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TITLE: Interrogating gender constructions in the *Daily Sun*: An analysis of the coverage of the 'Charter for a Man' campaign against gender violence between November and December 2007.

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ABSTRACT

The study seeks to interrogate the gender constructions in the *Daily Sun*'s "Charter for a Man" campaign which ran from 7 November to 7 December 2007. It coincided with the 16 Days of Activism against gender violence and was designed to lobby support for this campaign and discourage men from physically abusing women.

The "Charter for a Man" listed nine principles that signatories were to abide by. It included a section to be signed by men to be submitted to and collected by the *Daily Sun*. The campaign was constructed as an intervention into the issue of gender violence. Consequently, the 30 news stories, four editorial pieces and 11 letters to the editor that were published during the campaign period make up the textual data analysed in the study. The news stories consisted of testimonies from abused women and some women abusers. In addition, celebrity signatories were selected to endorse the campaign and encourage other men to follow suit. In the editorials, the campaign was consistently flagged as a nation building initiative which all men were supposed to support. The letters to the editor consisted of readers who either supported or rejected the campaign.

The study takes place against the context of a patriarchal society characterised by high levels of violence. Given this scenario, the study is informed by a concern with gender justice and therefore considers whether such a campaign, ostensibly aimed at eradicating gender violence, has the potential of being transformative of gender inequalities. The study set out to establish the kinds of masculinities and femininities that were variously constituted in the campaign as well as the gender discourses that were privileged. It is informed by the theories of feminist poststructuralism and Foucault's conceptualisation of discourse. As the campaign is the initiative of a tabloid newspaper, it is also considered within the framework of newspaper campaigns and arguments about tabloids and the public sphere.

As text based research, the study employs critical discourse analysis as a qualitative procedure of textual analysis. It makes use of an eclectic approach to textual analysis that draws on linguistics, narrative and argumentation. The texts are analysed according to the categories of news texts contained which includes the Charter itself, signatory articles, testimonies, vox pops and letters to the editor. The overarching theme of nationhood projected in the editorials and other categories is also discussed as part of the analysis.

The study concludes that the *Daily Sun* campaign might be a seemingly progressive action at first glance. However, it does not challenge the existing gender order but rather maintains and sustains patriarchal attitudes through the repeated representation of women as weak and in need of patronage and men as their protectors and providers. In some instances, women are constructed primarily as sexual beings as their physical attributes are emphasised, while men are constructed as working class citizens and rational beings. The study therefore proposes that the *Daily Sun* fails as an alternative public sphere that might make visible the concerns of women as a marginalised group in society. The campaign, it is argued, is self-serving in its promotion of the *Daily Sun*'s image as the "People's Paper" rather than serious concerns about gender violence.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Today a family and a home constitute the twin heights of feminine ambition. But one looming problem remains to be solved ... The problem that has no name ... (Friedan, 1965:1).

1. Introduction

Recognising that domestic violence is a serious social evil; that there is a high incidence of domestic violence within South African society ... that acts of domestic violence may be committed in a wide range of domestic relationships: and that the remedies currently available to the victims of domestic violence have proved to be ineffective; And having regard to the Constitution of South Africa, and in particular, the right to equality and to freedom and security of the person: and the international commitments and obligations of the State towards ending violence against women and children, including obligations under the United Nations Conventions on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Rights of the Child; It is the purpose of this Act to afford the victims of domestic violence the maximum protection from domestic abuse that the law can provide; and to introduce measures which seek to ensure that the relevant organs of state give full effect to the provisions of this Act, and thereby convey that the State is committed to the elimination of domestic violence (Preamble, Domestic Violence Act No.116 of 1998).

“My boyfriend has poured paraffin over my body and is forcing me to drink some!” (*Daily Sun*, 15 November 2007:3).

“He said that I was having an affair, and started to beat me up. Then he told me to strip naked, took a piece of wire and lashed me all over my body,” (*Daily Sun*, 7 December 2007:20).

The high levels of gender violence in South Africa exist uncomfortably alongside a progressive constitution envied by many countries around the world. This is demonstrated by the preamble to the Domestic Violence Act of 1998 quoted above that is juxtaposed with evidence from the *Daily Sun* “Charter for a Man” campaign against gender violence almost ten years after it was passed. The voices of these women stand as evidence that domestic violence is still harshly prevalent to this day. Moreover, gender violence seems to be low in the hierarchy of issues that need to be urgently addressed by the state. This is rather startling in a country where gender equality is entrenched in the constitution. Gender equality implies equal access to resources for men and women, equal opportunities and lack of discrimination in terms of gender. For a country with such an enabling constitution, it is of great concern that there are still such high levels of gender violence in South Africa. Through critiquing the “Charter for a Man” campaign that was run by the *Daily Sun* between November and

December 2007, an attempt is made to establish the masculinities and femininities inscribed in this particular case that offers the potential to critique the social structures that help in the perpetuation of domestic violence.

The purpose of this chapter therefore, is to establish a concern with the gendered discourses validated in the campaign with a view to understand the extent to which these discourses are transformative of gender injustices. The study takes a poststructuralist position and is therefore concerned with the constitution of subjects through discourse. The chapter proceeds by offering a background of the prevalence of domestic violence in South Africa. It then outlines the research objectives and theoretical framework that underpins the study as informed by Foucault's theory of discourse and feminist poststructuralism. A brief discussion of tabloidisation as a relatively new phenomenon in South Africa which advances a notion of tabloids as potentially an alternative public sphere as informed by the Habermasian concept of the public sphere is also offered. After presenting a brief rationale for undertaking the study, a concluding outline of how the thesis is structured is presented.

1.2 Context of the research

A campaign against domestic violence was run by the *Daily Sun*, a South African tabloid newspaper, between 7 November and 7 December 2007 in support of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence. The campaign consisted of a "Charter for a Man" document that was drawn up and published for the first time on 7 November (see Appendix 1). It invited men to sign the Charter in order to join the campaign and pledge their commitment to protect women from violence. Subsequently, a total of 30 news stories, 4 editorial pieces and 11 letters to the editor relating to this issue were published that either supported or rejected the campaign and articulated opinions about the treatment of women in society. The initiative generally received positive responses from readers, indicating a general consensus that men should be working to achieve gender equality.

What was striking about the campaign was its seemingly progressive nature juxtaposed with the unempowering representation of women in its accompanying coverage. I chose to study representations in the *Daily Sun* in particular because I was interested in evaluating the claim that tabloids offer an alternative public sphere where issues relating to marginalised groups are made visible. As a woman, my motivation to conduct the research was inspired by the desire to find out the extent to which the campaign would promote gender justice in its

coverage concerning such a volatile subject as domestic violence. The study therefore seeks to analyse the *Daily Sun*'s campaign, its Charter, accompanying editorials and news stories as well as letters to the editor in order to investigate the form it took and how gender relations were variously constituted.

The study is pertinent considering that South Africa has one of the highest rates of domestic violence in the world and this violence is largely perpetrated by men. The Human Rights Watch Commission estimates that at least one in six women are in an abusive relationship but this figure could however be higher as most domestic violence cases usually go unreported. Domestic violence or gender violence is commonly understood as violent acts whether real or threatened perpetrated on females and children and the intent is often to promote hierarchical gender relations (Green 2000). Therefore, while not intending to undermine the abuse of some men by women, this research prioritises the abuse of women as the campaign was specifically addressed to men to stop violating women.

There have been several responses to this phenomenon of violence in a South African context in this instance. The escalating problem of domestic violence saw the enactment of a Domestic Violence Act (No. 116 of 1998) that promotes the rights of abused parties. Another response takes the form of the annual 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence (25 November to 10 December), an international campaign that originated from the first Women's Global Leadership Institute sponsored by the Centre for Women's Global Leadership in 1991 whose primary purpose is to facilitate women's leadership, human rights and social justice worldwide (Centre for Women's Global Leadership 2007). The campaign is spearheaded by civil society groups and seeks to eliminate all forms of violence against women and promote gender equity. Thus, research that interrogates issues relating to this campaign has the potential of contributing to knowledge that would benefit movements for social change.

Violence against women and children should also be considered in relation to the pervasive issue of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. This is because women and children exposed to sexual violence are more at risk of contracting the deadly disease especially with the fairly widespread belief in the HIV/AIDS virgin cure myth that is firmly established not only in South Africa, but in many other developing countries as well (Earl-Taylor 2002). It is estimated that nearly 60 girl children are raped in South Africa everyday and this is partially

attributed to this strongly entrenched cultural belief which operates on the notion that an intact hymen, and the smaller amount of vaginal secretions in young girls, prevents transmission of the disease through sexual intercourse (Earl-Taylor 2002). This is disturbing considering the fact that South Africa is estimated to have the largest number of HIV/AIDS infections in the world (UNAIDS 2007). About 5.5 million people in its population of 48 million were believed to be living with HIV/AIDS at the time of study carried out by UNAIDS with more women than men bearing the brunt of the disease.

Gender violence often works to entrench control over females and sustain the system of patriarchy. Domestic violence often occurs within the family and the family is understood as the locus of patriarchy. Structuralist understandings have foregrounded the systemic nature of patriarchy. The patriarchal system has been argued to obtain consent through the socialisation process that people go through from birth which results in the formation of human personality along stereotyped lines of sex category “masculine” or “feminine” which is imbued with a “code of conduct,” gestures and attitude for each sex (Millet 1970). While Millet works within an approach that foregrounds ideology (this study takes up the issue of discourse instead), pertinent points are raised.

Millet provides a frame for understanding patriarchy as working to legitimate men as the privileged group over women in different contexts and spheres such as economic, education, and class among others. These aspects of patriarchy have an effect upon the psychology of both sexes and their chief result is

[A] most ingenious form of “interior colonisation” ... one which tends moreover to be sturdier than any form of segregation, and more rigorous than class stratification, more uniform, certainly more enduring. However muted its presence might be [patriarchy] obtains as perhaps the most pervasive ideology of our culture and provides its most fundamental concept of power (Millet 1970:25).

While patriarchy is thus theorised as an institution so deeply entrenched, it should additionally be recognised as both historically and culturally variable. Acknowledging such complexity, various attempts have been made to theorise identities and subjectivities, in this instance in masculinities and femininities in a changing South Africa. During the apartheid regime there were multiple masculinities pronounced along class and racial lines with the white middle class male representing a hegemonic form of masculinity (Morrell 2001). The black male was frequently exposed to brutal working environments especially in the mines. This, together with high levels of poverty partly explains the culture of violence that

characterise masculinities to this day. While the men laboured away at the mines, the women's domain remained as the caregiver on the domestic front in the rural areas and lending support for the men who were the primary providers and took up the role of head of the family (Morrell 2001)¹. It should be noted however that the situation was more complex than this. It is important to recognise in particular, the impact of the migrant labour structure and the struggle against apartheid on gender relations. Hassim (2008) points out that gendered oppression was manifested not only in the home but in the ANC camps and in the townships amongst other spheres. The „progressive“ struggle heroes were deeply implicit in gender inequalities.

After the first democratic elections in South Africa, social changes impacted broadly and these effects were seen in relation to gender and the state. The new government prioritised gender equality and this saw more women taking up influential posts in government and other sectors. Women started contributing even more significantly to the family income. This has had implications for gendered identities in this country. For instance, the rise in feminist concerns of gender justice has resulted in some men who feel that their role as head of the household is threatened. Furthermore, men who were emasculated by the apartheid regime and those affected by high unemployment levels feel the pressure to prove their place as head of the house. This often takes the form of physicality, especially in the form of abuse against women and children in order to assert their authority (Morrell 2006). There have however been some cautions against looking at the constructions of identities in a determinist way (Ratele 2001). It is important to go further and consider how violence has become crucial to the definition of what a „real“ man is and what the effects of such a construction are, concerns which the study is committed to establishing.

Morrell (2001) advances a triple categorisation of South African men's responses to the question of gender equity. First, there are those men who are reactive or defensive towards change. These are the men who have attempted to turn back changes in order to reassert their power and this is evident in the formation of different organisations with a common reactive agenda of seeking to “restore the tattered remains of the male image” (Lemon cited in Morrell 2001:26). These men are understood to feel that the empowerment of women has tipped the scales and „their“ women do not take care of them as they used to. The second set

¹ Morrell theorises these different forms of masculinities (and femininities) in relation to the historical context of apartheid and migrant labour.

of responses has been accommodating of change. This is seen in attempts to revive non-violent masculinities. Men who fall under this category do not necessarily relinquish their male power but they also do not defend or seek to restore “some pre-existing patriarchal order” (Morrell 2001:30). The third category consists of responsive or progressive responses to change. They challenge violent masculinities, and in the process propose new models of how to be a man. Organisations that fall in this category try to get men to take responsibility for violence, condemn it and work for more equitable gender relations, domestically and publicly. This is linked to the rise of the “new man” who is more participatory in the domestic front and supportive of their partner’s professional goals (Madlala cited in Morrell 2001).

As noted above, the construction of contemporary femininities and masculinities in South Africa is taking place against a background of colonialism, racial privilege, racial prejudice and in opposition to racial injustice and strong movements for gender justice. There is thus no one typical South African man or woman as evidenced by the diversity of responses in the changing gender order, yet despite all these changes South African society remains deeply patriarchal. Understanding the formulation of the “Charter for a Man” campaign within this context has the potential of opening up the range of discourses that underlined the campaign and the construction of femininities and masculinities that were privileged by the campaign. A country such as South Africa undergoing such changes, forces gender responses, and it is one of the objectives of this study to determine the kind of changes projected in the campaign.

As the campaign was run by a tabloid newspaper, the study needs to be contextualised in relation to the tabloidisation phenomenon that has received as much avid support as criticism from media theorists and practitioners. In part, the debate in South Africa responded to the introduction of new tabloids and the accompanying high tabloid circulation figures unrivalled by those of mainstream newspapers. Of these the *Daily Sun* commands the biggest market among tabloid titles and other mainstream newspapers with a daily circulation figure of over 524 000 nationwide (Ziecman 2008), with the next biggest daily, the *Sowetan*, at less than half that figure. The *Daily Sun* is notorious for its graphic pictures and stories about witchcraft, crime, celebrity scandal and death (Lowe-Morna 2007). However, there are also stories that expose issues which affect working class and poor people such as cracks in the health delivery system and the government departments (notably Home Affairs dubbed

“Horror Affairs”, *Daily Sun* 23 October 2007:4). Certainly a striking feature about the tabloid is its interactive voice in line with its mandate to be viewed as the “People’s Paper.” Its writing style is simple and it uses colloquial language and also tends to foreground ordinary people’s problems rather than focusing on elite people as occurs in the mainstream press.

The *Daily Sun* at times practices what is referred to as service or campaign journalism. The role of the journalist in service journalism is to advocate on behalf of the readers, the journalist is an advisor, “the hero or good helper” and consequently the newspaper builds an alliance with the reader (Eide cited in Strelitz and Steenveld 2007: 23). It can be observed that people often prefer to go to the *Daily Sun* with a problem rather than the authority concerned first, especially pertaining to service delivery. The paper usually follows up some of the stories in order to highlight how they helped people in need (Lowe-Morna 2007). Some scholars argue that tabloids play an integral social role in the inclusion of new reading publics, thus their popularity is due to the fact that they address concerns neglected by mainstream media (Fiske 1992; Grisprud 1992; Strelitz & Steenveld 2007; Wasserman 2005). However, other critics believe that tabloids undermine journalistic ethics and consider them an insult to respectable journalism (Todd cited in Sparks 1992; Bird 1990). (See Chapter 2 for detailed discussion on tabloids).

As the research is focused on the *Daily Sun*, Habermas’ conception of the public sphere helps to frame an understanding of the “Charter for a Man” campaign as a particular public sphere. However, Habermas’ initial conception has been argued to be exclusive of women, the working class and black people (Fraser 1989; Crossley & Michael Roberts 2004) and thus a reconceptualisation of the public sphere to suit contemporary contexts has been proposed (Dahlgren 1992; Curran 1991). In particular, the *Daily Sun*, as a tabloid newspaper can be considered an alternative public sphere to the mainstream mediated one. Therefore, rather than looking at tabloids as signalling a demise of the public sphere, they could instead be viewed as pointing to its renewal in different forms (Grisprud 1992). Against this background, the study seeks to interrogate the *Daily Sun*’s campaign which provides a public forum that arguably has the potential to do important political work in relation to gender and so address a neglected aspect of mainstream media. In other words, the research seeks to establish the extent to which the campaign served as a public sphere, the nature of that public sphere and whose interests it served.

1.3 Research objectives

The study is concerned with issues of gender justice and thus seeks to interrogate the “Charter for a Man” campaign and how it constituted gender relations. It also interrogates the positioning of the campaign and the kinds of gendered identities it advocated. In consequence then, the study seeks to interrogate the nature of the *Daily Sun* campaign as a particular form of a public sphere and to establish the extent to which the form it took contributes to gender justice. In particular, the study seeks to establish whether it is reactive, accommodative or progressive to change in line with Morrell’s (2006) argument outlined in the previous section. Against this background, the objective is thus to determine what masculinities and femininities were validated and the implications of these particular social constructions. To this end, the study seeks to establish the discursive positioning of the Charter and its accompanying coverage. The study analyses the representations of gender through the Charter and the accompanying coverage because media language use is seen as embodying relations of power and authority in society and contributes to the ongoing production of social conceptions, values, identities and relations (Deacon et al. 2007).

1.4 Theoretical framework

The study is rooted within the broad theoretical framework of poststructuralist feminism, and informed by Foucault’s discourse theory. Foucault’s understandings are valuable for feminist concerns as they allow for a non essentialist critique of the constructed nature of the gender relations espoused in the “Charter for a Man” campaign.” The study also draws widely from Weedon’s (1987) formulation of a poststructuralist feminist approach to the understanding of the construction of gendered identities informed by Foucault’s ideas.

Foucault’s conceptualisations provide a framework for understanding the relationship between discourse, power and the body in the maintenance of power relations. Briefly, (as there is more detailed discussion in Chapter 2), he referred to discourse as a “system of representation,” and was interested in the rules and practices that govern discourse in different historical moments (Hall 1997:44). Foucault argues that discourse defines and produces the objects of our knowledge by constructing the topic and regulating the way it is

talked about (Foucault 1981). Knowledge is therefore always a form of power and thus power and knowledge directly implicate one another. In consequence, knowledge linked to power assumes the authority of „the truth“ (Hall 1997:49).

Such knowledge-power relations are considered productive of the subject as they determine the forms and possible domains of knowledge (Foucault 1979). In this sense, power acts on the body, through “a set of material elements and techniques that serve as weapons, relays, communication routes and supports for the power and knowledge relations that invest human bodies and subjugate them by turning them into objects of knowledge,” (Foucault 1979:28). Language is also a vehicle through which subjectivities are constructed. Subjectivity refers to different subject positions validated by particular discourses that respond to particular forms of knowledge and practices. Thus the subject is produced within discourse and also subjected to it (Hall 1997:60). For example, those whose knowledge is constructed within the patriarchal discourse are constituted as willing and gendered subjects of patriarchy. In poststructuralist understanding, the meaning of gender is both socially produced and variable between different forms of discourse thereby offering us various discursive positions, specifically modes of femininities and masculinities through which we willingly live our lives (Weedon 1987:25).

Yet, in any discursive field there are multiple contesting discourses which struggle to make their own regimes of truth dominant therefore discourse is never static, it is constantly shifting in relation to other discourses at play. To this end, language, as a form of social practice, is considered as the site of definition and contestation. This is because all social practices are tied to specific historical contexts and are the means by which existing social relations are reproduced or contested and different interests served (Janks 1997).

Poststructural feminist thought includes these dimensions of language, power and subjectivity in any form of social critique. Poststructural feminism is anti-essentialist in nature and it seeks to unpack the processes through which subjectivities are constituted in patriarchal culture. To this end, feminist poststructuralism can be understood as a form of knowledge creation that employs “poststructuralist theories of language, subjectivity, social processes and institutions to understand existing power relations and to identify areas and strategies for change” (Weedon 1987:40). In relation to the study, this framework will help to establish the construction of subjectivities in a patriarchal society such as South Africa by interrogating the gendered representations in the “Charter for a Man” campaign.

1.5 Justification of the study

The study seeks to locate the *Daily Sun* within the complex body of knowledge in relation to gender and tabloids, an area in which little research has been done in a Southern African context. One study that was carried out by Gender Links in 2007 undertook a content analysis of selected tabloids in Mauritius, Tanzania and South Africa (The *Daily Sun* was one of the tabloids selected). The monitoring provided quantitative data on topics, sources, images, functions of sources, who speaks on what, roles, ages and gender perspectives found in these tabloids. They sought to investigate whether these tabloids carried either “blatant or subtle” stereotypes and if they were “gender aware” or “gender blind” (Lowe-Morna 2007). This approach and its conclusion is rooted in liberal feminist assumptions which propose an essentialist position that tends to reduce feminist media analyses to identifying gender stereotyping and socialisation (Millet 1970; Van Zoonen 1994). This position is argued to be inadequate as an account of the gender order as developed by black feminist writing, poststructuralist and postmodernist theories among others (Gill 2007). This study goes beyond looking at stereotypes; it intends a more nuanced investigation of text, context and reception as informed by the theoretical framework discussed in the previous section and detailed in Chapter 2.

1.6 Scope of the study

Chapter 2 offers the theoretical premise for interrogating the gender constructions in the *Daily Sun*. It outlines a poststructuralist approach understanding of representation and meaning making by drawing largely on Foucauldian insights relating to how discourse operates on the body to produce subjectivities. A feminist poststructuralist approach is also outlined in order to provide a framework from which to understand the constructed nature of femininities and masculinities.

Chapter 3 discusses the research methods that were employed in the study. Critical discourse analysis is employed as a qualitative procedure of textual analysis. The study adopts an eclectic approach to textual analysis that draws on linguistics and media studies. Chapter 4 consists of the presentation of the data and its analysis. The final chapter offers a conclusion to the study by drawing on the findings and relating them to theoretical understandings of gender and violence.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its „general politics“ of truth: that is, the types of discourses which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements (Foucault 1980:131).

2. Introduction

This study is concerned to investigate the gender representations in the “Charter for a Man” campaign in the *Daily Sun*. The first section in this chapter therefore discusses representation and the role of language in the meaning making process. Linked to this, the second section presents a discussion of discourse. It considers the notions of power, knowledge, truth and subjectivities as conceptualised by Foucault in order to understand how patriarchal discourse, which the campaign addresses, constitutes particular feminine and masculine subjects. As the campaign is aimed at men, a discussion of masculinities in particular becomes indispensable to the framework that underpins the study and the third section turns to this discussion. It presents a feminist poststructuralist approach to the understanding of gender relations to frame an understanding of the constructed nature of masculinities and the corresponding femininities in the campaign. In the next section, the Habermasian conception of the public sphere is reviewed according to contemporary debates so as to conceptualise the *Daily Sun* as a tabloid newspaper within this framework. The campaign is also discussed within the context of newspaper campaigns as well as the concept of nationhood that underpinned the campaign.

2.1 Representation, meaning and language

Within the field of cultural studies theorists foreground the concept of culture and the role of representation in the meaning making process is identified as a crucial point of this endeavour (Stevenson 1995). Because the arguments about what culture entails are diverse, an abridged and by no means exhaustive version of the general ideas espoused by some early British cultural studies theorists is offered here for purposes of the study. Broadly speaking, culture is understood as consisting of a network of shared meanings and the lived culture of particular groups of people. Early British cultural studies theorist Raymond Williams defined culture as a “whole way of life, material, intellectual and spiritual,” (cited in Turner 1992: 53). Williams was interested in the whole of cultural experience, its meaning and patterning.

Edward Palmer Thompson responded to this conception arguing that culture can also be a point of conflict and thus emphasised that individuals interpret culture in accordance with their position in the social structure (cited in Turner 1992). Although these early cultural theorists have been critiqued as offering idealised versions of working class culture and family relationships (Turner 1992; Stevenson 1995; Johnson 1989), their arguments remain valuable reference points in cultural critique to this day.

Recent shifts in cultural theory have, however, questioned the possibility of one whole way of life and have proposed that the processes of production and circulation of meaning need to be studied on their own terms (du Gay et al. 1997). In this way the actual production of meaning, the play of power and its contestation can be probed. These two meanings of culture as a whole way of life and as the production and circulation of meaning often stand in opposition to each other in the study of culture. What the two positions share is the idea that culture is inextricably linked to the role of meanings in society as culture serves as a conduit of meaning. Meaning is given to things through representation and the primary mode of representation in culture is language (du Gay et al. 1997). Representation thus connects language and meaning to culture and is therefore seen as one of the key processes in the „circuit of culture“ as conceptualised by du Gay et al. (1997). They identify five major cultural processes or „moments“ relating to understanding cultural artefacts, namely, representation, identity, production, consumption and regulation². Each of these processes depends on each other and is indispensable to the whole.

This research with its textual focus is located primarily within the representation moment with an understanding that the “Charter for a Man” campaign responds to gender violence that is prevalent in South Africa, arguably a patriarchal society where there are inevitably unequal relations of power. A poststructuralist approach to the analysis of the construction of femininities and masculinities in the campaign has the potential of illuminating such a constitution of gendered subjectivities. To this end, as mentioned in Chapter 1, this study is informed by poststructuralist understandings of language and discourse.

² Similarly, Johnson (1983) identifies three „moments“ that represent a circuit of the production, circulation and consumption of cultural products, that is, production based studies, text based studies and audience based studies. He argues that each of “these processes [is] intrinsic to cultural circuits under modern social conditions, and... are produced by and are productive of relations of power,” (Johnson 1983:49).

The term „poststructuralist“ does not have a single meaning and it is used refer to a range of theoretical positions developed from the works of Derrida, Lacan, Kristeva, Althusser and Foucault among others (Weedon 1987:19) and thus the body of work varies considerably. While there may be different forms of poststructuralism which diverge in both their practice and in their political implications, they however share crucial conceptualisations in relation to language, meaning and subjectivity. To this end poststructuralism is informed by semiotic and discursive understandings of the role of language in meaning making processes. Hall (1997) combines these two approaches when he discusses the constructionist approach to representation which sees language as a social practice and argues that meaning is constructed within society (Hall 1997). This approach contrasts with other approaches such as the reflective and intentional approaches which argue that language simply functions like a mirror to reflect meaning as it is in the world or that words and other signs mean what the communicator intends them to mean respectively. For Hall (1997), language cannot be solely reflective or be conceived of as carrying the communicator’s intended meanings. Rather, he argues, meaning should be seen as socially constructed, thus subscribing to a poststructuralist understanding of language and meaning making.

While this study is located in the discursive approach, there are important elements of the semiotic approach that also inform the study and will be discussed briefly. The semiotic approach considers language as a system of signs and a study of these signs helps in understanding the representation process since the production of meaning depends on language. Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss linguist to whom much of the work on semiotics is attributed, conceived of the sign as composed of two elements, the signifier and the signified which work together to construct meaning. His model demonstrates that “the sign is the union of a form which signifies (*signifier*) ... and an idea signified (*signified*). Though we may speak ... as if they are separate entities, they exist only as components of the sign ... (which is) the central fact of language,” (Culler cited in Hall 1997:31, emphasis in original). Importantly, he insisted that the signifier has an arbitrary relationship with the signified, in other words meaning does not lie in the sign itself but is intricately linked with social conventions.

Saussure’s model provides a framework from which to understand how there is a perpetual struggle to fix the signifier „man“ or „woman“ as particular naturalised versions of the masculinities or femininities in a patriarchal culture. This can be considered as a “battle for

the signified - a struggle to fix meaning temporarily on behalf of particular power relations and social interests,” (Weedon 1987:94). This insight is important in looking at the kinds of masculinities or femininities espoused in the “Charter for a Man” campaign in order to discern the range of discourses that contest and jostle in an attempt to become accepted as ideal.

Furthermore, Saussure argued, while language consists of signs they have to be organised into a system of differences (or binary oppositions) for them to produce meaning because it is through the differences that the signifiers tend to signify (see Barthes 1972). This then pertains to the constructions of masculinities and femininities in binary oppositions. However, the use of binary oppositions has been argued to be inadequate as there are other subtler differences which they cannot account for (Hall 1992) and this insight is important in the analysis of the variations of the masculinities and femininities.

Saussure also argued that language is a social practice with different shared codes and rules that people take up in order to communicate with those with whom they share the same conceptual maps (Hall 1997). Language cannot therefore be modified by a single individual as “we are born into a language, its codes and its meanings ... we cannot make up the rules of language individually ... their source lies in society, in the culture, in our shared codes, in the language system - not in nature,” (Hall 1997:34). Saussure’s linguistic approach to signification provides important insights for an analysis of culture as it recognises that cultural practices are acts of signification; they make use of signs and therefore work within the limitations of language. Saussure’s model of language helps us understand its constructed nature and how this has a bearing on how things are represented. On the other hand his model has been criticised for focusing on the formal and structural parts of language to the neglect of how it is used in society (Hall 1997; Turner 1992). In addition, his model has been argued to ignore the fact that meanings shift historically. Rather, poststructuralist critics propose that the relationship between signifier and signified should be understood as a result of social conventions specific to different social groupings and to specific historical moments. To this end, all meanings are produced within history and culture and are therefore not fixed through language.

These subsequent poststructuralist developments became “more concerned with representation as a source for the production of knowledge – a more open system, connected

in more intimate ways with social relations and questions of power,” which signified a shift of focus from language to discourse (Hall 1997:42-43).

2.2 Discourse, knowledge/power and subjectivity

Much work on discourse is attributed to Foucault, a French historian and philosopher. He moved beyond a semiotic approach based on the “domain of signifying structure” to a discursive approach based on analysing “relations of force, strategic developments and tactics” (Hall 1997: 43). His conceptualisations help provide a framework from which to understand patriarchy as a particular hegemonic discourse and to probe the strategies of truth that help to sustain it. This enables an understanding of patriarchy as a system that promotes unequal relations of power and privileges certain types of masculinities and femininities over others.

As noted in the first chapter, Foucault considered discourse as a group of statements which provide a language for talking about different topics at different historical moments. By referring to discourse as a “system of representation,” what interested him, in the first instance, were the rules and practices that govern discourse in particular historical moments. In his words

Discourse can be considered as a multiplicity of discursive elements that come into play in different strategies. It is this distribution that we must reconstruct, with the things said and those concealed, the enunciations required and those forbidden, that it comprises; with the variants and different effects - according to who is speaking, his position of power, the institutional context in which he happens to be situated - that it implies; and with the shifts and reutilisations of identical formulas for contrary objectives that it also includes (Foucault 1981:100).

Discourse is argued then to construct the topic and regulate the way it is talked about, thus effectively defining and producing the objects of our knowledge (Foucault 1987). It is in discourse that knowledge and power are joined together as discourse produces, transmits and reinforces power (Foucault 1981). He contended that knowledge is always a form of power and that “knowledge linked to power, not only assumes the authority of „the truth“ but has the power to *make itself true*,” (Hall 1997:49; emphasis in original). Truth, according to Foucault, is not outside power, but is produced in different periods, settings and contexts within discursive formations depending on what grouping has the power to make it true.

Truth is therefore to be understood as a structure of well-organised procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements. In this sense, patriarchy can be conceived as having a system of „rules“ that govern the behaviour of subjects. These rules operate at the level of truth and constitute these subjects, in this instance in relation to gender, as particular masculine or feminine subjects that serve to sustain the patriarchal structure. This has the purpose of constituting men and women as subjects of the patriarchal discourse and thus maintaining particular (always unequal) relations of power. To this end, Foucault advances a notion of subjectivity that attains its purpose by working through the body. He argues that power relations have an immediate relationship with the body and the exercise of power is possible only if the body is caught up in a system of subjection (Foucault 1979). This subjection, which operates through discourse, while it can be direct and physical is effected mostly “without involving violence, it may be calculated, organised, technically thought out; it may be subtle, make use neither of weapons nor of terror and yet remain of a physical order,” (Foucault 1979: 26) and operates through discourse.

Thus the subject is produced within discourse and also subjected to it (Hall 1997:60). This means that all subject positions have a discursive character and “partake in the open character of every discourse... consequently, the various positions cannot be totally fixed in a closed system of differences,” (Laclau & Mouffe 2001). For example, those whose knowledge is constructed within the patriarchal discourse are constituted as willing and gendered subjects of patriarchy but also take up different subject positions in the patriarchal discursive formation. In other words, discourse can be understood as constituting ways of being a subject, that is, modes of subjectivity that help in the creation of gendered subjectivities. The fixing of meaning in society, its implications and the distribution of social power rely on the discursive constitution of subject positions from which individuals understand the world and by which they are themselves governed (Weedon 1987). This discursive constitution of individuals as subjects is determined by the structures of discourse. In Foucault’s words, “it is experience which is the rationalisation of a process, itself provisional which results in a subject ... subjectivisation [is the] procedure by which one obtains the constitution of a subjectivity which is ... one of the given possibilities of organisation of self-consciousness,” (Foucault 1981: 253).

To that effect then, discourses are more than ways of thinking and producing meaning. They constitute the „nature“ of the body; both the conscious and unconscious mind as well as the emotional life of the subjects which they seek to govern (Weedon 1987:105). The body, thoughts and feelings thus do not have meaning outside of their discursive articulation. At the same time the ways in which discourses constitute the consciousness and bodies of individuals is always a part of a wider network of power relations (Weedon 1987). Furthermore, of importance to note is that there are multiple contesting discourses which struggle to make their own regimes of truth dominant (Foucault 1979). For example, patriarchal discourse, though dominant is constantly contested by discourses of gender equality and a range of other feminist discourses, which attempt to balance power relations between men and women.

To this end, Foucault argues, discourses are “tactical elements or blocks operating in the field of force relations,” (1981:111). Therefore different and even contradictory discourses can exist within the same strategy. In the same vein, power is understood as

... the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organisation; as the process which, through ceaseless struggles and confrontations, transforms, strengthens or reverses them; as the support which these force relations find in one another, thus forming a chain or a system, or in the contrary the disjunctions and contradictions which isolate them from one another; and lastly, as the strategies in which they take effect, whose general design or institutional crystallisation is embodied in the state apparatus, in the formulation of the law, in the various hegemonies (Foucault 1981:92-93).

Power therefore does not operate in a linear form and is never monopolised by one centre, but rather it circulates and is deployed and exercised through a “net-like organisation” (Foucault 1979; 1980). Furthermore, power is not only negative or repressive but it is also productive and therefore has to be understood as productive networks which run through the whole social body (Foucault 1979; also Fraser 1989; Hall 1997). In addition, power is productive not only of discourse but also of the subject as discussed earlier.

To understand how the discourse of patriarchy is effected one would have to consider the following aspects. What is constituted as the „truth“ in relation to gender; what statements are presented in relation to the „truth“ about patriarchy; what rules govern how it is talked about and who are the docile/willing subjects of the discourse; how is authority acquired to produce what counts as knowledge about patriarchy. A similar procedure was applied by Foucault in his early work on madness (see Foucault 1987). As mentioned earlier, those whose

knowledge is constructed within the patriarchal discourse are therefore constituted as subjects of patriarchy. Above all there has to be an acknowledgement that a different discursive formation about patriarchy which is radically different from the dominant one at that particular historical moment can evolve with time (Foucault 1987; Fraser 1987; Hall 1997). Therefore, what counts as knowledge and truth depend on particular historical moments as they are not fixed but susceptible to change and various interpretations in different cultures.

To this end, the poststructuralist approach is concerned with how the world is *mediated* and how meaning is constructed in the process of representation. It roots our understanding of social practices and its constitutive discourses as historically determined and therefore always shifting in different settings and contexts. The discursive approach is more concerned with the distribution and perpetuation of power in discourse and symbolic systems as it governs our knowledge of society and constitutes our subjectivities. As mentioned earlier, culture is primary to the way we order and give meaning to our lives. Such an approach to representation underpins this study that interrogates the “Charter for a Man” campaign and its accompanying coverage. It is specifically concerned with a poststructuralist approach that is discussed in the next section.

2.3 Feminist poststructuralism and the politics of masculinity

For a study concerned with gender justice, the issue of patriarchy is clearly central. While it would not be possible to provide a singular definition for patriarchy it is generally understood as a system of social structures in which there are unequal power relations between men and women with men having a privileged position of power and authority over women.

Therefore, patriarchy, to the extent that it can be defined at all, is “a social system in which structural differences in privilege, power and authority are invested in masculinity and the cultural, economic and/or social positions of men,” (Cranny-Francis et al. 2003:15; also Walby 1990). This social system has also been described as a gender order (Connell 1995). This conceptualisation of patriarchy as a system of social structures disallows recourse to biological determinism or essentialism to explain gender difference. Essentialist approaches identify particular features to define the core characteristics of the masculine and feminine to which men and women are expected to conform. Essentialism as a philosophical position assumes a basic “truth” about men and women (Kaplan 1987:217). The rejection of biological determinism and essentialism informs a constructionist approach to gender theory.

It posits that purely biological/anatomical aspects of sexual differences exist and these are identified as male or female. However, beyond that gender is socially constructed as masculine and feminine through different processes (Squires 1999).

Anti-essentialist feminist approaches attempt to understand the „processes through which female subjectivity is constituted in patriarchal culture... [because] [t]he feminine is not something outside of or untouched by, patriarchy, but integral to it“ (Kaplan 1987:217). Anti-essential feminists also argue that if gender roles are to be transformed then there is a need to understand how sexual identity is arrived at in the first place in order to get beyond such socially constructed definitions of man/woman or masculine/feminine³. Importantly, a new order to gender theory which involved postcolonial and black feminist writing, poststructuralist and postmodernist theories among others foregrounded cultural and historical specificity as important in accounting for changing femininities and masculinities (Gill 2007).

The project for feminism in general has sought to make visible the unequal power relations between men and women. Thus there is no overarching delineation of the boundaries of what feminism entails. However, the different approaches to feminism however share pertinent concerns that are germane to the struggle for gender justice. For instance, the focus on gender as a system that configures material and symbolic worlds and our experiences of them is key to most feminist analyses (van Zoonen 1994). Notably, gender also intersects with ethnicity, sexuality, class and a range of other discourses. Thus it is not the single determining factor in human relations. Poststructural feminism also holds central the notion of power and in this respect borrows largely from the work of Foucault highlighted in the previous section. Poststructuralist conceptions of power formulate power as non-monolithic and thus

[t]he issue of feminism is not who is „in power“ and who is not...[R]ather the challenge is to theorise the multiplicity of relations of subordination and to analyse how in these relations of subordination individual and collective identities such as gender and ethnicity are being constituted (van Zoonen 1994:4).

³ Anti-essentialist feminists go beyond the essentialist positions adopted by liberal and radical feminist approaches. These approaches were increasingly critiqued as an account of feminism due to the rise of a different order of theory (Gill 2007). However, these are not dealt with here due to the constraints of the thesis but they are important in locating poststructuralist feminist thought.

Gender and power thus form the constituents of poststructuralist feminist theory and to that effect, an understanding of gender and power should conceive of gender as “a particular discourse...a set of overlapping and often contradictory cultural descriptions and prescriptions referring to sexual difference which arises from and regulates particular economic, social, political, technological and other non-discursive contexts,” (van Zoonen 1994:4). From a poststructuralist position the meaning of gender is socially produced theory (Moi 1985, Weedon 1987, van Zoonen 1994).

Feminist poststructuralism can therefore be defined as “a mode of knowledge production which uses poststructuralist theories of language, subjectivity, social processes and institutions to understand existing power relations and to identify areas and strategy for change,” (Weedon 1987:40). This framework is valuable in examining how relations between men and women are normalised and made to seem natural thereby validating certain forms of masculinities and femininities over others.

With the strengthening of the feminist movement throughout the 1990s gender studies were also transformed by a concern with masculinities brought about mainly by the sustained interrogation and critiques of masculinity. This late twentieth century interest in masculinity, mainly poststructuralist in approach, made men visible as gendered subjects and not merely a problem like before (Gill 2007). Such poststructuralist analyses of masculinities conceptualise masculinities and femininities as a performance rather than an essential identity. Thus, in as much as femininities are constructed in cultural and historic specificity, so are masculinities. The two have a causal and frequently binary relationship with each other.

Accordingly, masculinity cannot have a single or stable definition. It can only be conceptualised in relation to and in contrast to femininity. In consequence masculinity does not arise except in a system of gender relations (Connell 1995).

Rather than attempting to define masculinity as an object...we need to focus on the processes and relationships through which men and women conduct gendered lives. „Masculinity,“ to the extent the term can be briefly defined at all is simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality (Connell 1995:71).

In the same vein, femininity cannot be said to have a singular definition as it is historically and discursively constructed. People acquire gendered identities as they grow up which then distinguish them as either feminine or masculine. To this end feminism ought to signal a concern with long-term gender inequalities and injustices amongst a multitude of other forms of oppression that relate to race, ethnicity, class, age, sexuality, disability and health status as highlighted earlier. The understanding of gender as a particular ordering of social practice which is also linked with other social structures points to a recognition of the multiplicity of femininities and masculinities unique to different cultures and social fractures in historically specific times.

It is important at this point to highlight a few concerns about postcolonial feminism, as the target audience of the *Daily Sun* is the black community as evidenced by the campaign's coverage of black women and men's stories. Postcolonial feminists argue that hegemonic western feminist writing does not take into account the diverse concerns of Third World women as it represents "a political and discursive practice in that it is purposeful and ideological," (Mohanty 1996:173). This type of hegemonic feminism has been argued to ignore the realities and locations of African women especially taking into account their colonial histories and how it has influenced their subjectivities (Lewis 2008). To this end, postcolonial feminism is concerned to express the experiences of African women, how these women struggle against white and hegemonic feminist discourse which often seeks to speak for them with a disengaged voice and how at the same time they struggle to fight patriarchal oppression in Africa. In relation to the multiplicity of identities, Connell (1995) describes four types of masculinities, namely hegemonic, subordinate, complicit and marginalised masculinities and these categories are useful for the kind of gender critique undertaken in the study.

Hegemonic masculinity refers to the currently accepted patriarchal dominance at a certain period of time. The idea of hegemonic masculinity is meant to signify that different masculinities are not equal; some are more dominant or powerful than others. Hegemonic masculinity sets the standards for men and thus manhood is measured against those standards in that particular setting. Therefore, whilst all men might gain from the "patriarchal dividend" or "the advantage men in general gain from the overall subordination of women" (Connell 1995: 79), some benefit more than others. This patriarchal dividend may be in terms of honour, prestige and the right to command and related to this it implies a complementary

material dividend, characterised by higher income scales for the same occupation and more state power than women among other factors. Hegemonic masculinity is accordingly dependent on emphasised femininities for its survival (see page 86 for elaboration on emphasised femininity).

In contrast, subordinate masculinity refers to the trivialisation of certain types of masculinity (for example homosexual masculinities), which are placed at the lower level of a gender hierarchy among men and then symbolically associated with femininity. Complicit masculinity refers to those masculinities that recognise the patriarchal dividend but do not operate in the frontline of hegemonic masculinities and most of the time involve compromises rather than stark domination of women. Marginalised masculinities can be considered as those that are often backgrounded but fight for recognition. They are best understood in the context of the kind of struggles for supremacy found in race relations. From these types of masculinities one can begin to formulate the types of contrasting femininities that constitute the gender order, these become clear in the analysis (Chapter 4) where the theory is applied.

These above mentioned delineations of masculinity emerge in particular situations due to changes in the structure of relationships. Recognising gender as a social pattern points to its nature as a product of history and simultaneously the structures of gender relations are formed and transformed over time (Connell 1995). The gender order can be understood in structural terms, that is, as a structure of inequality. More specifically, Connell (1995) devises a three-pronged structure of the gender order (namely division of labour, power and cathexis) that characterises the power relations between men and women which in consequence has profound effects in the construction of masculinities and femininities.

The sexual division of labour refers to the practice of allocating certain types of work to particular people and the conditioned skilling of men for certain types of work which puts them in a superior position to women with higher wages and better skills training as compared to women. The sexual division of labour can thus be seen as part of a gender-structured system of production with men having more control over the division of labour than women, thus rendering the capitalist system (as this is the economic system that prevails) as run by and mainly to the advantage of men. To this end Connell speaks of the “political economy of masculinity” (1995:106) which basically aligns the definitions of

masculinity with economic superiority even in the domestic front while childcare is the domain of the feminine. To that effect, the “hegemonic pattern of masculinity, in organising the solidarity of men, becomes an economic as well as a cultural force,” (Connell 1995: 106).

Related to this is the structure of power relations (Connell’s second prong) that entails the domination by men in terms of physical and cultural power as well as the general authority that men hold over women. Women may often be beaten up by their male counterparts who believe that it is their right to beat up their partners to ensure obedience and servitude. However, such power is not spread equally across every section of social life and in some circumstances the power of men is diffuse, confused or contested (Connell 1995). In relation to this much of feminist work has been committed to contesting such cultural power manifested in hegemonic definitions of women as weak, unintelligent and highly emotional beings for instance (Figs 1978). Moreover, there are also instances in family life where women hold power but as Connell notes, these “local victories” do not overthrow patriarchy (1995:111). What this points to is that the global or macro relationship of power, in which women are subordinate to men as a whole must be distinguished from the local or micro situation in particular households, workplaces or particular settings in order to account for the power inequalities that are still inherent in the relations between men and women. Men who do not work or are domesticated are often dismissed as not true men and they are effectively emasculated because of the demands that patriarchy makes of them. Central to this scenario is the role of the media as cultural industries in the symbolic structuring of existence, in the shaping of particular identities of femininities and masculinities, which forms a major concern of this study. Critiquing the constructions of femininities and masculinities in the *Daily Sun* as a particular medium opens up the realm of understanding how gendered subjectivities are formed on an ongoing basis both consciously and subliminally.

The structure of cathexis, Connell’s (1995) third prong, identifies sexuality as social and refers among other things to the perpetual objectification of women in contrast to men. As already established, the system of patriarchy prescribes and valorises particular gender roles for men and women that define what behaviour is acceptable and unacceptable as feminine and masculine. In relation to sexuality then, men’s promiscuity is constructed as natural and so signifies masculinity while women’s promiscuity signifies loose morals, thus constituting double standards with unequal power relations between men and women. In the South African context, sexual violence against women is very common and it has been manifested

in the repeated abuse of women for the way they dress. This is justified in a range of ways as evidenced by blaming women for rape in relation to their dress. For example, the former Deputy President of South Africa and current ANC President, Jacob Zuma testified that one of the reasons he slept with the woman who accused him of rape was because she was wearing a *kanga*. Zuma's utterances serve to justify and validate men's sexual attitudes toward women especially regarding rape, and points to the existence of a ruling masculinity whose existence is flagged by men with social power and cultural authority (see Ratele 2006 for detailed argument).

Given the massive inequality that characterises the gender order, it is hardly surprising that violence is often employed by men to make their partners „toe the line.“ In this instance violence is often used to sustain the privileged group's violence and cases include but are not limited to rape, domestic violence and murder. This helps frame an understanding of the construction of the “Charter for a Man” campaign which claimed to be principally motivated by a desire to fight gender violence. Frequently male violence is explained as individually motivated. However, such explanations disregard the profound effect male violence has on the “social patterning of the relations between men and women,” (Walby 1997:128) and thus cannot be understood outside patriarchal social structures, therefore these structures discussed above are integral to the understanding of the “Charter for a Man” campaign. The three structures of labour, power and cathexis in the gender order discussed thus far often intersect and cannot be viewed as independent of each other.

As Connell (1995) argues, a gender order in which men dominate women and revive the patriarchal dividend cannot avoid constituting men as an interest group concerned with its defence and maintenance, and women as an interest group concerned with its change (see Figs 1970). In consequence some men sometimes resort to violence in order to restore their sense of dominance over women and this tendency reflects a crisis of the gender order and thus by implication, a crisis of masculinities (and, by omission, femininities). This is because not all women and men want change which is why there are contesting discourses of patriarchy as people are positioned differently in relation to it. To this end, in order to understand the making of contemporary masculinities, the crisis tendencies of the gender order need to be mapped (Connell 1995).

Moving to the context of the study, that is South Africa, a range of masculinities have been discussed in relation to its specific history of racial, class, economic and gender inequalities. South African masculinities are argued to have been defined by a culture of violence and, because the country is arguably in a transition period different masculinities are manifested in different ways (Morrell 2001). Morrell proposes three ways in which men in South Africa have responded to changes that champion gender equality. The first is reactive or defensive and this is where men attempt to overturn changes in order to reassert their power. The second response is accommodative of change and is seen in the way men attempt to live harmoniously with women, but without relinquishing their patriarchal dividend. For instance, a man could be non-violent to his partner but still expect to be served and treated as head of the family and not equal with his female partner. The third one is described as responsive or progressive. It is manifested where men condemn violence and work for more equitable gender relations, domestically and politically. These responses are also inclusive of the diverse racial identities in South Africa and point to constantly shifting and changing views of masculinity, for masculinity is a social construct that is by no means static (Morrell 2006). The study therefore has to engage with how the constructions of both femininities and masculinities in the campaign constitute people as different subjects of patriarchy at a historically specific time and it thus draws on a feminist poststructuralist approach to enable this analysis.

This approach informs the analysis of the representation of masculinities and femininities in the “Charter for a Man” campaign. Representation is an important battleground for contemporary feminism as the movement for gender change is not only concerned with equal rights and opportunities for women, but it is also in a “symbolic conflict” about definitions of masculinities and femininities (Van Zoonen 1994:12). Part of the agenda for feminist poststructuralism is to understand why women tolerate their insubordination to men and why both men and women inhabit particular discursive positions as representative of their interests, an agenda which the study takes up in its interrogation of gender representation in this particular campaign.

2.4 Tabloid journalism and the public sphere

The media, as noted earlier, play a central role in the construction of gender. Newspapers like the *Daily Sun* constitute certain kinds of spaces where the constructions of masculinities and

femininities occur, and this space is arguably a public sphere as initially formulated by German philosopher Jurgen Habermas. In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1989), Habermas reconsiders the democratic role of the media in relation primarily to 18th century England. He argues that there was the emergence of a “public sphere in the political realm ... [which] evolved from the public sphere in the world of letters; through the vehicle of public opinion it put the state in touch with the needs of society,” (Habermas 1989:30-31).

Habermas traces the evolution of the bourgeois public sphere from the turn of the seventeenth century to the first half of the nineteenth century. This sphere was considered as a public space between the private domain and the state in which public opinion was formed and popular supervision of government was established. He argues that the development of early modern capitalism brought into being an autonomous arena of public debate. The economic independence enabled by private property, the critical reflection cultivated by letters and novels, the flowering of discussion in coffee houses and salons and, above all, the emergence of an independent market based press, created a new public engaged in “rational-critical public debate,” (Habermas 1989:28). Together with increased literacy and better transportation, these communication webs allowed discussion of matters which emanated from relatively small groups into affairs of the state and of politics. From this was forged a reason-based consensus which shaped the direction of the state (Curran 1991).

Subsequently, Habermas’ conception of the public sphere has been criticised for being partial in its concentration on the bourgeoisie. This critique discredits Habermas’ argument that there was free and equal access to the public sphere and argues that his conception ignores the power driven attributes of the public sphere (Crossley & Michael Roberts 2004). Furthermore, some critics maintain that he idealised the rational discussion in this period of history (Thompson 1995; Dahlgren 1995). The Habermasian conception of the public sphere has also been criticised for excluding women and the working class as well as racial and ethnic diversities (Fraser 1989; Crossley & Michael Roberts 2004). In response to these criticisms, it has been counter argued that even though the public sphere did not include everyone, and by itself did not determine the outcome of all parliamentary actions, it however did contribute to the spirit of dissent to be found in a healthy representative democracy (Poster 1990:31).

However, in his later work Habermas does argue that after the first half of the nineteenth century the media ceased to be an agency of empowerment and rationality, to become a further means by which the general public are sidelined (Curran 1991). The public sphere, it has been argued, came to be dominated by strong, expanded state interests and a press which represented organised economic interests. Subsequently, a new corporatist pattern of power relations was established in which the media became part of the process of a „re-feudalisation“ of the public sphere as state, industrial conglomerates and the media underwent a process of fusion (Curran 1991: 82). Instead of providing a conduit for rational-critical debate, the media has been argued to manipulate mass opinion, conditioning the public into the role of passive onlookers and consumers. The technological and economic developments were promoting a “continuation of the shift away from involving people in societies as political citizens of nation states towards involving them as consumption units in a corporate world,” (Elliot cited in Golding & Murdock 1997:23). This political economy approach to the media resonates with the concerns of the early Frankfurt scholars who were wary of the “dumbing down” of the media due to technological advancements and assumes a fairly strong effects approach to media (Crossley & Michael Roberts 2004).

The lingering question left by Habermas was how this model which was supposedly realised by a restricted class (of mostly men) in the early nineteenth century could be universalised during the era of mass politics in a highly differentiated, organised capitalist society characterised by rapid technological changes. Curran argues that the public sphere cannot be re-established through a simple process of magnification “by enabling those who have been excluded to participate in it ... rather the role of the public sphere and the role of the media in relation to it have to be reconceptualised and reincarnated in a new form,” (1991:83). To this end, they raise the possibility of a reformulation of the public sphere to suit different contexts, as it cannot be uniform across societies.

In consequence, new perspectives on the public sphere have argued for the increasing centrality of the media as a public arena where the public can access societal dialogues. The media then play an important part in providing this access and thus it becomes relevant to talk about a *mediated public sphere* (Dahlgren 1995; emphasis added). Thompson (1995) points out that in contemporary society participation in political life is not patterned in the way

described by Habermas, nor are dialogue and face-to-face communication viable instruments for day-to-day democracy. He contends that contemporary public life is marked by a much higher degree of visibility: a mediated publicness that is crucially not singular or homogenous and thus different media have different contributions to make to the public spheres.

This argument coincides with the extensive tabloidisation of the media that has been criticised for churning out uncritical, „bubblegum“ content for the sake of the bottom line and in the same process effectively doing little to enhance the democratic role of the media. A contrasting argument points to tabloidisation as an alternative public sphere that engages with different publics from the traditional public sphere. The media landscape could be described as consisting of a mainstream and a number of alternative spheres. Through such alternative spheres marginalised groups strive to gain access to and representation in the mainstream and the tabloid press may be considered as one such public sphere. Tabloid journalism has been argued to be a potential “alternative public sphere created by structural elitism in the mediated public sphere,” (Ornerbring & Jonsson 2004: 285). The mainstream mediated public sphere is considered as consisting of television and radio news, commentary shows and newspapers considered important by members of the audience, as well as members of the political, economic and cultural elite. It is assumed that this mainstream public sphere is dominated by elite sources of different kinds (Ornerbring & Jonsson 2004), therefore creating possibilities for alternative public spheres to exist and thrive is a better way to promote democratic participation and open public debate rather than viewing the public sphere as unique to the bourgeoisie and promoting its claims to be an exclusive public arena. To this end, Fraser contends that “in stratified societies, arrangements that accommodate contestation among a plurality of competing publics better promote the ideal of participatory than does a single, comprehensive, overarching public,” (1992: 122).

Four different but related ways suggested by Fraser (1992) in which the alternative public sphere can be made concrete are outlined here with reference to the focus of this study. First discussion can take place elsewhere than in the mainstream mediated public sphere, in this case in the *Daily Sun*, and thus potentially serves as an alternative public sphere. Second, it may be alternative in the sense that participants other than those who generally dominate media discourses have access to it and it serves as a place for the debates and discussions taking place. Tabloids can be argued to cover different issues using different forms and

giving voice to different participants (Ornerbring & Jonsson 2004; Bird 1995). Similarly, the *Daily Sun* usually uses different sources from the elite sources quoted in other mainstream newspapers. The stories are usually characterised by people from the economically lower echelons of society. This is closely linked to the third dimension, in which issues other than those commonly debated or not debated at all in the mainstream media are discussed in the alternative public sphere. This is evident in the way the *Daily Sun* concentrates on domestic or family issues, mob justice, and witchcraft almost on a daily basis, unlike the discussions relating to politics and the economy that can be traced in other mainstream newspapers. This is a common trait in most tabloid newspapers (Ornerbring & Jonsson 2004). The fourth dimension is defined as ways or forms of debating and discussing common issues other than those commonly used in the mainstream, for example, forms which encourage citizen participation and non-parliamentary direct action. This arguably occurs in the form of campaigns such as the “Charter for a Man campaign” in the *Daily Sun* which is the subject of this study. The purpose of newspaper campaigns is ostensibly to draw responses from the public or the people in power and they accordingly always aim to for social change in one form or another (Richardson 2007; also see next section).

This can also be achieved by using drastic, sensational and even lurid headlines that are designed to pique the reader’s interest. The popularity of tabloids is partially attributed to sensationalistic coverage. Sensationalism can be argued not to imply a distortion of the truth but rather a vivid and dramatic presentation of events so as to give them a forceful impact on the reader (Hargreaves 2003: 110). This strategy is also used by *Daily Sun* to reach its audience and it could be argued that sensationalism does not always need to be used as a cynical ploy to attract audience attention because sometimes facts *are* sensational (Ornerbring and Jonsson 2004).

In contrast, there have been more sceptical responses to tabloids from media professionals, academics and audiences alike. At its worst the *Daily Sun* has been described and attacked as lacking ethics and shallow as evinced by an academic commentator who asks “Is the selling of more than 400 000 copies of an „incredible“ *Daily Sun* as significant for South Africa as the 38 000 sales of the influential *Mail & Guardian*?” (Berger cited in Wasserman 2005:31). This position echoes the points raised in Chapter 1 again, that tabloids are generally viewed as lowering the standards of public discourse. As such, Wasserman (2005:34) states that “in

the reactions to tabloid journalism, dichotomies can be seen between ethical and non-ethical journalism, information and entertainment, and high-level and low level journalism, with tabloids consistently being placed at the negative end of the binary.” (See also Dahlgren 1995). The debate about tabloid journalism is argued to make evident the dominant perspectives about the media in general, and it has been observed that the rejection of the excesses of tabloids has become a strategic ritual for a profession in trouble (Wasserman 2005).

Debates around the public sphere have raised concerns about democratic political processes in contemporary societies and consequently an outright dismissal of the concept would be ill advised as there are different entry points to it that one can use to suit particular contexts. In this study the understanding of the public sphere borrows from Fraser’s (1992) conception of the public sphere as a culturally powerful tool in the context of representation. While Habermas sees the public sphere as a locus for political power, Fraser discusses it as an arbiter of cultural recognition (Ornerbring and Jonsson 2004: 285). Fraser argues for the public sphere to be an arena that allows subordinated groups such as women to be included and thus eliminate the injustice of going unrecognised in discussions that impact on them.

[M]embers of subordinated social groups – women, workers, peoples of colour, and gays and lesbians - have repeatedly found it advantageous to constitute alternative publics. I propose to call these *subaltern counterpublics* in order to signal that they are parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counter discourses to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs (Fraser 1992:123).

Granted that the political power and the cultural recognition that Fraser refers to are related, it is however difficult to achieve political power without recognition. The emancipatory potential of the public sphere tends to be judged differently depending on whether the main standard is equality of power or equality of recognition. Difficult as it may be to prioritise one over the other, criticism of tabloid journalism and tabloid form is notably more often made using traditional criteria of political power (voting, participation in formal political activities), rather than criteria of cultural recognition (representation, participation in other types of political activities) (see Ornerbring & Jonsson 2004). As the study is concerned with representation of gendered identities, Fraser’s (1992) conception of the public sphere as an arbiter of cultural recognition provides a useful framework from which to understand the

constitution of masculinities and femininities in the “Charter of a Man” campaign as a particular public sphere or discursive arena. To this end, this provides an entry point to probe the extent to which the *Daily Sun*’s campaign operated as a forum for the representation of women, as a particular subordinated group.

2.5 Newspaper campaigns

It has been argued that the main purpose of newspaper campaigns is to elicit a response from either the public or the people in power (Richardson 2007). In this case the signed forms were going to be collected and sent to the “Union Building to the most senior politician SunEditor Themba Khumalo [could] find,” (*Daily Sun*, 7 November 2007:1). While this could be seen as a way of lobbying the government to speak out about domestic violence, one could argue that this was a strategy employed by the paper for recognition. Furthermore, newspaper campaigns seek to connect with the concerns of the newspaper buying public so that they feel a sense of ownership (Richardson 2007). Such campaigns therefore provide an opportunity to create “readership loyalty and identification by positioning the paper as an effective change agent,” (Aldridge cited in Richardson 2007:116) as will be demonstrated in the analysis in Chapter 4.

In addition to constructing themselves as “community commandos” (Richardson 2007:117), newspapers use campaigns as a strategy for increasing circulation figures. As pointed out in Chapter 1, the *Daily Sun* boasts of the highest circulation figures in South Africa. To ensure this position, it has to come up with new strategies of maintaining and increasing its circulation figures. Running a campaign that arguably strikes a responsive chord among readers has the potential of further spiralling the circulation figures. Furthermore, a campaign also needs to call in readers from across social divides. To ensure reader response, the paper had to choose a cause that very few people (if any) would argue against. The subject of domestic violence cuts across all social and class differences and such a campaign can serve as an effective way of cementing these differences by foregrounding the “localness” that readers share, thus effectively obfuscating any other social category (Richardson 2007:117). This can be observed in the reference to the *Daily Sun* community as “SunLand” and the community members (readers) as “SunLanders.” Most notable, is the foregrounding of the unifying potential of the campaign that was constantly flagged through the discourse of

nationhood. Although this is discussed in detail with supporting evidence in Chapter 4, the next section attempts to conceptualise nationhood in order to pre-empt this discussion.

2.6 Conceptualising nationhood

It has been argued that a nation is a discursive construct, an entity that exists through its reproduction in often subliminal ways (Billig 1995). Billig coins the term “banal nationalism” (1995:6) to refer the ways in which nationalism is flagged in the everyday lives of its citizens. To this end, citizens of nation states are expected to possess a national identity which is constantly recalled in the way people use language. As Billig puts it:

To have a national identity is to possess ways of talking about nationhood ... Having a national identity also involves being situated physically, legally, socially, as well as emotionally: typically, it means being situated within a homeland, which itself is situated within the world of nations. And, only if people believe that they have national identities, will such homelands, and the world of national homelands be reproduced (1995:8).

It is common practice for newspapers to represent the world as a world of different nations and, as noted before, the *Daily Sun* is no exception. In particular, newspapers often signify an assumed unity in the project of nation building. It has been noted though, that this nation building process often hails men as the front runners whilst women remain in the periphery of this project. Nationalism therefore proposes a hegemonic masculine position usually articulated through varied masculine identities (Prinsloo 1999). Thus nationalism is patriarchal in nature, and media narratives often work to naturalise this kind of hegemonic gendered power relationship.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the theoretical and conceptual framework that informs the study. The representation moment in the circuit of culture was identified as key in the production and circulation of culture. The chapter also located the Foucauldian discourse theory within the process of representation by showing that knowledge production within discursive formations is always linked with power and helps in establishing certain „truths“ in different social groupings in varied historical moments. A discussion of feminist poststructuralism showed how masculinities and femininities are historically grounded constructions that are implicated in the practice of representation. Finally, the chapter discussed the *Daily Sun* as a tabloid newspaper. It considered the possibility of the *Daily Sun* as an alternative public

sphere. Against this background the next chapter discusses the research methods that were employed in the study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODS

For too long in the history of communication scholarship, we have focused on what messages refer to, or the effects they have, without examining what messages are or how their articulation creates social realities for speakers and audiences. We have ignored the exquisite timing and skilfulness of the most obvious-seeming acts. We have glossed the cultural and historical variation of events of social participation, and failed to understand the profound ways in which communicating constitutes the rituals, functions and power arrangements of contemporary life (Lindloff 1995: 22).

3. Introduction

Aligned with the poststructuralist understanding of the constructed nature of media representations discussed in the previous chapter, the study followed a qualitative procedure to probe the construction of masculinities and femininities in the “Charter for a Man” campaign against gender violence that took place between 7 November and 7 December 2007 in the *Daily Sun*. This chapter outlines the research design and procedure undertaken in the study. The chapter first presents the research question. The second section moves to a discussion of qualitative research methodology and then the third section discusses critical discourse analysis as a research method as this is a textual based study. The chapter concludes by outlining the sampling of the data and the analytic strategies employed.

3.1 The research question

Qualitative research frequently deals with competing interests at various levels. In such instances, it “originates in some local conflict or quandary or subversive activity, in which a political issue writ large seems to be at play,” (Lindloff 1995:25). The issue of gender inequalities can be considered such an issue and the *Daily Sun* “Charter for a Man” campaign offered an entry point to the questioning of gender justice. With its focus on changing the attitude and behaviour of men towards women and children, the campaign posed a puzzle in that it apparently stood as representative of a feminist or gender justice campaign. The primary question therefore was: What kinds of masculinities and femininities are validated in the campaign? The subtext of this question that also informed the research is whether the discourses of the campaign were transformative of patriarchal power relations in line with gender justice. The answer to this question was achieved by interrogating the constructions of

masculinities and femininities in the “Charter for a Man” campaign by analysing representations through qualitative procedures of critical discourse analysis.

3.2 Qualitative Research as a methodology

Although the terms methodology and methods are often used interchangeably, Bryman (1984) provides a valuable distinction between the two terms. For him, the term “methodology” refers to an epistemological position, while “method” refers to particular ways of gathering data (Bryman 1984:106). In a similar vein, Babbie and Mouton describe the term “qualitative” as referring to “a broad methodological approach to the study of social action. [It] refer[s] to a collection of methods and techniques which share a certain set of principles or logic” (2001:270). Thus, qualitative studies typically employ qualitative methods of gaining access to research subjects, data collection and analysis (Babbie and Mouton 2001). To this end, as text based research this study will employ qualitative methods of data collection and textual analysis.

As highlighted in the first chapter the research takes the form of a case study and thus analyses the “Charter for a Man” campaign against gender violence in the *Daily Sun* as a particular case. As a form of research, case studies are defined by interest in individual cases; their purpose is to represent the case and not the world (Stake 1994). A case study is thus not a methodological choice but a choice of object to be studied due to its uniqueness. Case studies are used to gain an in-depth understanding of particular cases. Thus the results it produces are not generalisable (Punch 1998; Yin 1984). A good case study adds value where knowledge is “shallow, fragmentary, incomplete or non-existent,” (Punch 1998:55). In a similar way this study also seeks to add value to the understanding of the construction of various masculinities and femininities in contemporary society through popular cultural forms, an area in which there has been minimal research. As already established this is done through qualitative inquiry.

Qualitative research emphasises in-depth or „thick“ descriptions of specifics and is committed to an understanding of actions and events. Actual talk, gesture, interview data, texts and other social action can constitute the raw materials for analysis. In relation to this study, one can consider the “Charter for a Man” campaign and associated coverage in the *Daily Sun* as a particular event whose analysis can produce such thick descriptions due to its nature as a case study. As such, qualitative research should be understood as an approach that includes but

also goes beyond most of what is considered ethnography or naturalistic inquiry (Lindloff 1995). In addition, for a study to be considered as qualitative it should demonstrate a theoretical interest in human interpretational processes and be concerned with the study of socially situated human action and artefacts, such as media texts in this case.

Furthermore, the main concern of qualitative research is to understand social action in terms of its specific context rather than attempting to generalise to a theoretical population like quantitative research. Thus, it has also been considered as the “contextualist” or holistic research strategy of qualitative research (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 272). In the same way, the study seeks to understand the constructions of masculinities and femininities in a particular South African historical context (see Chapter 1). As Lindloff notes, “[a]lthough the scope of qualitative inquiry is necessarily local and particularistic, its emphasis on holism, historicity, and process provide dimensions of explanation typically not available in quantitative studies,” (1992:25). Qualitative researchers therefore often reject quantitative methodology as it is seen to provide superficial evidence related to the social world due to its tendency to generalise unlike qualitative research which favours “interpretive particularisation” over “explanatory generalisation” (Ang 1996: 71; also Maxwell 1992). Furthermore, because the qualitative research process is often inductive in its approach it therefore results in the generation of new hypotheses and theories. Thus, theory in qualitative research is „data driven“ and emerges as part of the research evolving from the data as it is collected (Wimmer & Dominick 1991). Accordingly, qualitative research constitutes the production of knowledge and not its discovery (Lindloff 1995). In other words the qualitative researcher “embarks on a voyage of discovery rather than one of verification,” (Bryman 1984: 85).

Quantitative researchers therefore often question the validity and reliability of qualitative research findings as the results are argued not to be positivistic by nature. However, qualitative researchers for their part have argued that when validity is applied in terms of accounts and not to methods, qualitative research findings can achieve the status of reliability (Maxwell 1992).

The applicability of the concept of validity does not depend on the existence of some absolute truth or reality to which an account can be compared, but only on the fact that there exist ways of assessing accounts that do not depend entirely on features of the account itself, but in some way relate to those things that the account claims to be about (1992: 114).

The study thus follows a qualitative procedure as it subscribes to the idea that a qualitative approach will help to understand the frames of human interpretive actions on a more intimate level than would be achieved by a quantitative approach. Against this background the next section looks at critical discourse analysis as a research method.

3.3. Data and sampling

The case that was examined was made up of several media texts, namely the “Charter for a Man” document, 30 news stories, four editorial pieces and 11 letters to the editor as shown in the tables below. Table 1 lists the news articles and editorial pieces while Table 2 presents a chronological list of letters to the editor published during the course of the campaign. Table 1 identifies the day of the ongoing campaign, the page on which the related articles were published and their titles. It also identifies the focus of the articles by providing a brief description and the category under which particular articles fall.

Item	Day	Date	Page	Title	Description	Category
1	1	7 November	25	<i>A Charter for a Man</i>	The Charter document to be signed setting out nine pledges	Charter
2			1	<i>Stand up and be a man: Don't let your women end up like Funeka</i>	Story about a woman who is tired of abuse and has reported her abusive partner to the police	Other
3			1	<i>Count me in, says doc</i>	Kwaito star Doc Shebeleza signs the SunPledge	Signatory
4			1	<i>Daily Sun says</i>	Introduction to the charter inviting men to sign	Editorial
5	2	8 November	4	<i>Have you signed the charter?</i>	Invitation to sign the Charter	Editorial
6			4	<i>It's amazing, says DJ Sbu</i>	TV and radio personality DJ Sbu signs the pledge	Signatory
7			4	<i>We must protect women</i>	Vox pops	Vox pops
8	3	9 November	4	<i>Des says yes! He signs SunPledge</i>	Comedy star Desmond Dube signs the Charter	Signatory
9	4	12 November	1	<i>Men: Keep the women safe</i>	Poet Mzwakhe Mbuli signs the SunPledge	Signatory
10	5	13	3	<i>Sunland's war on</i>	Afropop singer Ntando	Signatory

		November		<i>evil: Ntando signs and joins the battle</i>	signs	
11			3	<i>Another young woman dies in a sea of blood and battle lines are drawn</i>	Young woman chopped to death by her boyfriend	Testimony
12	6	15 November	3	<i>A time of horror (My boyfriend has poured paraffin over me)</i>	Mother's testimony of her daughter's death in the hands of a boyfriend	Testimony
13			3	<i>But there's still hope (Jerry signs our Charter to be a REAL man)</i>	Showbiz personality Jerry Mofokeng signs the SunPledge	Signatory
14	7	16 November	4	<i>Men who are monsters Used as a sex slave</i>	Testimony	Testimony
15			4	<i>Boiled by her lover</i>	Testimony	Testimony
16			4	<i>And real men who care Wilson signs up to make things right</i>	Radio personality Wilson Nkosi signs SunPledge	Signatory
17	8	19 November	4	<i>Fed up women beat up abusive husband</i>	Women gang up to beat up an abusive husband	Other
18			4	<i>Baloyi signs pledge</i>	Soccer personality Brian Baloyi signs the SunPledge	Signatory
19	9	21 November	1	<i>I'm sorry: Wife basher changes his ways and signs the SunPledge</i>	Abusive husband apologises and signs the Charter to change his ways	Signatory
20	10	22 November	3	<i>Ringo signs up to get real</i>	Afropop singer Ringo Madlingozi signs the SunPledge and discourage violence	Signatory
21	11	23 November	3	<i>Snaysi! Joe Mafela signs the SunPledge</i>	Showbiz and TV icon Joe Mafela signs the SunPledge	Signatory
22	12	26 November	12	<i>Changing lives: Bobby collects 340 SunPledges</i>	Taxi boss volunteers to collect pledges from door to door	Other
23			12	<i>Paul signs up to change</i>	Abusive man signs the Charter to change	Signatory

24	13	27 November	5	<i>A flood of pledges</i>	SunEditor Themba Khumalo impressed with the overwhelming response to the Charter	Editorial
25			5	<i>More men should be signing up</i>	Marketing Director of Birchwood Executive Hotel joins thousands who have signed the Charter	Signatory
26	14	29 November	4	<i>Speedy signs the SunPledge</i>	Former Bongo Maffin band member Harold Matlhaku signs the SunPledge	Signatory
27			4	<i>Real men don't abuse women – Tshepo</i>	Gospel artist Tshepo Molele signs the SunPledge	Signatory
28			4	<i>Your last chance to join the struggle</i>	Last invitation to sign the Charter	Editorial
29	15	30 November	5	<i>Xolani signs the Pledge</i>	Radio and TV personality Xolani Gwala signs the SunPledge	Signatory
30			5	<i>Anna says NO to abuse</i>	Testimony from a woman abused by her boyfriend of four years	Testimony
31	16	5 December	1	<i>Well done real men: Sexy Chomee praises thousands who signed the SunPledge</i>	Singer Chomee gives a thumb of men who have signed the SunPledge	Other
	17	7 December	8	<i>My lover beat me to a pulp</i>	Testimony from a woman with swollen eyes from being beaten up by her boyfriend	Testimony
33			8	<i>And this is what REAL men are made of</i>	Mercury Media workers sign the SunPledge	Signatory

Table 1: News articles and editorials in chronological order from 7 November to 7 December 2007.

As shown in the last column of the table above, the news articles and editorials were grouped into six categories listed below for sampling purposes.

1. Charter for a Man document	1
2. Vox Pops	1
3. Editorials	4
4. Testimonies	6
5. Signing up articles	17
6. Other	4
7. Letters to the editor	11
Total	44

The category identified as „other“ consists of news texts that did not fit comfortably in the other categories. For example, the article with the title “Well done real men: Sexy Chomee praises thousands who signed the SunPledge” (5 December 2007:1) does not fit under the signatory category but in Chapter 4 it is discussed under this category as Chomee is a celebrity like most of the celebrities. Likewise other stories in the “other” category are absorbed into the other categories in the analysis. The seventh category is that of letters to the editor and it is presented in Table 2 below. The table identifies the day of the ongoing campaign, the page on which the letter to the editor appeared and its focus.

Item	Day	Date	Page	Title	Description
1	1	9 November	47	I support the Charter of Men	In support of the Charter
2	2	12 November	39	Proud of the People's paper	In support of the Charter
3				What are you waiting for	In support of the Charter
4	3	14 November	39	Let's be better men	In support of the Charter
5				South Africa is against men	Suggestion for charter for women
6	4	23 November	47	SunPledge helps men to change	In support of the Charter
7	5	27 November	39	Confident men don't abuse	In support of the Charter
8				Turn 16 Days into 365 days	In support of the Charter
9	6	5 December	39	Let the abusers sign	In support of the Charter

10			39	The real men rule	In support of the Charter
11	7	7 December	55	Men are also victims	Suggestion for women to also sign the pledge

Table 2: Letters to the editor

As a textual based study, the research did not take into account the audiences’ opinions on how they construct their feminine and masculine selves through the paper. It has been argued that people’s different sociocultural backgrounds provide a basis from which to make their own meanings from media texts due to the polysemic nature of texts. Thus people have the liberty to engage critically with the text (Fiske 1992; Hall 1997). However, a separate study would have to be carried out for comprehensive results and this was beyond the scope of the study. What makes up for what some may perceive as a weakness to the study is the fact that this discrepancy is made up for by the analysis of letters to the editor and vox pops as they provide a sense of the different contributions and feelings about the campaign from the readership.

On the day the campaign was launched (7 November 2007), the actual pledge listing nine principles was published. The nine principles were essentially pledges that men would protect women and children from violence and provide for them. On the front page, the *Daily Sun* ran a story about a woman who was abused by her drunken husband for not giving him food when he demanded it. The story was accompanied by a close up picture showing her swollen face with one eye completely closed, assumedly from the severe beating. Next to this story was an editorial article inviting men to stop abuse and stand as proud men by signing the “SunCharter.” On the same page there was a story about Kwaito star Doc Shebeleza pledging support for the SunCharter by signing the pledge.

This pattern of inviting signatories, stories of celebrity signatories and personal testimonies can be traced throughout the campaign. These are outlined briefly below. On the second day (8 November) there was another appeal for people to sign the Charter and another celebrity signed the Charter. This edition included a section of vox pops from „ordinary“ men in the street pledging support for the Charter and condemning abuse against women. In the next two editions of 9 and 12 November, two more celebrities signed the Charter; on 13 November the *Daily Sun* ran an article about a young woman stabbed to death by her boyfriend who accused her of not caring for him as she had before. At this point the

campaign began to construct the campaign by employing the metaphor of war as yet another celebrity “sign[ed] and join[ed] the battle,” (2007:3).

Following from there, on the two days (15 and 16 November) that followed there were testimonies about men who had abused and killed women juxtaposed with “real” men (notably celebrities) who had signed the Charter. On 19 November there was an article about women who had taken the law into their own hands and beat up an abusive husband and another about yet another celebrity who had signed. Two days after that (21 November) the man who had been beaten up by these women made front page news when he apologised to his wife, signed the Charter and promised to change his abusive behaviour. On 22 November a story was published about a taxi boss volunteering to collect pledges and another abusive man signing up to change. On 27 November the editor of the *Daily Sun*, Themba Khumalo was pictured with a pile of pledges encouraging more men to sign the pledge and over the next few days (29 & 30 November) three more celebrities signed the pledge and another testimony from an abused woman was published.

Perhaps the most striking story was the front page article of 5 December which recounts how Kwaito singer Chomee praised all the men who signed the Charter. A snapshot of her scantily dressed and surrounded by the signed pledges was splashed on the front page with the caption “Sexy Chomee praises thousands who signed the SunPledge.” On the last day (7 December) another woman provided her story of abuse and a picture of her with swollen eyes she could barely see out of was published along with it.

From the above skeletal narrative of the stories that made up the campaign one can see the sets of opposing binaries that were created by distinguishing the “monsters” from the “real” men through juxtaposition of the two as evidenced by the headlines in Table 1. And from this, particular constructions of the campaign, masculinities and femininities come through which will be discussed in further detail in the next chapter. Since not all the stories were analysed, they were grouped according to different categories mentioned earlier for sampling purposes.

Purposive sampling was employed to identify the final sample for critical analysis in relation to the dominant themes that emerged and that were likely to aid the understanding of the construction of masculinities and femininities in the campaign. Sampling strategies always vary according to purposes and questions guiding the study (Punch 1998; Deacon et al.

2007). The final sample for analysis consists of the original “Charter for a Man” document, two editorials, one set of vox pops, the six testimonies and three stories from the category of other. As the signatory stories formed the majority of the stories and were all relatively short, all of them were also selected for separate analysis. The articles were divided into three categories for analysis and one major theme that came through in the analysis. The categories consisted of the signatory articles, the testimonials as well as the vox pops and letters to the editor. While these two categories are essentially different, they are discussed as one category as they represent the readers’ views about the campaign. The theme that was identified was the representation of the campaign as a nation building initiative.

3.4 Critical discourse analysis (CDA) as a method

Qualitative textual analysis procedures are concerned with how signifying occurs and unravelling the polysemic nature of texts (Lindloff 1995:22). This study employs critical discourse analysis as a qualitative procedure of textual analysis. An eclectic approach to textual analysis that draws on linguistics and media studies is employed for analysis. The study of media texts is well established in the field of media studies and usually involves the use of analytical tools borrowed from literary criticism, film studies and linguistic analysis.

These kinds of studies focus on the construction of meaning in media texts thus emphasising their qualitative nature as opposed to quantitative content analyses which emphasise a fixed meaning in media texts (Gunter 2000:82). In recent scholarship, critical discourse analysis has emerged as a qualitative procedure of textual analysis that emphasises the capacity of texts to convey multiple meanings depending on the receiver. Linguistic analyses of media texts and representation have the ability to reveal the assumptions and values that are wrapped up in the construction of texts, and are also helpful in revealing how language use in the media contributes to the ongoing production of social conceptions, values, identities and relations (Deacon et al. 2007). Thus media language use is seen as embodying relations of power and authority in society since the way language is used reproduces or transforms society and culture which means society and culture are in a dialectical relationship with discourse. The relationship between language use and social structure is therefore a central concern of discourse analysis (Deacon et al. 2007; Richardson 2007).

Accordingly, CDA is an interpretative approach (Richardson 2007): it is concerned with making visible the underlying discourses, perceptions of power relations and producers’ level

of authority and interest that is manifested in media texts. Through employing CDA the study seeks to assess the discursive practice of representation in the *Daily Sun*.

CDA consists of “theories and methods for the empirical study of the relations between discourse and social and cultural developments in different social domains” (Jorgensen & Phillips 2002: 60). It is critical in the sense that it teases out the unequal relations of power implied in texts and in society and attempts to contribute to radical social change through communication processes (Fairclough 1995; Jorgensen & Phillips 2002). CDA also provides a contextual approach as discourses are usually historically grounded and can only be understood in relation to their context (Richardson 2007; Hall 1992). To this end through employing CDA, one can look at the intended purposes of the “Charter for a Man campaign” to achieve particular subject positions as it operated in a patriarchal discursive formation. Discourse is most fundamental in revealing the manifested subjectivities which people tend to perceive as „natural.“ Interrogating the discursive space occupied by the campaign will help to make explicit the constructions of subjects in relation to patriarchy and the role of the *Daily Sun* as a particular public sphere in representing these constructions and so upholding certain social systems.

Thus as Lindloff argues, “if communication is primarily a matter of signifying meanings and purposes, then qualitative inquiry is interested in how signifying occurs and what it means for those who engage in it,” (1995:22). This is the logic on which this research is based; it is concerned with finding out how tabloids, in particular the *Daily Sun* represents the power arrangements in contemporary society by seeking an engagement with a particular set of texts relating to a case, the “Charter for a Man” campaign. More importantly, Lindloff (2005) argues, interpretive science deals with often competing interests and thus qualitative studies often originate in some local conflict. The tensions associated with gender balance in contemporary society constitute an issue which this study seeks to interrogate using qualitative techniques.

3.5 Foucault’s value for CDA

Foucault’s theory of discourse which was outlined in Chapter 2 informs the analytic approach employed here. What is relevant to this discussion here is Foucault’s broad sense of discourse. His approach is important in that it looks at discourse as a blanket formation and not as single units of analysis in the way that linguists tend to. In other words his concern is

not looking at discourse through a linguistic lens but rather as already highlighted before, his concern is with specifying sociohistorically variable discursive formations and rules which govern discourse at particular times (Fairclough 1992). A discursive formation comprises “rules of formation” (Foucault 1972: 38) which refers to the conditions of existence in particular contexts. The rules for the formation of objects (for example patriarchy), enunciative modalities and subject positions, as well as rules for the formation of concepts and strategies elaborated on below can be used to understand the set of relations and contestations.

Patriarchal power relations are similarly constituted and transformed through discourse consistent with a particular discursive formation. The value of this view lies in its emphasis on discourse as constitutive, as “contributing to the production, transformation and reproduction of subjects,” (Fairclough 1992: 42). The relationship between discourse and its subjects is understood as active in relation to reality, thus language constructs meanings of what is „real.“ The constitution of reality usually operates through speech or enunciative modalities. Thus the subject who speaks and the one who is addressed by a certain discourse are not outside the power of discourse. The relationship between the subject and the statement is historically specific and open to change. Thus, there is a “field of statements” (Foucault 1972:46) in which concepts of speech which appear and circulate in a discursive formation can be analysed. The concepts of patriarchal discourses would include the beliefs associated with it and their rationale as well as the strategies or techniques of enacting them, censoring or rewarding subjects. In relation to the study an analysis of patriarchy as a particular discursive formation and identifying the rules of formation through which it operates has the potential helping to probe the constructions of masculinities and femininities in the “Charter for a Man” campaign.

3.6 Fairclough’s CDA approach

As a critical linguist concerned with issues of power, Fairclough developed an approach to critical discourse analysis which seeks to systematically investigate

[o]ften opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts and (b) broader social and cultural structures, relations and processes, ... how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power [and] how the opacity of these

relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony (Fairclough cited in Jorgensen & Phillips 2002:63).

In other words he proposes a form of critical discourse that is a three dimensional analysis of the text, discourse practice and the sociocultural practice. For him, the analysis of a text encompasses an analysis of vocabulary, semantics, and cohesion of sentences, grammar, transitivity choices, theme, modality and the overall structure of the article. His approach is informed by linguistics and this is evidenced by the kinds of analyses he identifies and uses. However, there are other forms of relevant analyses that he does not identify. From within the field of media and cultural studies, the analysis of a text would also draw on semiotics, narrative and genre theory (Janks 1997). Discourse practice in CDA refers to processes of text production and consumption, and sociocultural practice refers to the “social and cultural goings on which the communicative event is a part of,” (Fairclough 1995:57) the communicative event being the text.

3.7 Textual analytic strategies

3.7.1 Argumentation

The analysis of the articles, in particular, letters to the editor draws on the theory of argumentation and narrative theory. Argumentation or argumentative discourse is viewed as a verbal and social process of reasoning that aims at either increasing or decreasing the acceptability of a contentious standpoint for the reader, by presenting a number of positions intended to justify an argument (Richardson 2007). Richardson substantiates his position by using Aristotle’s theory of rhetoric which aims at revealing methods of persuasion in an argument. The three varieties of rhetorical discourse identified and that were employed in this analysis are forensic, epideictic and deliberative rhetoric. Forensic rhetoric is concerned with drawing on past actions to create a negative picture about someone while epideictic rhetoric draws on the present and deliberative rhetoric often speculates on possible future repercussions of certain types of behaviour (Richardson 2007: 155). Similarly, Silverstone (1999) argues that the media rhetorically constructs places for audiences in private or public, thus the media uses rhetorical language that has a persuasive intention. Rhetoric is built on hierarchy, that is, on an acknowledgement that there are different views to an issue thus the motivation to persuade and to this effect, rhetoric is central to the exercise of power and its opposition.

3.7.2 Narrative

Narrative theory on the other hand studies the “devices and conventions governing the organisation of a story (fictional or factual) into sequence,” (Branston & Stafford 1996:26). The making of narratives is fundamental to the way in which meanings get constructed in and outside the media. The analysis draws on theories of Todorov, Propp and Levi-Strauss. Todorov argued that a narrative begins with a state of equilibrium where there is stability followed by an event which causes a disruption to the state of equilibrium and finally there is a transformation from one state of being to another where there is a new equilibrium. The new equilibrium is not necessarily the same as the initial equilibrium (Wigston 2001). The value of Todorov’s theory lies in its ability to make us aware that the equilibrium or status quo may be constructed in certain ways so as to serve particular ends (Branston & Stafford 1996).

Similarly Propp offers a narrative model that analyses the function of characters within narratives and the role they play in advancing the narrative. He thus identified 32 narrative functions that move the narrative along which usually involve the struggle between the hero and the villain, and eight character roles which specify the role of each character in the narrative (Wigston 2001). For the purpose of this analysis with its focus on gendered identities, it is the character functions that are most productive. However, the narrative function of the magical agent is also useful as it aids the hero in restoring the preferred social order and is signalled in this study by the Charter (discussed in Chapter 4). People may be constructed differently in narratives in the media which means that the assigning of roles and representation of the hero and the villain serve to privilege certain people or positions over others.

These constructions also serve to create binary positions between the good and the bad as argued by Levi-Strauss in his theory of binary oppositions (Branston & Stafford 1996). Levi-Strauss advances a theory of how myth works as an “anxiety-reducing mechanism that deals with unresolvable contradictions” in society (Fiske 1987: 132). These unresolvable contradictions are made apparent through binary oppositions. The creation of binary oppositions often “reinforces or challenges social understanding,” (Wigston 2001: 152) by placing characters or their qualities in opposition to each other. This serves to expurgate some people or certain types of behaviours by representing them as „other“ and creating a

distinction between „us“and „them“ (Thompson 1990). To this end, as Silverstone (1999) argues, the structure and content of media narratives help us find ways of fixing ourselves in relationships with each other. More importantly, “media narratives and the narratives of our everyday discourses are interdependent [and] together they allow us to frame and measure experience,” (Silverstone 1999:11). Having highlighted the narrative tools that were used for textual analysis, the discussion now turns to the linguistic tools that were used to aid the analysis.

3.7.3 Linguistic tools

As mentioned earlier the analysis followed the structure of Fairclough’s (1992) three pronged approach to doing discourse analysis. The first level, the text, is analysed with reference to details of the particular linguistic tools employed and the objects of analysis. The discussion of the levels of discourse practice and sociocultural practice will then follow.

Lexical analysis

A lexical analysis refers to analysis of the choice and meaning of words (Janks 1997; Fairclough 1992). Words convey denoted and connoted meaning thus their analysis helps to establish the imprint of societal values and attitudes. This includes naming and reference. The naming of people in newspaper discourse plays a significant part in how they are viewed by the reader as it signals the social groups that they are associated with. The choice to refer to people in one way over other alternatives serves “many different psychological, social or political purposes...on the side of the speakers or writers,” (Reisigl & Wodak cited in Richardson 2007: 49-50). These referential strategies therefore have the purpose of implying certain meanings and social values to be associated to the referent while systematically determining the reference and representation of other social actors.

Predication

Predicational strategies are used to represent the values and characteristics of social actors. They can be used to describe people using their attributes (physical or otherwise) in a positive or negative way to achieve particular ends in the form of adjectives, prepositional phrases, nouns and pronouns (Richardson 2007). An example would be Sexy Chomee as discussed in Chapter 4.

Sentence construction: transitivity

Transitivity refers to the relationship between participants and the roles that they play, thus it forms the very heart of representation. Transitivity as a form of analysis probes the types of processes used in referring to people (Fairclough 1992). The processes can be verbal, material, relational or mental. Verbal processes refer to speech acts, material processes refer to the act of doing, relational processes refer to the state of being and mental processes refer to thinking (Richardson 2007). The purpose is to establish whether particular process types and participants are favoured over others in the text and what purpose this serves.

Modality

Modality refers to the “judgements, comment and attitude in text and talk, and specifically the degree to which a speaker or writer is committed to the comment he or she is making,” (Richardson 2007:59). Modal expressions indicate judgements as to truth (correct), likelihood (might) or desirability (regrettable) for example (Fowler 1991). Modality is also signified through the use of obligatory modal verbs such as *will/must* and their negations *will not/must not* or through adverbs such as *certainly*. Modality is usually a feature in opinionated news articles such as those in this campaign. The purpose of analysing modality is to evaluate the extent to which “modality practices are imposed upon those who draw upon particular discourse types,” (Fairclough 1992: 162). Modality also indicates the existence of an individual subject who is qualified with the knowledge to pass certain judgements (Fowler 1991).

Presupposition

This refers to the hidden meaning in texts; to a taken for granted implicit claim entrenched within the explicit claim of a text. The use of certain words (usually implicative verbs that imply a certain type of behaviour) suggests presupposed meanings already exist and the purpose of the statements is to qualify or disqualify those modal claims (Richardson 2007). The purpose of analysing presuppositions is to establish how they are cued in the text and whether they are sincere or manipulative in order to determine the positioning of the text (Fairclough 1992).

Metaphors

Metaphors tend to configure the way people think and act, their beliefs and knowledge systems in an important way, thus when people signify things through one metaphor over another, they are constructing their reality in a certain way rather than another (Fairclough 1992). Some metaphors within particular cultures have become so naturalised to the extent that they are no longer seen as such. An example is the militarisation of discourse to the extent that metaphors of war are used in everyday speech (Fairclough 1992). In trying to analyse the use of metaphors it is important to determine the choice of metaphor and what purpose it serves, especially the effect it is bound to have on thinking and practice.

3.8 Discourse practice

The next level of analysis was establishing the discourse practice that is, analysing the production and consumption patterns. At this point, the analysis becomes discourse analysis rather than textual analysis (Richardson 2007). The consumption analysis is included by considering the letters to the editor; an extensive and separate study would have to be conducted to get conclusive results on the audiences' reaction and is beyond the scope of this study. These are some of the questions that helped to frame the analysis of this dimension of CDA as informed by Fairclough (1992: 233).

What kind of positions are the audiences taking up in relation to the Charter? What kind of subjectivities do these positions reveal? What are the contesting discourses revealed by these positions and what do they reveal about the gender order? To what extent did the *Daily Sun* succeed in acting as an alternative public sphere that is representative of both men and women?

3.9 Sociocultural practice

The socio cultural practice dimension involves looking at the wider frame of the society and culture that the text is embedded within. The questions that framed the analysis at this stage were informed by Richardson (2007:42).

What does this text say about the society in which it was produced and the society that it was produced for? What influence or impact do we think that the text may have on relations between men and women and consequently impact on the formation and construction of

masculinities and femininities? Will this kind of representation help to continue inequalities between men and women or will it help to break them down? In this regard, was the campaign transformative?

3.10 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to outline the research methods employed in this study and to discuss the research process. To this end a discussion of qualitative research as a methodological approach was offered and critical discourse analysis as a research method informed principally by the work of Foucault and Fairclough discussed. The chapter also presented a synopsis of the campaign that forms the research data, the sampling procedures and analytic strategies. Having highlighted the research process and explained in detail the narrative and linguistic tools that were employed in analysing the data, the next chapter moves to offer a presentation and detailed analysis of the data.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

News is a representation of the world in language; because language is a semiotic code, it imposes a structure of values, social and economic in origin, on whatever is represented; and so inevitably news, like every discourse, constructively patterns that of which it speaks (Fowler 1991:4).

4. Introduction

The primary goal of this study is to identify the constructions of masculinities and femininities in the *Daily Sun*'s "Charter for a Man" campaign through analysing its representations. This chapter presents the analysis of the coverage of the campaign. The data presentation and analysis is rooted in the objectives of the study and informed by the theoretical framework (Chapter 2). The chapter proceeds by presenting an analysis of the different categories of media discourse and the theme of nationhood identified in the previous chapter which, while interrelated, have been separated for the purpose of this analysis. Consequently some texts are discussed in more than one section due to this fluidity. In the first section the analysis of the "Charter for a Man" document is discussed both because it is the founding document and in order to lay ground for the findings of the accompanying coverage. Then the coverage of the campaign from 7 November to 7 December is analysed holistically as a sustained narrative by drawing on the theories of Todorov, Propp and Levi-Strauss. Using the narrative analysis as the framework, a detailed analysis of the accompanying coverage (news stories, editorials and letters to the editor) is presented according to the following three categories: the signatory articles, testimonials, vox pops and letters to the editor. Finally, the theme of nationhood that is inscribed in the editorials in particular as well as in the other categories of coverage is discussed by way of concluding the analysis.

4.1 Analysis of the "Charter for a Man" campaign

The "Charter for a Man" first appeared as a full page spread on 7 November 2007 on page 25 of the *Daily Sun* (Appendix 1). Notably it was on the right hand side of the spread which, based on readership research that has shown that readers' attention goes to the right hand page first, is known as the principal optical area (Giles & Hodgson 1990). The Charter is presented in portrait layout with a section at the bottom for the readers to sign and send back

to the *Daily Sun*. The cut off section has the statement “I ACCEPT THAT THESE AIMS ARE AN IMPORTANT PART OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MODERN MAN”⁴. The reference to a modern immediately sets it up to its binary opposite which in the current South African context would be a traditional or customary man. The implication is that a modern man is one who would choose to abide by the nine pledges contained in the Charter.

Placed centrally at the top is the *Daily Sun* logo sandwiched by the slogan “Our lives” and “Our paper” thereby presuming solidarity between the paper and its readers of a deep seated and shared concern about “our lives.” In this way the *Daily Sun* claims responsibility for the Charter which holds the promise of relevance to readers’ lives. Below this is the statement “A CHARTER FOR” in bold capital letters on one line and on the next “A MAN” in an even larger and bolder typeface. The lexical emphasis on “A MAN” at once identifies the primary addressee as one who identifies himself as “a man” or strives to be considered manly. The statement then qualifies what it proposes as manly by means of the pledges listed in the Charter for immediately below, is the declaration “HERE IS WHAT I PLEDGE.” In this way it firmly establishes the first person reference “I,” that is repeated through all the nine pledges that notably begin with the uniform phrase “I will...” This works to give agency to the primary addressee, that is, the man who the campaign is aimed at. The effect is to eliminate the sense of imposition of certain types of behaviours by proposing an agency, a particular moral subject that the addressee identifies with and who embodies the pledges as his own. The future tense also works both as a declaration of future behaviour as well as an imperative. The pledges are presented in point form and surrounded by a red border, the *Daily Sun*’s signature colour. The pledges are quoted below:

1. I will protect women and children.
2. I will never harm them.
3. I will use my hands to create a better life for them.
4. I will not resort to violence to settle arguments.
5. I will not allow any evil to be committed against those weaker than me.
6. I will teach and encourage fairness and justice.
7. I will be a positive role model to all.
8. I will be the bridge from terror to sanctuary.
9. I will dedicate myself to fighting all abuse. (*Daily Sun*, 7 November 2007:25)

⁴ This statement is capitalised in the original. From here on I retain the capitals and emphasis as published in the *Daily Sun*. All articles relating to the campaign and that were selected for analyses are appended in chronological order.

In order to probe the nature of these constructions of masculinities and femininities, a transitivity analysis was carried out. The constructions of masculinities in the Charter also imply the construction of certain types of femininities in turn, as masculinities and femininities are complementary. As noted in Chapter 3, transitivity describes the relationships between participants and the roles they play in the text. In other words, transitivity is “concerned with how actions are represented; what kind of actions appear in a text, who does them and to whom are they done,” (Richardson 2007:54). The processes identified in the construction of the campaign were primarily material (process of doing). By attributing material processes to the “man” it gives him agency which by implication means whatever he is doing he does for or to someone else. In this case these actions benefit women and children as evidenced by pledges 1-8. The man will “protect”, “never harm”, “use [his] hands”, “teach and encourage”, and “settle arguments.”

A “man” is therefore constructed as actively responsible for protecting women and children, providing for them and fighting abuse against them. By implication then, women and children are passive, dependent individuals. In the same way, the last pledge signals an intention to “fight all abuse.” This in effect constructs two sets of binary oppositions which identifies qualities and behaviours on one hand, of the „good“ rather than a „bad“ man and on the other „man“ not „woman.“ Table 4 below identifies the way a good man is constructed through binary oppositions.

Good man	Bad man
“protect”	Perpetrate
“never harm”[s] women and children	always harms them
provider (“use my hands to create a better life for them”)	uses hands to abuse women and children
use reasoning to settle arguments (“will not resort to violence”)	aggressive (use violence to settle arguments)
“teach and encourage fairness and justice”	model injustice
“positive role model”	negative role model
“bridge from terror to sanctuary”	source of terror
“dedicate[d] to fighting abuse”	enacts abuse
“MODERN MAN”	traditional man

Table 3: Binary oppositions of men in the “Charter for a Man” document.

The principles that are set out propose what it is to a modern man, a good man, which suggests that there is the “other” bad man who is, implicitly then, a traditional man according to the line of argument in the table above. The good man “will protect women and children”, provide for them, “not use violence to settle arguments” but rather “dedicate [himself] to fighting abuse.” He will be a “role model”, he is strong, fair and just and he is a “sanctuary.” One could argue that this has biblical overtones as “sanctuary” connotes a safe haven in the same way that God provides a sanctuary for his followers, so a man is given qualities of a deity (the word sanctuary has its roots in the Latin word *sanctus* that means holy). He is also constructed metaphorically as a “bridge,” that enables the passage from one state to another or, to be precise, from “terror” to “sanctuary” for women and children. It is of interest to note that the ideal man is constructed as knowledgeable, rational and just as he can “teach fairness and justice.” In consequence the bad man is implicitly constructed as harmful, violent, unfair, and unjust, he enacts abuse, is irresponsible and unleashes terror on women and children. Thus he is evil.

Masculinity is also implicitly constructed as binarily opposed to femininity and childhood. Women are bracketed with children and constructed as passive subjects in need of protection from violence and the bad men. They are also identified as “weaker than me[n]” and living in “terror.” Thus they are represented as in need of patronage as they cannot fight abuse by themselves. They look up to the man who is “a positive role model to all.” Thus women are not considered as independently competent or adequate individuals but constructed as in need of paternalistic protection or patronage. Essentially, the assumption is that men must protect and look after women who are dependent on the men to “use their hands to create a better life for them.” This positioning does not entertain other possibilities or ways of being for women.

The constructions of masculinities and femininities in the *Daily Sun* campaign represent a particular patriarchal nature. In as much as women are more educated than in the past and afforded equal rights by the constitution today (Morrell 2001), the Charter does not refer to any of these developments. It merely constructs women as in need of patronage as they are likened to children who need to be guided and guarded from harm. The Charter thus inscribes a certain type of hegemonic masculinity, of a man who is a “role model”, who protects women and children and who is caring and provides for them. This is a non-violent masculinity where non-corporal practices are validated. This form of masculinity is proposed as the norm against which „real“ manhood can be measured against. This also reflects the

patriarchal dividend men gain over women in terms of honour, prestige and the right to command (discussed in Chapter 2). An honourable man ideally conforms to the demands of the pledges and effectively gains prestige from being seen as a „real“ man. The Charter vests such a man with the right to command, to supposedly take the leading role in the family by being a patron to women and children. Women are effectively backgrounded in this scenario and, as mentioned earlier, grouped with children who are meant to be protected.

Related to this, the Charter implies that men have a material dividend in terms of occupation as evidenced by the pledge “I will use my hands to create a better life for them.” This is consistent with the structures of labour and power (Connell 1995) discussed in Chapter 2. Men are constructed as the primary contributors to the family income, thus the inclusion in this pledge. What is ignored or erased in this construction is women’s role in the contribution to the family’s financial upkeep. The trend in the workforce is that men get paid more than women for doing the same job. Furthermore, many women who are not in the mainstream and formal workforce do work that goes unrecognised and unpaid for in the form of housework and childcare (Connell 1995). Because the work is divided between public and private the crossing over from one threshold is not a norm. For instance, a woman in the mainstream workforce will not be accorded equal opportunities or equal pay as it is constructed as a male domain, while a domesticated man is effectively emasculated. This simultaneously feeds into the unequal relations of power that are evidenced by the reference to women as weak and unfit to do „men’s work“, as overpowered in arguments and needing the protection of men. Most of the time women come across as the property of men (Connell 1995).

The Charter thus works to normalise unequal relations of power between men and women, with men having the upper hand. The two forms of masculinities (good and bad) depicted here represent two of the responses to gender equality described by Morrell (2001) in relation to contemporary South African men discussed in Chapter 2. At first glance the Charter appears to be an accommodative and progressive response to gender equality in its rejection of violence. While this may be so, one needs to exercise a degree of scepticism as on the surface the responses seem to be accommodative of change and seek to revive non-violent masculinities. However, a nuanced reading reveals manifest power imbalances. There is no actual commitment to seeing women as equals, as proposed by the South African Constitution, a point that was elaborated on earlier. Clearly, the campaign does not challenge

the existing gender order; rather it serves to preserve it. This argument is further supported by the evidence provided through analysing the accompanying coverage in the following sections.

4.2 The campaign as narrative

This section proposes that, looked at holistically, the campaign works as a sustained narrative and thus the analysis draws on narrative approaches to further unpack the discursive workings of the campaign. Events are often represented in the news media in the form of narratives. Narrative works as “a sense making mechanism” (Fiske 1987: 129), which helps us to deconstruct the structuring and positioning of messages we encounter in media texts. Media messages should therefore be understood as constructions as they are developed in different contexts and interpreted differently by diverse audiences (Wigston 2001). In order to analyse the campaign as a narrative, Todorov and Propp’s narrative approaches were applied to the campaign.

Applying Todorov’s model

Todorov’s (1977) narrative approach is valuable for its ability to explain news stories and to represent news as “the social narrative of the conflict between the social order and disruptive forces (see Fiske 1987: 139). This means that in any news story, there is always a disruptive event to the existing social order. The representation of the disruptive event and the social order reflect the constructed nature of news stories as the two may be framed differently depending on what type of social order the storyteller prefers to uphold. Todorov proposes a five stage model which states that narrative always begins with a state of harmony that is then disrupted usually by the villain. Thereafter the disruption is recognised and attempts to restore the equilibrium are made. A new equilibrium which is not necessarily the same as the first one is restored. It should be noted that the initial state of equilibrium is usually a utopian ideal that never really existed in the first place. Todorov’s model is applied to the campaign and shown in further detail in the table below:

Todorov’s 5 stage model	Todorov’s model applied to the campaign
A state of equilibrium	A violence free society
A disruption of that equilibrium by some action	Perpetrators of domestic violence abuse women and children
Recognition of the disruption	<i>Daily Sun</i> recognises the disruption

Attempts to restore the equilibrium	<i>Daily Sun</i> runs a campaign against gender violence
A reinstatement of equilibrium	Ideally a violence free society

Table 4: Todorov’s model applied to the “Charter for a Man” campaign.

By applying Todorov’s model to the campaign, it is evident that the *Daily Sun* has constructed itself as heroic as it recognised the disequilibrium and therefore took it upon itself to go on a quest to restore the equilibrium by running this campaign against gender violence. In order to qualify this observation, the discussion turns to Propp’s narrative approach.

Applying Propp’s character functions

Propp’s narrative approach is similar to Todorov’s approach in terms of the general structure of narratives. However, Propp’s approach as highlighted in Chapter 3 differs in that he goes further to identify character functions in the narrative. Propp argues that a character’s significance is determined by what they do to advance the narrative rather than “who or what they are,” (Propp cited in Wigston 2001: 159). The value of this lies in identifying the discursive positioning of texts. In any narrative, the character that is represented as the hero and in contrast, the villain serves to prove the preferred hegemonic order of society. However, in a text that challenges the hegemonic order the roles of hero and villain may be constructed differently to achieve particular ends. The character of the hero is usually constructed in such a way as to signal those who hold power in different discursive spaces so as to maintain a preferred status quo. The character functions that were identified in the campaign are listed in the table below:

Character function	Purpose	Role player in the campaign
Hero	Seeks to restore equilibrium	<i>Daily Sun</i>
Villain	Blocks the hero’s action, so complicating the narrative	Domestic violence perpetrators
Member(s) of the family	Desires to have something (usually freedom)	Women and children
Hero’s helper(s)	Aids and moves the action towards a resolution	Signatories of the Charter

Table 5: Character functions in the “Charter for a Man” campaign (adapted from Wigston 2001:160).

As noted in the previous chapter, while the character functions are more useful in this analysis, the narrative function of the magical agent is relevant to the discussion. The role of the magical agent is to effect the transition that helps the hero to achieve their goal. In this case the Charter acts as a magical agent.

4.2.1 *The Daily Sun as hero*

What is striking about the campaign is that the *Daily Sun*'s heroic role is foregrounded more prominently than the actual abuse of women. The coverage ensures that this is echoed as most of the signatories of the Charter applaud the *Daily Sun* for coming up with the idea of running a campaign against domestic violence. This role is constantly flagged, for example, one comes across the phrase "And here is what he said about the SunCharter" in varied versions in almost all the stories. Some of the words used to describe the initiative were "wonderful", "positive", "noble", "commendable", "great" as well as "critical and important." These descriptions invariably place the campaign as central and the *Daily Sun* as praiseworthy, giving it hero status and arguably detracting from the supposed major focus of the campaign, that is, domestic violence as portrayed by the following comments (Appendix 3 and 5 respectively):

"I must say this is an amazing initiative ... I respect *Daily Sun* for coming up with the whole concept," (DJ Sbu, 8 November 2007:4).

"I think we should take our hats off to the People's Paper for what it is doing to change people's lives ... This shows that the heart of The People's Paper is based on Ubuntu," (Mzwakhe Mbuli, 12 November 2007:1).

The phrase "take our hats off" in the last quote is a metaphorical reference to a show of respect and through this, the paper is put on a pedestal and a subtle comparison is made to "other" newspapers that are not "chang[ing] people's lives." The reference to the *Daily Sun* with its „pet“ name the *People's Paper* is a unification strategy (Thompson 1990) that proposes kinship with the audience and resonates with their slogan "Our lives [...] our paper" discussed earlier. It is given human qualities as it has a "heart" and "*ubuntu*." Lesejane (2006) argues that *ubuntu* is a concept that emphasises a spirit of communalism amongst community members and it is attributed to African culture. He further states that it is characterised by caring and compassion for others, connectedness and a commitment to the

common good (Lesejane 2006). The reference to *Daily Sun* as characterised by this quality clearly seeks to strike a chord with all those who prefer to be concerned with the value of *ubuntu*. In summary, the *Daily Sun* constructed itself as heroic both in the pledge and accompanying coverage. This is consolidated primarily by the signatories of the Charter.

4.2.2 *The campaign as magical agent*

If the *Daily Sun* is the hero, the “Charter for a Man” then serves in Proppian terms as the “magical agent” (Fiske 1987) which is used by the hero (*Daily Sun*) to defeat the villain (perpetrators of domestic violence). This is evident in the story on Suzan “Used as a sex slave” (16 November 2007:4) where it is claimed that “she burst into tears” when she first saw the Charter as she was “thinking of the man she once loved and she wished the charter had been there before she married him in 1994,” (Appendix 8). She ascribes a power to the campaign as she assumes that if this man had signed the Charter then he would not have abused her. This also suggests that the Charter holds the hope of changing men and therefore serves to encourage more men to sign the Charter.

The construction of the Charter as a magical agent is further portrayed in two articles in which two men signed the Charter following the publication of their abuse by their partners (Appendix 10 and 12). The first story is of Sidiso Manga who had been beaten up by “fed up women” a few days earlier. The article with the headline “I’M SORRY!” and subheadline “Wife basher changes his ways and signs the SunPledge” (21 November 2007: 1) foregrounds Sidiso’s “reformed” behaviour through signing the Charter. The signing of the Charter symbolises his change of behaviour. Most interesting is the caption “HE SEES THE LIGHT AND HOLDS ONTO THE SUNPLEDGE! Abusive husband Sidiso Manga promises never to hurt a woman again!” The caption is enhanced by the visual illustration of a bare chested picture of Sidiso holding the Charter in his hands with an apologetic expression on his face. His bare chest could be a sign of vulnerability which further emphasises his willingness to change.

The reference to the Charter as the “light” has biblical undertones that suggest he was „saved“ by it. In the same way one may argue Sidiso was also saved as he “saw the light” in hospital and “has pleaded with his wife - and - God to forgive him.” It is also interesting how Sidiso goes from being a “wife basher” to being constructed as a “reformed husband” through the mere act of signing the Charter, thus emphasising its construction as a magical agent. A

community leader who is quoted in the article also aids this construction when he comments that “Sidiso”’s reaction is a real eye-opener for all men who abuse their wives,” thus suggesting that all abusers will stop the abuse once they sign the Charter.

In the second story, the headline “Paul signs up to change” (26 November 2007: 12) foregrounds the signing as symbolic of turning over a new leaf. Paul (not his real name) also signs the Charter as a sign that he is going to change (Appendix 12). This story is not given much prominence possibly because Paul was not willing to reveal his true identity thus we are shown his back in the picture but he is clearly in the act of signing the Charter. The introduction to the story also clearly foregrounds the popularity of the Charter (as claimed by the *Daily Sun*) and its role as an agent of change. It begins like this

THE MEN’S Charter continues to make BIG waves...

The call on men to stop bashing women and children is changing minds!

Now a guy - whose wife is divorcing him because she says he beats her - has signed the SunPledge as well! (26 November 2007:12).

The metaphorical reference to the Charter as making “BIG waves” emphasises its power and popularity as yet another abusive man has signed up to change.

4.3 Analysis of the signatory articles

During the campaign period a total of 17 news stories were published that focused on people who had signed the Charter. Thirteen of these were celebrities, two were former women abusers and the other two were representatives of two corporate companies namely Mercury Media and Birchwood Executive Hotel. The celebrities ranged from media personalities and singers to soccer players, all figures likely to be familiar to the readership. Celebrities are one of the mainstays of tabloid reporting. They have been characterised in three ways by Meyer and Gamson (1995). First they have been described as a “powerless elite” (1995:4). Second, while they might hold a privileged social position, this status does not relate to power that is institutionally based (as might a politician, business tycoon or academic specialist) but derives from the fact of public attention. Third, “their notoriety has less to do with what they *do*, or with how they can directly affect lives, than with what and who they *are*,” (Meyer & Gamson 1995:4).

Because they serve as attention grabbers, celebrities' participation in social movements is often actively sought out in order to give these movements what Thompson referred to as "mediated visibility" (Thompson 1995). The presence of a "media-certified celebrity makes an event inherently newsworthy," (Meyer & Gamson 1995:6). The *Daily Sun* similarly sought to promote the visibility of the campaign by deploying celebrities to spearhead the campaign. Such use of celebrities seeks to attract those readers who would normally not be concerned with the abuse of women and children. However, as Meyer and Gamson (1995) point out, there is always a danger that some celebrities may not be sincere in fighting for a cause and thus their participation may be driven by ulterior motives of personal career gain. Thus one should always be mindful of such factors when analysing media-certified celebrity events.

The signatory articles share a common structure and headline format. They are accompanied by the subjects of the stories either in the act of signing the Charter or holding it up to add credibility to the stories. Headlines are an important part of the analysis as they are pointers to what the story is about and because they are constructed by news editors after the stories have been written, their purpose is to shape opinion. They also serve to reveal the positioning of news articles, they are "macropropositions, [that] encapsulate the news stories, and attract the reader to the stories," (Thetela 2001:351). The typographical styles such as the use of different typefaces on the same page or various punctuation styles (Fowler 1991) employed by newspapers additionally serve to stress the relative importance of a story. The type of register used in the headlines and the stories in tabloids tend toward the informal and colloquial language and this is important to note as it says a lot about the target audience and the relationship between the paper and its readership. Most of the headlines in the celebrity stories are in the form of direct speech although they are not in quotation marks. The examples cited below can be found in the appendices as Appendix 2, 3 and 13 respectively.

"Count me in, says Doc!" (7 November 2007:1).

"It's amazing, says DJ Sbu," (8 November 2007:4).

"Real men don't abuse women – Tshepo," (29 November 2007:4).

The gist of the stories is established in everyday language. The use of colloquial language (for example “count me in”) and contractions (such as “it’s, don’t) that are typical of tabloids invest the stories with what Hall describes as a “popular force and resonance,” (Hall et al. cited in Fairclough 1995:71). It serves to naturalise them within the framework of the various publics who read the paper as they are essentially different individuals. Consequently, it also has an interpersonal function of an implicit claim by the tabloid to co-exist with the audience, of the world of ordinary life and experience it is drawn from and a relationship of solidarity between the newspaper and its audience as flagged by the slogan “our lives [...] our paper.”

Other headlines in the signatory articles are in the form of direct address, a theme following up from the “Charter for a Man” document such as, “MEN: Keep the women safe!” (12 November 2007:3, Appendix 5). The use of exclamation marks is also recurrent. Exclamation marks serve to emphasise a statement, or make a direct demand, as in the previous example. Most of the headlines also make use of material processes as a transitivity analysis makes evident. As highlighted before, the headlines are about men signing the Charter, which is accompanied by the visual illustrations of the men either signing or holding up the Charter to lend credibility to the story, and to draw attention to the main object of the stories, the Charter.

The campaign is metaphorically constructed as a symbolic representation of war in order to show the gravity of domestic violence in the signatory articles. The headline “Sunland’s war on evil!” (13 November 2007:3, Appendix 6) testifies to this and is supported by the sub headline, “Ntando signs and joins the battle.” This suggests a soldier enlisting for battle, thus providing a heroic image and thereby implicitly encouraging the reader to join the “battle” as well. It is notable that the word “SunLand” has the purpose of constructing a community inclusive of those who are fighting in the “war” against domestic violence. These people who consist of the *Daily Sun* readers are referred to as “SunLanders” and their identity is created by signing and supporting the pledge as evidenced by the quotation in one of the stories “On Wednesday SunLanders unanimously backed the Charter.” As the celebrities mainly took up the theme of nationhood in their construction of the purpose of the Charter discussed in the last section of this chapter, the analysis at this point concentrated on the headlines and one other separate celebrity story.

This particular celebrity story is exceptional in that it is the only one that focuses on a female celebrity. In the story Chomee, a well known South African singer and dancer, praises all the men who have signed the Charter. The story dominates the front page with half the page dedicated to the picture of Chomee (Appendix 15). It is notable that the main headline of the story “WELL DONE REAL MEN!” is positioned at the bottom of the page and is preceded by the subheadline “Sexy Chomee praises thousands who signed the SunPledge!” positioned at the top beside the picture. What is striking about the headline is the predication strategy used to refer to Chomee. Predication strategies (noted in Chapter 3) are the “basic process and result of linguistically assigning qualities to persons...actions and social phenomena,” (Reisigl & Wodak cited in Richardson 2007:52). The reference to her as “Sexy Chomee” as if “Sexy” is her title (such as Sir or Princess) serves to associate her physical appearance with desirability and yet her physical appearance and her desirability have nothing to do with the fight against domestic violence. The physical predicate is typical of the way most tabloids describe women (Richardson 2007).

This referential strategy is more striking because it has a semiotic relationship with the picture of a scantily dressed Chomee surrounded by a pile of signed pledges, smiling for the camera and holding some of the pledges with her hands. She is looking straight into the camera and pushing her chest forward which draws attention to her cleavage. The cleavage is further emphasised by the necklace that dangles over her partly exposed breasts. The picture is clearly meant for the male gaze (Berger 1972) and constructs a certain image of femininity that emphasises the constant demands on women to always look beautiful (Gill 2007). Chomee’s salon styled hair flows down to her shoulders and is symbolic of some of the demands of the beautification of women through fashion.

While it has been argued that the demands made by fashion on the woman’s body signal the social subordination of women by the system of patriarchy that coerces women into making themselves beautiful (Cranny-Francis et al. 2003), this argument has been dismissed as too deterministic. Therefore, it is also argued that women adorn themselves fashionably as a sign of self empowerment and expression of identity (see Gill 2007). These beauty „regimes“ performed by women are argued to point to the “multiplicity of meanings attributed to the female body [and] the insidious workings of power in and through cultural discourses on beauty and femininity,” (Cranny-Francis et al. 2003:197).

Allowing that dress enables varied performances of identities, this image in this context stands in irony to the purpose of the campaign. Considering the fact that the abuse of women is attributed frequently to the way they dress it is rather ironic that a scantily dressed woman is chosen to give the thumbs up for all the signatories⁵. One may argue that it actually compromises the seriousness of the campaign. The myth that women provoke men by the way they dress is so clearly deep seated and it is in direct contrast to the usually blatant display of women's bodies in the media. It would appear that scantily dressed women should remain in that domain and not parade the streets. The moment they parade the streets they are interpreted as soliciting for sex and thus needing to be disciplined. This abuse signals the perceived right of men to regulate and control women's sexuality and yet the sexuality of celebrities like Chomee should remain accessible for their gaze at the same time. This reflects the unequal relations of power and the structure of cathexis that Connell (1995) advances. Because of the patriarchal system's privileging of male power, men have the advantage of judging the types of femininities that are either acceptable or not in different contexts to suit their needs. More often than not, this cultivates violent masculinities when their demands are not met.

In the story Chomee is referred to as "SA's sexiest songbird" and "the dance music sensation," other similar predications that emphasise physical attractiveness and clearly construct her through the eyes of a man. This is in contrast to the descriptions of the male celebrities. Their working profiles and what they have achieved in their careers were foregrounded (see appendices) which is clearly not the case with Chomee. In fact, there is nowhere in the story is there even reference to what she has achieved except that she is a "golden girl of Kwaito music who is riding the airwaves with the hit *Jaiva Sexy*." This resonates with Connell's (1995) structure of labour and depicts the inequalities that are manifest when it comes to forms of work. Other popular musicians like Chomee such as DJ Sbu and Ringo (Appendix 3 and 11) are not constructed as sexual beings like she is. They

⁵ A recent case in point is of a highly publicised incident of a young woman who was assaulted by taxi drivers and hawkers at Noord Street taxi rank in Johannesburg on 17 February 2008 for wearing a mini skirt. Her clothes were torn off her body and she was stripped naked by the men who also poured alcohol over her head. Some men even shoved their fingers in her vagina, called her names and claimed they were teaching her a lesson for dressing unrespectably. Three other women were abused on the same day for the same „offence.“ This kind of abuse is not a new phenomenon, it spans years back but the cases usually do not gain attention as most of them, like any other type of abuse, go largely unreported.

essentially do the same kind of work but Chomee's description is highly sexualised whereas DJ Sbu and Ringo's physical attributes are not mentioned at all, a factor which further symbolises the power inequalities. These inequalities are circulated and rearticulated in these media narratives that prescribe certain types of masculinities and femininities.

The inclusion of Chomee should not be construed as a construction of her as equal to her male counterparts. She re-iterates a patriarchal position which depicts the constitution of women by such powerful social discourses. Women frequently consider themselves as unequal with men and thus continue to view themselves through a patriarchal lens. Chomee is no exception. She states "the fact that so many have signed the SunPledge shows South African men care about the weaker gender and about children." She goes further to remind men that they have a responsibility to take care of women and children as they are their father figures. She is accepting of the parameters of this form of patriarchy which construes women as "weak(er)" and thus they need the "care" of men. This positions her as a willing subject of patriarchy as her attitude supports and perpetuates it.

As pointed out earlier this points to the construction women as unable to sufficiently survive without men. Similarly men also seem to have particular ideas about the role of women being primarily to take care of the men's needs in the home. These subjects are constituted within the prevailing patriarchal discourse which is dependent on creating particular subject positions in relation to patriarchy. They are as already established, the willing subjects of patriarchy as they subscribe to some of its „truths“ and therefore embody the values as their own. Thus, as Weedon argues, the way we live our lives as "conscious thinking subjects, and how we give meaning to the material social relations under which we live and which structure our everyday lives, depends on the range and social power of existing discourses, our access to them and the political strength of the interests which they represent," (1987:26).

In the rest of the article Chomee sings praises for the signatories and expresses hope that "guys who have a negative mentality" can also change. In contrast, only positive words were used to describe the signatories such as "great", "wonderful", "responsible", and have "goodwill."

4.4 Analysis of the testimonies

There were six testimonies published during the campaign period. This section first presents an overview of what the articles are about and then provides a critique of the articles.

Accordingly, six women gave testimonies about the abuse they suffered at the hands of their partners. The first story appeared on the day the campaign was launched as a lead story with the recurrent direct address headline format noted earlier “STAND UP AND BE A MAN! Don’t let your women end up like Funeka! (7 November 2007:1, Appendix 2). The headline is supported by a close up picture of Funeka’s face with one swollen eye. Her visual face is enhanced by the story in order to show the gravity of domestic violence in the country as evidenced by the introduction “[t]his is the face of the violence suffered by thousands of South African women [and] hers is a sad story that repeats itself around the country every day.” The story recounts how Funeka is fighting back by laying a charge against her “wicked” husband who often abuses her to the extent that she has “lost count of the number of times he has beaten [her] up” by now. She relates how her husband came home drunk and “demanded food” and then beat her up for saying there was no food. Her husband is constructed as irresponsible as he “always blows money on booze” and gets angry every time Funeka asks him for any money.

The next testimony is narrated by a woman about her daughter’s death at the hands of her boyfriend. The headline consists of the chilling last words of Rhandzu Khubayi to her mother over the phone, “My boyfriend has poured paraffin over me!” (15 November 2007:3, Appendix 7) whose purpose is to startle the reader and possibly provoke a response. Rhandzu who lived in Soweto made the call to her mother who was in Cape Town at that time. Rhandzu told her mother that her boyfriend was also forcing her to drink some of the paraffin. Soon after that call she was informed that her daughter had been taken to the hospital with “terrible burn wounds.” There had been no arrests made even after she told the police about her daughter’s last desperate call to her.

On 16 November two testimonies were published side by side on page four under the umbrella headline, “Men who are monsters”, juxtaposed with, “And real men who care”, a story about a celebrity signing the Charter. The two testimonies are entitled “Used as a sex slave!” and “Boiled by her lover!”(Appendix 8). In the first story Suzan tells of how she has been disappointed by a number of men in her life and consequently “she holds no hope that

there will ever be a man to mend her broken heart.” This is retrogressive and suggests that men are saviours and constructs women as incomplete without a male partner. This also picks up on the argument made earlier about the Charter constructing women as in need of patronage and being incomplete individuals without men. Suzan relates how she has been “beaten, locked out of the house and used as a sex slave” and how in addition, her daughter was almost raped by her husband. In the second story Pinkies, whose swollen faced picture accompanies the story for effect, relates how her boyfriend has been sending her “scary phone messages” since he had been released on R500 bail after he burnt her with boiling water, burnt down her house using petrol and stabbed her niece with a knife.

The other two stories are also variations of the same abuse women suffer at the hands of their partners. In “Anna says NO to abuse” (15 November, 2007: 5, Appendix 14), Anna relates how her husband abuses her and his step son and how on one occasion he beat her up and threatened to kill her because she had failed to cook lunch on time. On the last day of the campaign in the story headlined “MY LOVER BEAT ME TO A PULP!” (7 December 2007:8, Appendix 16) another woman tells of her abuse. Nonthuthuzelo relates that her boyfriend accused her of having an affair and started beating her up, told her “to strip naked, took a piece of wire and lashed [her] all over [her] body.” The story is accompanied by her close up picture with swollen eyes that she could barely see out of. She reported the matter to the police.

What is striking about these testimonials is the emphasis on the justice system’s lack of action or inadequate action even provided with the evidence. Most women suffer in silence because they do not have much faith in the justice system as evidenced by their actions in these stories. For instance, Rhandzu’s mother related the story of her daughter’s death but no action had been taken even after she had enlisted the help of the community to corner the boyfriend. When they called the police, they failed to take him in for questioning. In the case of Pinkies, her boyfriend had been released on bail for just R500 and when she reported the “scary” message that reads “Your house will be burnt down from today and I am hunting you,” the police could not help her. Nonthuthuzelo’s testimony further provides evidence of the ineffectiveness of the police. An anonymous policeman at the police station where she had gone to check on the progress they had made in arresting her live-in boyfriend remarks “it is not the first time this monster has done this to [her], but this time we will set a trap for him. He’ll be locked up soon.” This makes one wonder why they have not arrested him

before and whether they ever will. One may also argue that since most police officers are male, they are always reluctant in dealing with domestic issues as they believe it is a man's right to „discipline“ his partner as some traditions allow this practice.

Also of interest to note are the constructions of the abusers that emerge from a lexical analysis as shown in the table below:

Abusers (bad men)	Good men
“wicked”	Virtuous
“drunk”	Sober
“taxi driver husband” (lowly job associated with hooligans)	decently employed
“demanded food”	Request
“blows his money on booze” (irresponsible)	use money responsibly to take care of their families
“violent”	Peaceful
“cruel”	Kind
“monsters”	human (“real”)

Table 6: Constructions of abusers in the testimonies

The abusers as evidenced above are constructed as monstrous, quick to anger and violent people who do not hesitate to beat up their partners. These characteristics they have are what the “real” men are supposed to pledge against as evidenced by the pledges discussed in the first section.

Reflecting on testimonies

As discussed in Chapter 2, in order for discourse to be effective, it requires “activation through the agency of the individuals whom [it] constitute[s] and governs in particular ways as embodied subjects,” (Weedon 1987:108). This means that at its most pervasive, discourse works to constitute the individual's mind, body and emotions although this is never total as there is always resistance. This compliant or resistant subject points to the workings of power in society as power often inheres in difference. Power is “exercised within discourses in the ways in which they constitute and govern individual subjects,” (Weedon 1987:110) and one of the ways in which power can operate is through inflicting violence on the body. Gender violence thus points to the workings of power in society. In terms of the campaign, the

several narratives of violence that were expressed through the testimonies are one way of producing truth. The gruesome details of the murders and violence inflicted on the women are appalling to say the least and it points to the workings of such power. This violence can be seen as a form of discipline meant to instil fear and obedience and constitute women's bodies, minds and emotions to the needs of gendered hierarchical forms of power thus substantiating men's power over them.

Another way that power operates is through the confession mode. Confession, Foucault argues permeates through all sectors of life both public and private to the extent that "man [sic] has become a confessing animal," (1981: 59). Furthermore, the obligation to confess is deeply embedded in people such that the confession is no longer seen as an effect of a power that constrains us but rather as freeing us from our wrong doings. As Foucault states, "the confession is a ritual of discourse in which the speaking subject is also the subject of the statement," (1981: 61) subjected to the discourse of which they speak. Often the speaking subject is also in a power relationship to the one who listens as they will be the judge of character and unburden him of his wrongs. In the same way, Sidiso's confession discussed in detail earlier, ("I'M SORRY! Wife basher changes his ways and signs the SunPledge" 21 November 2007:1) places him as a repentant subject who apologises for abusing his wife and promises to change his behaviour. At this moment he is the subject that is against domestic violence as he discredits his own abusive actions. Although Sidiso's story does not completely fit in as a testimony, it can be considered as such in the sense that he confesses his wrong-doings against his wife and asks for forgiveness although it fits rather uncomfortably in this category.

Constructions of women

This section discusses the constructions of women in the categories of media discourse discussed so far. Women are constructed as at the mercy of abusers. Some of the words used to describe them are "terrified" and "living in fear," following up on the pledge "I will be a bridge from terror to sanctuary." The "good" men are thus supposed to provide them with protection from the "monsters." The women are also portrayed as confused, desperate and in need of help as they resort to the police for help when they are tired of the abuse.

It also emerges from the testimonies that women are usually constructed as responsible for bringing the abuse upon themselves. For example, Funeka's cousin (Appendix 2) is quoted as

saying “they had warned the poor woman about her husband but she always went back to him.” (Don’t let your women end up like Funeka,” 7 November 2007:1). The reference to Funeka as “the poor woman” while seemingly sympathetic serves to mask the blame that is being laid on her for always going back to her husband. Similarly, one can easily blame the other women as they have been abused by their partners with whom they have lived for years but placing the responsibility on them seems to be too easy a way out of the life threatening issue of domestic violence. In two of the stories, the women are beaten up for not providing food on demand. These men clearly subscribe to the idea that a woman’s place is in the kitchen and thus her role is to cater to the man’s needs and make sure he is well fed. It may be argued that this connects with Connell’s (1995) argument about the inequalities one discovers when analysing the structure of labour in which women are always confined to either domestic spaces or low paying jobs. This serves to maintain the inequalities between men and women.

The *Daily Sun*’s use of colloquial everyday language such as “wife basher”, “guy” and “boozing” (“Paul signs up to change,” 26 November 2007) are a further strategy of kinship creation with the audience by the paper. The referential strategies to the subjects of the story, (that is, Paul as a “guy” and Suzan as his “wife”, Appendix 12) serves to maintain the stereotype that men never age and are thus never referred to as someone’s husband in contrast to women who are always recognised as someone’s wife. This has the effect of sustaining unequal relations of power between men and women.

Similarly, the referential strategies used to refer to the women who beat up Sidiso (Appendix 9) in “Fed up women beat up abusive man,” (19 November 2007:4), serve to create a negative image of women. As Richardson (2007) notes, the naming of people in news discourse has a significant impact on the way they are viewed. In this story they are referred to as “fed up women” and “angry females.” While it may be argued that the referential strategies are appropriate as they serve to show the emotional state of these women, one may counter argue that this leans dangerously close to the stereotypical image of women as emotional and not rational beings (Figs 1970). This is emphasised by the community leader’s comment “[i]t is time we stop women abuse before more women start to take the law into their own hands,” (21 November 2007:1, Appendix 10) a comment that one may argue serves to put women „in their place“ while seemingly encouraging action against gender violence. There is an implicit argument that women are not supposed to fight back when they

are being abused. In the original story “Fed up women beat up abusive husband” (19 November 2007: 4), the introduction foregrounds the fact that the women “took the law into their hands and assaulted him,” therefore suggesting that this was an illegal and therefore wrongful action.

The article sounds sympathetic to the man who “is now lying in hospital” after he was “injured by angry women,” (19 November 2007:4). The up side of the story is that the women are given a chance to speak and explain that they were “fed up” with this man thus they decided to “teach him a lesson.” Apparently when they asked him to stop beating his wife, he “became aggressive and [threatened] to set her shack alight ... then went to buy petrol” but they ganged up on him before he could do anything. Notably, the police were swift in arresting these women, thereby constituting them as criminal, something that is not observable when the perpetrators are men.

Likewise, in a follow up article, Paul (Appendix 12) discredits his wife’s claims (see Suzan’s story in Appendix 8 with the headline “Used as a sex slave!” 16 November 2007:4) arguing that “NOT everything his *unhappy* wife Suzan says is true” (emphasis added). Apparently Suzan “lied” to Paul about being pregnant so that he would marry her “knowing that [he’s] a religious person!” Notably Paul here is taking the moral high ground at Suzan’s expense. He adds that she also lied that Paul had sexually abused his stepdaughter as “the girl had fallen pregnant by her older boyfriend!” Arguably, *Daily Sun* has chosen to discredit Suzan’s story and endorse Paul’s because Suzan is not given the chance to defend herself against Paul’s claims. This stands in irony with the paper’s initiative to fight the abuse of women if they can easily dismiss her claims by giving Paul the last word. In this light, one may argue that the paper is sustaining and perpetuating the unequal relations of power rather than challenging them as it seems to subscribe to the common view of women who claim abuse as liars. It is perhaps ironic that a campaign that claims to be fighting against gender violence in fact actually turns out to be endorsing an unempowering image of women.

4.5 Analysis of Vox Pops and Letters to the editor

In order to get a sense of the reader’s reactions to the campaign, it was necessary to analyse the vox pops and the letters to the editor. This part of the analysis falls under Fairclough’s (1992) discourse practice dimension that was discussed in the previous chapter. There was only one set of vox pops published during the campaign period and 11 letters to the editor. As

explained in Chapter 3, four of the 11 letters were selected for analysis as they were reasonably representative of the whole sample. Letters to the editor are considered to “represent an important site for the (re)production and/or resistance of discourse on and around notions of „We-dom“ and „They-dom”” (Hartley cited in Richardson 2007:112), thus they form a critical part of the analysis of the constructions of femininities and masculinities in the “Charter for a Man” campaign. The role of letters to the editor is to allow the readers to express their opinions or air their grievances and to include readers so that they feel importance of having achieved special communication to a certain extent (Richardson 2007). Similarly vox pops are an institutional attempt to suggest that the newspapers value their readers’ opinion and that they are in sync with their readers.

Thirteen men were interviewed and all of them expressed support for the campaign and condemned abuse of women. A common theme that emerged was that men have a responsibility to protect women and children which informed the headline “We must protect women” (8 November 2007:4, Appendix 3). The modal verb “must” in this context authoritatively indicates that protecting women is an obligation that men have to fulfil. This is further emphasised by the possessive pronoun “our” (women) and the phrase “they have to be protected” that are frequently used in the text to refer to women. This represents women as a particular possession that has to be kept safe. One of the interviewees even goes on to suggest following the “rules” set out in the Charter will lead to people living in harmony. Implicitly then, as long as women are subordinate to men, there is a state of harmony.

Another interviewee suggests that a “good man should stay calm when a conflict arises” by “tak[ing] the woman out to a restaurant [to] soften her heart.” Interestingly agency is given to the “conflict” as its source is not explicitly mentioned; it is not attributed to the man in any way. However, because the woman has to be treated to “soften her heart”, one may argue that women are considered as emotional or childlike beings who are usually the cause of conflict situations (see Figs 1970). In such situations women are disarmed by appealing to their emotions like taking them out. Furthermore, as the interviewee connotes, women are constituted as fickle and their emotions are swayed especially by materialistic things in that when they are taken out, they forget their anger and its cause and men can thus make amends for whatever it is they may have done wrong. Viewed in relation to issues of gender equality, this construction proposes women with questionable rational capacity as they are to be wooed but not reasoned with.

Some men also expressed their feelings about abusers calling them “stupid”, suggesting that they “suffer from low self-esteem” and therefore “create a negative image for all men.” The first naming strategy is judgemental, the second rationalises the abusers’ behaviour and the last one smacks of egotism and masculine pride. Interestingly, the one who suggests that abusers suffer from low self esteem offers a further explanation that some men feel threatened by women’s rights that are enshrined in the constitution and take it out through abusing their partners.

The same argument occurs in the letters to the editor. The abuse of women is rationalised in a letter to the editor (“Confident men don’t abuse” 27 November 2007:39, Appendix 19). The writer suggests that abusers “feel inadequate within themselves” thus “lack self confidence” and this may be caused by several reasons. The letter makes three moves. First, the writer argues that abusers may feel that their “honour, integrity, intelligence, reputation, dignity or salaries are being challenged by their wives or girlfriends, who have become assertive.” What is interesting about this explanation is that these qualities are what define “a man” and their lack thereof suggests that someone is less of a man. Again it is fascinating to note that salaries form an important part of the description of a “real” man. This goes on to show that the structure of labour plays a significant part in determining a person’s status in society, especially that of a man. In contrast a successful woman is constructed as dangerous as she is seen as a challenger to men’s „natural“ position as a woman’s superior.

Second, abusive men are constructed as perhaps “timid and despise themselves due to failures they experienced in their lives” and thus vent out their frustrations on women. They go on to suggest that “confident women have an advantage over this kind of man” as men are “unable both socially and culturally to handle such a situation.” This rationalisation is important on two levels, the first being the suggestion of another kind of woman and man whom we have not encountered in the other texts, namely a “confident” woman and a “timid” man. In this kind of scenario the power relations change as the former has power over the latter. A self assured woman will not be trampled upon as she knows her rights whilst the “timid” man will suffer from self pity and be overshadowed by the powerful woman. Some men however resort to violence because they cannot reconcile with the fact that women should be treated equally and have a right to a higher salary than men. Such men represent a “traditional” man who will use cultural arguments to „put the woman in her place“ and this is the kind of man that the Charter advocates against as mentioned earlier. A “modern” man will accept that

women are their equal partners and should not feel threatened by more powerful partners. The rationalisation is also important because it points to a crisis of masculinities and femininities. There is no one way of being masculine or feminine, it is a constant struggle people negotiate every day (Cranny-Francis et al. 2003).

Third, the writer suggests that men should resort to other ways of dealing with the situation instead of resorting to violence by “ris[ing] again from where they fell, and seek information.” They can also “improve themselves by furthering their studies, or seek help in their churches,” so that “they will be able to face the challenge they believe women pose.” The solution is ironically for men to be more „manly“ and help is also identified as knowledge. This letter is written in argumentative discourse (see Chapter 3) whose purpose is to present an analysis from the position of one who knows and thus offer prescriptions to the problem (Richardson 2007). In this case, the writer analyses abusive behaviour and comes up with possible reasons why some men abuse women which are presented as an argument employing the deliberative rhetoric strategy (Richardson 2007). The writer argues that if abusers follow the given prescription, their problems will disappear in the future.

In the same way other letters to the editor also use rhetorical argumentation to state their positions. The letter titled “What are you waiting for?” (12 November 2007:39, Appendix 17) employs pathos (emotion) as a mode of persuasion for men to sign the Charter. Pathos is used to shift the audience from one emotional state to another in order to provoke action (Richardson 2007). Accordingly, the writer uses a direct form of address in order for her message to be more personal and increase the chances of striking a responsive chord. She writes, “[y]ou will not be doing it for *Daily Sun* but because you too are a son, a father, a lover, a brother and a real man.” Her argument is clearly meant to change someone’s mind by using family as the basis of her argument as the majority of people consider family an important part of defining who they are. She further states “[y]ou will swear to protect women and children from those who decided to be beasts,” thus motivating those who have not signed the Charter to commit themselves to protecting women and children.

The other two letters are more sceptical about the Charter with the titles “South Africa is against men” (14 November 2007: 39, Appendix 18) and “Men are also victims” (7 December 2007: 55, appendix 20) clearly attesting to this. In the first letter, the writer first commends the idea of the Charter but hastens to add that it is “one sided” therefore “a similar

charter should also be drafted to groom women to respect their husbands.” While some may consider the idea of a second charter as a reasonable argument, the reason he supplies for a women’s charter to be drafted is suspect. The word “groom” in this context connotes an undisciplined person who needs to be properly taught how to treat a man with “respect” allowing that if a woman does not respect her husband then she is deserving of a beating. In my own personal experience as an African woman, I am aware that according to custom, when a woman is getting married, she is taught the values of a „good woman“ which basically serve to subordinate the woman to her husband in most cases. Arguably, it is this traditional attitude that the writer was trying to capture.

He further goes on to state that men do not always start the violence as they may sometimes be reacting to the abuse from their partners. He justifies his argument by stating that few women are arrested by the police for abusing men. This is not the case as evidenced by the news stories in this campaign. He thus concludes that “the world, particularly South Africa, is against men. I do not condone the abuse of women but I am also against the abuse of men.” The writer is careful to sound like he is taking a neutral stance but a nuanced reading of his argument reveals his discomfort about facing the reality that men are usually the perpetrators and that not enough is being done to discourage the abuse of women. Instead he negotiates this by using a blaming strategy so that the negative attention shifts to women. Arguably such men wish to continue benefitting from the patriarchal dividend and are thus uncomfortable about gender justice. They resist change by trying to preserve the patriarchal state of affairs. They represent what Morrell (2001) would consider masculinities that are defensive in the face of change.

In a similar way, the writer of the second letter provides an argument which is critical of modern women. He constructs women as expedient by arguing that “nowadays women get married because of wealth and power and not for love anymore.” He further criticises the justice system as unfair to men: “a lot of men have lost their possessions and children because of our justice system.” Men are thus the victims of these perpetrators in contrast to the wrong doers and one may conclude that his implicit argument is that the justice system favours women for no apparent reason. He implies that in the event of a separation women should get nothing out of marriage as their reasons for getting married are suspect in the first place. This view of women as money grabbers often disadvantages women in relationships as they sometimes tend to be abused because of this misconception.

It is possible, of course that this man was referring to a particular case which may have been the reason for the highly emotional letter and the use of the pseudonym “victim” to sign off his letter. The writer goes on to sardonically state that he is “amaze[d]” by the “hard work [of] Editor Themba Khumalo in allowing men to sign the pledge but not allowing the same for women.” He goes on to accuse the editor of “turning a blind eye” to the cases where men are also abused by their partners. His letter even prompts a response from the editor who clearly states that no one disputes the fact that there are some men who are abused as well, but the reality is that abuse of women and children is more prevalent. Thus, the writer presents a position that is again not accommodative of change, but is rather quick to point out that women are also to blame in any case where men are put in the spotlight such as in this campaign.

4.6 The campaign as a nation building initiative

Nationhood was a recurring and unexpected theme both in the editorials and also in some of the accompanying campaign coverage. It should be noted that the accompanying coverage that is discussed in the last part of this section draws mainly from the celebrity signatory articles which were discussed earlier. The notion of nationhood (as discussed in Chapter 2), is a complex concept and its apparent naturalness has been variously critiqued. In line with constructionist approaches, it has been argued that a nation is an “imagined community” (Anderson cited in Hall 1992: 290) as people are not born with an essential national identity. Rather, national identities are constructed through representational processes and therefore articulated and rearticulated not least of all in the news. The same applies to African identity which the *Daily Sun* seems to conflate with national identity. This section moves to argue that African identity is another “imagined community” as it is not an essential identity.

The construction of the campaign as a nation building initiative is inscribed in the editorials which project the *Daily Sun*'s position. The first editorial was published on the first day of the campaign with the title “*DAILY SUN SAYS*” (7 November 2007: 1, Appendix 2) and it served to introduce the campaign. The nine pledges spelled out are argued to be “designed to make us proud Africans again ... the way our forefathers were.” The editorial piece uses the nationhood discourse that places emphasis on “origins, continuity, tradition and timelessness [thus] national identity is represented as primordial,” but ready to be revived and take up its continuous existence (Hall 1992: 294). Aligned to this, one notes that the issue of pride is

being foregrounded and it is further emphasised by the statement “at last here’s a chance to stand tall and proud as men again.”

Arguably, the editorial employs the unification strategy (Thompson 1990) through the use of the word “us” and “Africans” that implies a sense of unity and serves to encourage men to sign the Charter in order to strengthen the unity and revitalise the pride “our forefathers” had. Often, newspaper articles that employ identity discourses in order to signal unity and common purpose tend to discursively reprocess the division between „us“ and „them“ as „we“ (Fowler 1991:6). The editorial opens with a statement designed to convince the reader to want to sign the Charter as it stresses that “MOST men” are against what “SOME men do to women and kids.” The capitalised emphasis on MOST and SOME serves as a strategy of expurgation. Its purpose is to interpellate men to identify themselves as falling into the category of most men by identifying themselves with the perceived majority of men who are fighting gender violence. It is then followed by the argument about pride and being African and clearly it is a well constructed argument whose purpose is to garner support for the campaign.

The following editorial is more direct in its approach with the recurrent direct address headline format noted before “Have YOU signed the Charter?” (8 November 2007: 4, Appendix 3). The question presupposes that everyone else has signed the Charter such that answering “No” to this question is almost an embarrassment. There is another implicit question embedded within this question like “Why have you not signed the Charter?” whose effect is to make one uncomfortable for not having joined other signatories. Presuppositions are taken for granted implicit claims embedded within the explicit meaning of a text or utterance and are a common strategy in print journalism (Richardson 2007). In the rest of the article, men are urged to sign the pledge and stick it up on their walls, probably as a constant reminder of their pledges, and to send back the cut off with their signature back to the *Daily Sun*. The editor, Themba Khumalo claims that he was “overwhelmed” by the calls he received from radio stations wishing for more information about the Charter, a further strategy to build the hero image of the tabloid and him by extension.

Interestingly, the editorial is accompanied by a copy of the article that is said to have given “birth” to the campaign. It started with the editor’s regular Monday column known as “SLEDGEHAMMER” on the 6th of August 2007. It had the title “Let Mother-Earth give birth

to a brand-new man” and he was mourning the escalating levels of violence against women and children and the silence of the “good” men about this issue. By constantly emphasising femininity of a nurturing kind, he represents himself as a humble man who is respectful of the role played by women in the birthing processes. Notably, he does not go beyond this as if to suggest that a woman’s claim to recognition owes simply to her ability to give birth and no further. He further suggests “we need a movement that will reach every place where there are men and make them sign a pledge ...” Clearly, he was planting a seed for this campaign which was to be launched a few months later.

In line with this discourse of nationhood and African identity foregrounded in the editorials, the signatories of the Charter alluded to the campaign as a nation building initiative. This becomes evident through employing Thompson’s (1990) modes of unification and fragmentation which help to identify the construction of an us/them division. For example, radio and television personality, DJ Sbu said “We as men of this country we have a responsibility for each and every one of these pledges,” (Appendix 3) while comedy star Desmond Dube said, “It reminds us of who we are as black men in our country and it is going to encourage other men to take responsibility,” (Appendix 4). From these two comments, one discerns an implicit sense of pride in being black South African through the use of “we” a unifying term which is also at the same time expurgatory (see Thompson 1990). “We” therefore refers to the men who are ready to take “responsibility” and sign the Charter and arguably there are silent binary “others” who are not willing thus they have to be “encourage[d] to take responsibility.” Dube’s comment is explicit in its exclusion of “other men” as he clearly states that the Charter reminds “*us* of who we are as black men” (emphasis added). This implies first that the Charter is not aimed at white men who are thus implicitly expurgated and second, that the Charter embodies the values of black men. His statement has racial undertones, subtly revealing tensions in South African contemporary society where people’s identities are still defined by skin colour in most circles.

More explicitly, poet Mzwakhe Mbuli is quoted as saying “This is nation - building in action ... I applaud it and I am proud of it,” (12 November 2007:1, Appendix 5) thus giving support to the construction of the Charter as a nation building initiative. The musician, Ntando also adds that “as a country people want a better place and men must take responsibility,” (13 November 2007:3, Appendix 6). This theme of nationalism runs throughout most of the articles and the emphasis of men taking responsibility simultaneously serves to emphasise

women's role as their silent partners who need patronage. A showbiz personality Jerry Mofokeng argues "I believe it is time for us to play a role in our society and to father and love our children and families," (15 November 2007:3, Appendix 7) thus including women and constructing them as in need of fathering.

Clearly "a man" is constructed as one who is active in nation building, and this is done through being responsible and protecting women and children from violence. Another singer, Ringo Madlingozi asks "How can you be a man when you only hurt and abuse the weaker sex? Nobody's entitled to be someone's superior, especially in a violent way," (22 November 2007:3, Appendix 11). Ringo's last statement while seemingly progressive is contradictory to the first one. His seeming advocacy for equality is ironically contradicted by his reference to women as "the weaker sex." The discourse of nationhood articulated by these men is patriarchal and proposes that men hold the key to a „united nation.“ To emphasise this, a former abuser says "I also want to join the nation in signing *Daily Sun*'s Men's Charter – and I pledge to fight abuse!" This serves to encourage more men to sign the Charter and to show themselves as part of the nation-building project. Also notable is the absence of women in this nation building project. The nationhood discourse is naturalised as a male domain, with women relegated only a nurturing role in this scenario. Concern about this naturalisation of the gendered nationhood discourse has prompted arguments for a radical change to this kind of representation. In her study of South African advertisement campaigns, Prinsloo concludes that in public narratives "women do not constitute half of the nation, but they find their place among all those who are "othered" by hegemonic masculinity," (Prinsloo 1999). Thus she proposes that the naturalisation of such discriminatory attitudes should be taken seriously as they are not conducive for gender equity.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter gave a detailed presentation and analysis of the data. The findings were related to theory in order to qualify their validity. It was established that the campaign was represented as a sustained narrative and as such the *Daily Sun* was discussed as a hero and the Charter as a magical agent. The discussion was also hinged on the different categories of the articles that were identified, namely signatory articles, testimonies, vox pops and letters to the editor. The discourse of nationhood that underpinned the campaign was also discussed.

Having presented a detailed analysis of the data, the next and final chapter attempts to bring together the findings of the study by way of concluding the thesis.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

[Patriarchy] is a tradition which perpetuates itself in different guises...It has been objected that anything which perpetuates itself for so long must have a basis of truth (Figs 1970:33).

5. Introduction

In an attempt to establish the construction of masculinities and femininities in the *Daily Sun* “Charter for a Man” campaign, the study sought to analyse how these gendered identities were variously constituted discursively. The intention was to find out the extent to which the campaign presented a discourse that is transformative of gender in line with gender justice. This qualitative investigation of the construction of gendered subjectivities also sought to investigate the extent to which the *Daily Sun* could be seen as acting as an alternative public sphere.

As such Chapter 2 presented the theoretical and conceptual framework that informed the study. It outlined a poststructuralist approach that underpinned the analysis of the construction of masculinities and femininities in the campaign. In particular, Foucault’s understanding of how discourse constitutes subjects was helpful in providing an explanation for the power of patriarchal discourse and its role in maintaining unequal relations of power through the strategies of „tuth“ that work to sustain it. Similarly, the feminist poststructuralist approach helped to probe the discursive construction of gendered subjectivities. The research acknowledges the symbolic role played by the news media in the articulation and rearticulation of these different subjectivities and hence proposes that the *Daily Sun* constitutes a space that can be considered as a particular public sphere. As such the “Charter for a Man” campaign is discussed in relation to the public sphere and within the framework of newspaper campaigns in order to allow for the transformative potential of the campaign.

Chapter 3 then discussed the research methods employed in the study informed by a qualitative approach to textual analysis. The study employs critical discourse analysis as a method and makes use of an eclectic approach to textual analysis that draws on linguistics and narrative. It presented the data and outlined the sampling method (purposive sampling) as well as identified the categories of analysis followed in Chapter 4. The data presentation and analysis is structured according to these categories and the theme of nationhood whose

conceptual framework was highlighted in Chapter 2. The purpose of this chapter is to outline the main findings from the study.

5.1 Primary findings from the study

5.1.1 The campaign as a sustained narrative

The campaign worked holistically as a sustained narrative. This was achieved through the construction of the *Daily Sun* as a hero that undertakes a quest to eradicate gender violence. The *Daily Sun* uses the Charter as, in Proppian terms, a magical agent in order to make a case against domestic violence and its perpetrators (the Proppian villain). This particular heroic representation is constantly repeated throughout the campaign, even in the testimonies by abused women that were selected for inclusion, instances where one would have expected vigilant confrontation of gender violence. The repetitive emphasis on the *Daily Sun's* goodwill leads me to propose that this campaign served to boost the paper's image as the "People's Paper" and maintain its popularity amongst its readers in the first instance and that it deployed the problem of domestic violence to this end. As a further attempt to create kinship with readers, the paper frequently inscribed the campaign as a nation-building discourse. The discourse of nationhood tended to be conflated with one that proposed an African subject and identity in its arguments. By constantly articulating and rearticulating the perceived unity of purpose in fighting gender violence, the campaign discursively constructs a nation that can only be held together by men, as argued by Prinsloo (1999) and mentioned in Chapter 4. Notably women are ignored in this scenario of nation building.

5.1.2 Patriarchy as a hegemonic discourse

The campaign is constituted within the hegemonic patriarchal discourse that prevails in South Africa, and like any other discourse it has its strategies of „truth“ that inform it and constitutes its subjects (Foucault 1981). The particular representation of women as weak and in need of protection and patronage in the "Charter for a Man" document and consequently in the accompanying coverage serves as evidence that the campaign is in effect endorsing the systemic subordination of women to their male counterparts. The campaign has been demonstrated to favour a certain kind of masculinity over others. Hegemonic masculinity is evident in the construction of men as protectors and as patrons of women. This aspect of the man as custodian signalled through the recurrent use of the possessive pronoun "our" to refer

to women in most of the articles is symptomatic of a gender order that privileges the interests of men.

The construction of the abusers juxtaposed with those of the ones who fight domestic violence serves to discourage violent masculinities and also demonstrated the hegemonic masculinity validated by the campaign. The abusers are referred to as “cowards,” and this cowardice transfers “bravery” to the good men. The good men are also constructed as “real” men countless times in headlines, for instance, “Real men don’t abuse women - Tshepo” (29 November 2007: 4) and “Ringo signs up to get real,” (22 November 2007: 3). The repetition of the word “real” privileges a certain image of “a man” as being proper (adult) while the abuser is inferior, immature and rather childlike. Whilst it is commendable that the campaign takes a stance against the abusers, what is striking are the particular constructions of masculinities and the complementing sets of femininities being foregrounded as women are primarily constructed as subservient to men.

These are some of the strategies of truth that work to maintain patriarchy. Such strategies operate in a subtle manner in everyday communication that is taken for granted and their purpose is to maintain the unequal relations of power between men and women. As a powerful discourse that structures contemporary social life, patriarchy operates in different discursive spaces and newspaper language often works to sustain and maintain its strategies of truth. Subjectivity is often manifested through language thus meaning appropriation in everyday life is informed by different sources which offer different modes of femininity and masculinity which people learn to negotiate.

In the campaign we are presented with different forms of masculinities and femininities. There is evidence of a contesting discourse of femininity that challenges hegemonic masculinity and subordinate femininity. We encounter a woman who knows her rights, notably through a letter to the editor and not through the news stories. This is notable because one can easily miss it as letters to the editor are not given as much prominence as main news stories. The fact that the successful woman does not make it to the forefront of the campaign could on one level show that the campaign was concerned with foregrounding the concerns of the vulnerable women (the abused). On another level however, it may be argued that showing the other way of being „woman“ could have been beneficial for the campaign because as it

stands, it offered a subordinate form of femininity as representing how women should behave.

However, the different forms of femininity and masculinity offered serve to show that we are constituted through different forms of subjectivity. What is significant is that where the woman is shown as successful she is juxtaposed to a weaker man, as if the two effectively change roles and cannot live in harmony as equal partners. In the same letter to the editor, it is argued that a successful woman makes a man feel “timid” and she has “an advantage over him,” (“Confident men don’t abuse” 27 November 2007:39). This is typical of discourses around femininity, they always have to either subtly or explicitly come back to the issue that women cannot have status or occupy positions of what is perceived to be manly without something wrong with that position being pointed out as women have to occupy their position as homely and caregivers. These kinds of positions are validated as „natural“ through representation processes among other things. These „natural“ positions men and women are supposed to fulfil are inserted into language from an early age and emanate from discourses which govern family life and childhood to a large extent (Weedon 1987). These subject positions are assumed to be natural thus there is always a battle to fix and unfix them in discourse. Gendered subject positions are constituted in various ways and representation play a large part in the fixing and unfixing of these identities.

5.1.3 Daily Sun: an alternative public sphere?

Considering that the campaign is taking place in a public domain, one has to evaluate the extent to which the *Daily Sun* lived up to this expectation. As already established, an alternative public sphere should also include the interests of women (Fraser 1989) which, at face value, seemed to be happening as the campaign is clearly branded as a campaign against gender violence. However, considering the fact that it advocates the kind of femininities subordinate to hegemonic masculinity puts this into question. If it was operating as an alternative public sphere in this case the *Daily Sun* would have advocated for women’s equality but this is clearly not the case. The campaign would be transformative of patriarchal discourses. However, there is no evidence of empowered women who are involved in the fight against domestic violence. „Weak“ women are foregrounded and their stories told. The *Daily Sun* also disappointingly falls into the practice for which tabloids are critiqued – of seeing women through the “male gaze” which tends to describe women in terms of their

physical appearance or attractiveness (Berger 1972). This is demonstrated through the sexually charged representation of Chomee, the female musician in contrast to that of her male counterparts (see Chapter 4). As with any representation, these sexualised representations of women are not innocent and hence they should be seen as part of the “operation of power which trivialises women’s perspectives and keeps them „in their place“” (Gill 2007:117). It must be recognised then therefore that the paper uses discriminatory language in its reference to women, a common trait in tabloid newspapers (Fowler 1991).

The above evidence depicts that gender constructions are represented within a strongly patriarchal discourse that reinforces unequal relations of power. This it does as a particular public sphere, “a social imaginary that is created and reproduced through discourse,” (McLaughlin 2004: 159). As already established, South Africa is a patriarchal society. It is notable here that the interests of women as equal partners to their male counterparts are not foregrounded. Because gendered identity structures private and public life, patriarchy becomes an instrument that perpetuates the subordination of women in the home, in the structures of labour and in the exclusion of women from the public sphere (McLaughlin 2004).

The marginalisation of women results in the creation of particular femininities and masculinities. Men and women in the campaign studied are constituted as subjects of particular discourses of femininity and masculinity and these work to uphold their regimes of truth through the sustained narrative. This narrative tends to work to reconcile men and women to patriarchal society because it is embedded in existing patriarchal power structures (Thornham 2007). Consequently subjects constitute themselves from the culturally available range of public narratives in which they position themselves and construct their sense of identity.

These narratives remain powerful not simply because of their „historical embeddedness“ but because they remain „foundational“ in constructing our sense of a coherent identity. As such, we continue to invest in them not simply discursively – through the stories we tell of ourselves - but ontologically, in the way we live our lives (Thornham 2007: 75).

To this end, the consistency and strength of patterns of gendered behaviour are enacted by the subjects constituted by the discourses and the “culturally sanctioned meta-narratives that form the parameters of self-understanding,” (McNay cited in Thornham 2007:75). It is therefore important for different voices to be heard in the media, especially African women’s

voices as most media narratives tend to speak with a homogenised global voice for these women. Recognising the importance of this, McFadden (1998) also argues that we must however take note of whose agenda these voices in the media are authenticating as mostly it is black males speaking on behalf of African women. She argues for a democratisation of the media where women can actively engage and tackle issues of concern to them rather than have someone else speak on their behalf and points that this is still a big challenge in post-colonial Africa. In addition, since the popular media are the arenas where competing narratives struggle for legitimacy, it should be noted that the public narratives which result are also contested spaces which should be evaluated in light of these dimensions.

The marginalisation of women in public narratives such as in this campaign, leads to them being largely pigeonholed in the domestic sphere. It is my argument that the *Daily Sun* as a tabloid newspaper that claimed to speak for the marginalised represented women in non-transformative ways. Telling women's stories and struggles remains a big challenge or what Friedan would refer to as a "problem with no name," (1965:1). The narrative of gender equality in particular remains a narrative struggling for recognition and supremacy in the public sphere. As Gqola (2007) argues, the discourses of gender in the South African public sphere are conservative as they speak of "women's empowerment" in non-transformative ways; they exist at ease together with overwhelming evidence that South African women are not empowered. The high rape and other gender based violence statistics and the public circulation of misogynist imagery, metaphors and language are evidence of this. Gqola further argues that this behaviour leaves what she calls "the cult of femininity" (2007: 117) intact and the violent masculinities relatively untouched. It sustains the gendered binary division of the constructions of a particular hegemonic masculinity as powerful, physical and rational and femininity as passive, dependent and emotional. This construction proposes an "emphasised femininity" which is defined as women's orientation to the desires and interests of men that maintains the subordination of women (Connell 1987:183). For gender transformative work to be considered successful, masculinities (and not just femininities) should be radically revisited to ensure that South Africa is gender-equitable both in reality and on paper.

5.2 Final remarks

As the study is concerned with issues of gender justice its main objective was to interrogate the “Charter for a Man” campaign and how it constituted gender relations. Informed by poststructuralist theories of discourse and feminism, the study found that a certain hegemonic masculinity was privileged. This type of masculinity which vests men with the power of being custodians of women, proposes the kind of femininities subordinate to men which are defined by weakness and a dependence on men. The contesting discourse of femininities not subject to male control is marginalised and only encountered in a letter to the editor.

The study also sought to interrogate the nature of the *Daily Sun* campaign as a particular form of a public sphere and to establish the extent to which the form it took contributes to gender justice. The findings reveal that the campaign failed to represent the interests of women in a transformative manner. I argue that while the *Daily Sun* took a certain stand against gender violence, the paper utilised this platform to promote their hero status whilst masquerading as a champion opposed to domestic violence. This was achieved through the sustained narrative of the *Daily Sun* as hero and the representation of the Charter as a magical agent vested with the power of changing the attitude of abusers.

The analysis also demonstrates that the responses of South African men to gender equality are varied. As highlighted in the first chapter, Morrell (2001) advances three possible responses to gender equality. First, there are those men that might be reactive or defensive in the face of change. In the study, two letters to the editor “South Africa is against men (14 November 2007:39) and “Men are also victims” (7 December 2007: 55) are argued to represent this category. Their attitudes point to a deep seated concern with reasserting their power. The letters argue that women’s role in gender violence should also be recognised and that a similar Charter to “groom” women should also be drafted. The second form of responses Morrell identifies relates to men who have been accommodating of change and is seen in attempts to revive non-violent masculinities. Men who fall under this category do not necessarily relinquish their male power but they also do not defend or seek to restore “some pre-existing patriarchal order” (Morrell 2001:30). This is reflected as argued before by the willingness of the *Daily Sun* to run a campaign against gender violence and yet still represent women in non-transformative ways. The third form of responses consists of responsive or progressive responses to change. Men in this category challenge violent masculinities, and in the process propose new models of how to be a man. Whilst the *Daily Sun* and the signatories

of the Charter challenge violent masculinities, they do not propose new ways of being a man. Their attitude serves to sustain the system of patriarchy.

To this end, the study concludes that the campaign is not transformative of gender injustices as it is embedded in a hegemonic patriarchal system that privileges the interests of men over women. Women's stories are not told in transformative ways and the *Daily Sun* campaign effectively perpetuates the marginalisation of women in the public sphere.

5.3 Prospects for further study

Given the fact that domestic violence takes place within a larger context of a particularly violent society, one might investigate the different forms of violence against women in order to come up with a holistic approach to understand the South African contradiction alluded to earlier (see also Chapter 1) so as to reduce violence in South Africa. One could interrogate the issue from a cultural point of view in order to establish how the construction of African culture and Western culture serve as myths that perpetuate different forms of violence against women. Perhaps if such a point of entry is used, a more noticeable change would be visible in the constant quest for gender equality.

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A CHARTER FOR A MAN

HERE IS WHAT I PLEDGE:

- 1 I will protect women and children.**
- 2 I will never harm them.**
- 3 I will use my hands to create a better life for them.**
- 4 I will not resort to violence to settle arguments.**
- 5 I will not allow any evil to be committed against those weaker than me.**
- 6 I will teach and encourage fairness and justice.**
- 7 I will be a positive role model to all.**
- 8 I will be the bridge from terror to sanctuary.**
- 9 I will dedicate myself to fighting all abuse.**



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