reinforced, and circulated and made part of their (SANDF employees) ... conversation [] It's there, it's made, and the health officer thinks, 'I've done my job now, it's finish and klaar'. And it's no use having a colonel that we don't know from nowhere (Pretoria headquarters, or SANDF Psychological Services) to come and give us a once-off lecture. It's no use. Get social workers from the community, people that they (recruits) actually see when they walk outside and it serves a dual purpose as integration of the military and the community.

Ideally, the military and the community should collaborate to develop workable HIV/AIDS intervention programmes. The central recommendation of this study is that HIV can only be addressed through a broader initiative that takes full account of constructions of masculinity, sexuality and risky sexual practices. In my discussions in a range of forums, it is broadly recommended that all stakeholders – including the state, religious organisations, the media, schools, multinational companies and communities – need to be consulted in developing workable HIV/AIDS intervention strategies. Such collaboration links with the notion that vulnerability to HIV cannot be approached in the work setting alone but has to be part of all social systems in a person's life. For example, as public schools are institutions where soldiers are sometimes recruited, collaboration between schools and the military could portray young men and women as strong role models for responsible sexual behaviour.

A concern is that typical recruits, at 18 years old, are not emotionally developed. Recruits are exposed to a lot of overwhelming things, including being far from family, dealing with tough military training, and budgeting their salary. As seen from the results chapter and literature review, a sense of achievement linked to masculinity could be manifested through providing money to women, and through multiple partnering. This study concludes that tackling sexual coercion and traditional forms of male sexuality as they get played out in the military context involves the examination of dominant constructions of masculinity, and in particular discourses prescribing traditional male sexual practices that inadvertently facilitate coercive and violent sexual practices. The analysis here is two-fold: first, that intervention should occur on multiple levels; second, that there is a need to address the whole picture of men, focusing more broadly on masculinity and male sexual practices.

Further, it is evident there is a need to focus on women in the military, primarily to change men's constructions of women in general, as well as to shift attitudes to female soldiers in a masculinist environment. As highlighted, men reject and stigmatise women who step outside of traditional roles, and in the military context, women may model on traditional male sexuality and take risks because of pressure in the military and through their own need to fit in with the men. Based on this, I recommend that interventions for men include looking at their perceptions and relations with women in the military. There should be attempts to demasculinise the military and allow women a rightful place. Women should be empowered to assert their needs. If they decide to have multiple partners they should do this consciously and responsibly by practicing safe sex. In addition I suggest that programmes make provision for dialogue between men and women to facilitate openness regarding their own and each other's constructions of sexual identities.

The SANDF should also provide forums for deconstructing and challenging the institutionalised multiple partnering by men, by bringing to consciousness the implications of these practices for women (and men). There needs to be a stepping away

from pathologising current sexual practices, and the construction of a politics of equality, respect and recognition. Therefore, repressive discourses such as homophobia and women's subordination and stigmatisation (especially when they step out of prescribed roles) should be systematically challenged.

9.8 Limitations of the study and recommendations for further research

A limitation of this study is the relatively small sample, as findings cannot be generalised to the broader population of men in the military. Unlike more conservative approaches, the sample size in discourse analysis studies is relatively small with the emphasis being on exploring personal experiences. This allows for in-depth understanding of participants' constructions of masculinity, sexuality and risky sexual practices and their underlying discourses. The homogeneous nature of the sample group, all of whom have been exposed to tertiary education, is a further limit to this study. The results are therefore bound within a specific context. Future research could be extended to other groups of male military personnel who are in top leadership positions, non-commissioned officers and those soldiers with no tertiary exposure.

While this study's focus is on the experiences of heterosexual men, there is a need to understand the experiences of those engaging in alternative sexual practices in the military. It seems that gay men are particularly 'othered' in the military given the prevailing masculinist, heteronormative culture. The consequent secrecy of gay sexual practices may make it difficult for such men to engage in safe sexual practices. Such a sample could provide a richer and alternative data set, and thereby represent more comprehensively the main concepts (masculinity, sexuality, and risky sexual practices) under study here. Shefer (1999, p. 349) also points to a lack of South African research "which documents and analyses those bodies and subjectivities which resist, subvert and destabilise and transgress the rigid normative injunctions of the dominant sexual/gender disorder". Enabling the emergence of alternative forms of sexuality and ways of being a man, especially discourses that challenge traditional male sexuality, may serve to provide more positive models of masculinity.

One other limitation of this study is the inclusion of males only. This means that the study expresses the feelings and thoughts of both civilian and military women via the reports of men in individual interviews. Clearly there is a need to focus on women in the military, not only to provide better insight into men, but also to identify their particular needs and challenges with respect to their experiences in the military and most importantly their ability to practice safe, consensual sex.

I believe we as psychologists are challenged with the task of going back to look at the layers that maintain intolerance and unequal power. As others (Cohen, 2005; Shefer, 1999) have suggested, it is useful to acknowledge the value of a psychoanalytic framework that looks to socio-psychological functioning when exploring subjective experiences and practices. At an individual level, the imperative for psychologists is to explore with clients the way in which their practices reflect both social and cultural forms of power as well as how these intersect with their personal psychological realms. As highlighted in the literature reviewed, emotions are not outside the social, but are produced normatively; they are embedded/entrenched within culture. Therefore, we should explore the layers of cultural constructions that impact on interpersonal and personal practices as well as their psychological manifestations. In short, some of the insights of a psychoanalytic framework could have been usefully combined with the theoretical and methodological approaches of this study to gain insight into how participants locate themselves in relation to a particular discourse. This study's focus was only on the discourses that participants use to construct meaning, not why some participants choose to locate themselves in particular discourses and not in others. More insight into the dynamics of locating subjectivity in the military context, particularly with respect to traditional male sexual practices, would provide better understanding and direction for interventions.

Finally, as I highlighted in Chapter 5, the findings and conclusions of this study have been filtered through my own subjectivity, primarily that of being a woman engaging with men's discourses. Therefore this research is the construction of an African

academic woman who is a civilian working in the same environment as the participants. Further research would need to be carried out by an outside researcher in order to elicit more or different information on the constructions of masculinity and sexuality and how this is interwoven with sexual practices.

There is also a need for more research that looks at how psychosocial factors, such as race, ethnicity, socio-economic status and democratisation are interwoven. To mobilise changes in HIV/AIDS vectors, we have to understand the complexities of these social identities; we need to know how people make decisions; how they think; and how they act upon sexuality. To provide these insights, input and attention is clearly required from psychologists and other social scientists at a range of levels.

9.9 Concluding thoughts

The value of this qualitative discourse analytic approach to studying masculinities and discourses on sexuality and gender within the military context relates to the potential it holds for an investigation of the vulnerabilities and uncomfortable spaces of hegemonic male performance in relation to women. It is these moments and spaces that we need to foreground as we move towards re-thinking and re-constructing sexualities and genders and facilitating equitable, safer and mutually pleasurable intimate relationships between men and women. This study highlights the importance of looking at male sexuality within the broader context of masculinity/ies in order to avoid atomising (and demonising) male sexual practices as much of the literature in the area of HIV does. These practices need to be understood in the broader context of the construction of masculinities – of male subjectivity – and the multiple levels of being a man. The way forward will be mediated by contradictory discourses stemming from these normative expectations.

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Appendix 1: Interview vignettes

1) Lack of communication/male difficulties:

Vusi: The experience which I have with the opposite sex is very confusing for me. I thought my partner would explain to me her expectations in relation to our relationship. She also does not tell me what she likes in bed. I am not sure if I am pleasing her or if she does not want sex when I do.

Do men often feel confused by what women want sexually?

Is it difficult for men to ask women what they want or desire?

How would you deal with the situation Vusi has with his sexual partner?

Do many men care about what women feel sexually?

2) Lack of negotiation/women's vulnerability/male abuse:

Janine: A married guy offered to give me a tour of his house. Naively I went. I saw him as a friend and did not expect him to do anything because I knew that he was married and that he loved his wife. When we walked past the bedroom, he threw me across the bed, and well, "things" happened despite my weak protests. Weak because I was totally bewildered and I wasn't sure whether I actually wanted him to stop. What is highlighted most in my mind though, was when he got up after finishing, he had a huge smile on his face and I was sprawled across the bed. The smile said 'I knew I could do it', which left me embarrassed, confused and very angry. I slapped the smile off his face.

Was Janine raped?

Why did the married man do what he did?

Why do you think Janine responded so "weakly"?

Do you think Janine should have responded differently? If so how?

Is this something that happens often?

3:Lack of communication/male sex drive discourse:

Zinzi: My first sexual experience stands out starkly. It was one that has influenced my view of the opposite sex. It happened while I was really too young, and involved with an older man who knew the ropes. I was head over heels in love and he was in it for sex only. At first I did not want to believe that he was using me but after the relationship (which lasted just over a year) I realised this and came to the conclusion that all men are out to use women. I still find it difficult to be totally open about my emotions towards my partners because the fear is great that I am being used once more.

What do you think Zinzi's boyfriend wanted out of the situation?

Is this any experience that happens often?

Have you been in a situation like this before?

Do you agree that all men are out to use women?

4) Lack of trust /pressure on men to seek many lovers:

Jacky was visiting her friend in another residence near the one where she lives.

It was quite late at night. As she was leaving she saw her boy friend entering the room of a woman a few doors down. She sat down outside the room, waiting for him to leave.

After an hour she went home, convinced that he was having a sexual relationship with another woman. She felt humiliated, angry and betrayed.

Does this happen often?

Why do men take more than one sexual partner?

How should Jacky respond?

5) Lack of trust (continued):

This is a story about "while the cat's away, the mice come out to play", as the old saying goes. However, for a Cape Town man, the mouse got caught. It seems that last month,

Sara Jones was away visiting relatives for a few days, leaving Mr Jones at home. Mr Jones, however, having felt neglected by his spouse for some time, took the opportunity to meet with his secret lover Candice. A friend of the family's noticed Mr Jones and his lover kissing one evening at a party, and informed Mrs Jones about it on her return. The whole story came out when Mrs Jones confronted him about it. "I don't see that what I did was so terrible," he told an obviously upset spouse.

Would you agree with Mr Jones?

Do you think this happens in many relationships?

6) Lack of negotiation/contraception:

Sipho has been dating Thandi for some time. One night she pulls out a condom and says: "I think we should start using a condom when we have sex, I'm worried about falling pregnant and what about AIDS?"

How do you think Sipho will respond? How would you respond?

What do you think Thandi's reasons are for doing this?

Who do you think should take responsibility for contraception and protection against HIV infection?

7) Negotiation of sex in relationship/male pleasure/female lack:

Laetitia: Men just think about their own pleasure. They won't worry about you. If he reaches a climax, he doesn't bother about his partner. Five minutes after being inside of you, he's done; and you are miles away from reaching climax.

Do you identify with Laetitia's experience?

Do you agree with her view on men's lack of concern for women? If so why?

Do women ever challenge this?

8) Negotiation of sex in a relationship:

Dumi and Karen are newly-wed. One night Karen is exhausted and does not feel like making love. She tries to tell Dumi but finds herself unable to do so.

Why is Karen unable to express her need to go to sleep without sex?

How does Dumi feel?

How would you feel?

Does she have a right to say no?

Have you ever had sex when you have not felt like it, and if so, why?

2

Appendix 2

INFORMED CONSENT

Researcher Information

I am Ms Nyameka Mankayi. I am a psychologist working at the Military Academy at Saldanha. I am currently enrolled for a D.Phil degree in the Department of Psychology at Stellenbosch University (SU).

I kindly request your participation in my research study investigating the Constructions of masculinity, sexuality and risky sexual behaviours. Both the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) and SU have granted permission for me to pursue this study. The study is taking place under the supervision of Prof. Tony Naidoo of the Department of Psychology at SU, and Prof. Tamara Shefer, Director of the Womens' and Gender Studies Programme at the University of the Western Cape.

I can be contacted at (022) 702 3092 during office hours, or at the e-mail address nyameka@ma2.sun.ac.za. Prof. Naidoo can be contacted at (021) 808 3441 or at e-mail avnaidoo@sun.ac.za and Prof. Shefer can be contacted at (021) 959 3360 or at e-mail tshefer@uwc.ac.za.

Data Collection

I am planning to gather the data for my research through interviews. Participants are guaranteed that their information will be treated highly confidentially. All interviews will be taped and the tapes retained in safekeeping by the researcher. To ensure confidentiality only the researcher will have access to the tapes to transcribe and analyse all data collected. Once tapes have been transcribed they will be destroyed to protect the confidentiality of participants. In the transcripts pseudonyms will be used to avoid participants being identified, and these transcripts will be kept on file at the researcher's

home. Any participant has the right to withdraw from the study at any stage and to request that the tape be destroyed.

CONSENT

I,hereby give my consent to being interviewed by Ms Nyameka Mankayi. I have not been unduly pressured into granting this interview, and understand that I am free to terminate the interview at any stage without any consequences. I understand that any information will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Furthermore I agree that the data collected may be published in a thesis as a requirement towards Ms Mankayi's D. Phil Degree in Psychology at SU.

Signature:

Date:

Place:

Appendix 3

INFORMED CONSENT

Researcher Information

I am Ms Nyameka Mankayi. I am a psychologist working at the Military Academy at Saldanha. I am currently enrolled for the D.Phil degree in the Department of Psychology at Stellenbosch University (SU).

I kindly request your participation in my research study investigating the Constructions of masculinity, sexuality and risky sexual behaviours. Mr Keith Ruiters, a clinical psychologist and lecturer at the University of the Western Cape (UWC), will assist me with the interviews. Both the SANDF and SU have granted permission for me to pursue this study. The study is taking place under the supervision of Prof. Tony Naidoo of the Department of Psychology at SU and Prof. Tamara Shefer, Director of the Womens' and Gender Studies Programme at UWC.

I can be contacted at (022) 702 3092 during office hours, or at the e-mail address nyameka@ma2.sun.ac.za. Prof. Naidoo can be contacted at (021) 808 3441 or at e-mail avnaidoo@sun.ac.za and Prof. Shefer can be contacted at (021) 959 3360 or at e-mail tshefer@uwc.ac.za. Mr Ruiters can be contacted at (021) 959 2911 or at e-mail kruiters@uwc.ac.za.

Data Collection

I am planning to gather the data for my research through interviews. Participants are guaranteed that their information will be treated highly confidentially. All interviews will be taped and the tapes retained in safekeeping by myself. To ensure confidentiality only the researcher will have access to the tapes in order to transcribe and analyse all data collected. Once tapes have been transcribed they will be destroyed to protect the

confidentiality of participants. In the transcripts pseudonyms will be used to avoid participants being identified, and these transcripts will be kept on file at the researcher's home. Any participant has the right to withdraw from the study at any stage and to request that the tape be destroyed.

CONSENT

I,hereby give my consent to being interviewed by Mr Keith Ruiters. I have not been unduly pressured into granting this interview, and understand that I am free to terminate the interview at any stage without any consequences. I understand that any information will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Furthermore I agree that the data collected may be published in a thesis as a requirement towards Ms Mankayi's D. Phil Degree in Psychology at SU.

Signature:

Date:

Place: