


**A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE REPRESENTATIONS OF  
GENDER AND SEX IN NEWSPAPER REPORTS ON HIV AND  
AIDS**

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THESIS



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I hereby declare that the thesis submitted for the Doctor Philosophiae degree to the University of Johannesburg, apart from the help recognized, is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another institution of higher education for a degree.



*For Papa and Uncle Kathy*



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## Abstract

The aim of this study is to critically analyse representations of gender and sex in newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS in the hope of improving messaging around HIV and AIDS. Within the scope of this study observations are made at the conclusion of each case study so as to inform prevention campaigns and media on more appropriate ways of representing gender and sex and HIV and AIDS. These observations serve as guidelines to inform journalists and civil society on how better to message HIV and AIDS and sexuality. Mutual recognition is used as the theoretical standpoint for understanding sexuality by emphasizing the premise of respect for self and other. Mutual recognition is used as the critical lens to rethink gender beyond constructions of masculinity and femininity, race, class and sexuality; looking for the moments and opportunities for recognition between both masculine and feminine subjects as well as for narratives on sameness and difference beyond race, class and sexuality. Mutual recognition is also the way forward for resisting phallogocentrism and shifting representation away from the workings of male hegemony. The theoretical framework used in this study is based on feminist psychoanalysis and feminist media interpretation. Special mention is given to the work of Jessica Benjamin, Donna Haraway and Jane Flax; on account of their reception of Freudian theory of the oedipal complex showing ways of rethinking the oedipal complex and gender differentiation. Foucault's work on representation shows how we can rethink language to better serve the notion of mutual recognition, placing importance on concepts such as respect, responsibility and caring for self and other in ways that go beyond race/ethnicity, class, sex/gender or sexuality. *Eros* and *thanatos* (life and death drives) is nuanced to highlight how *jouissance* or the 'little death' (orgasm) is a way of resolving the tension between these opposing drives by shifting discourse away from sex and taboo or death towards sex and pleasure and thus emphasizing *eros* and mutual recognition. The study is concluded with a set of guidelines for representing gender and sex in relation to HIV and AIDS. It is significant to note that this is a qualitative study that, which makes use of textual analysis and seeks to offer a measure of transparency and accountability to the interpretation of selected texts.

## Introduction

I have chosen to write my doctorate on representations of gender and sex and HIV and AIDS for a number of reasons. Firstly, in 2004, I worked on an HIV and AIDS stigma index for the Human Science Research Council (HSRC) in the Western Cape. During this time I met and interviewed a range of people from health workers to counsellors to people living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA). Whilst working in this community (Mitchell's Plain), I was inspired by the defiance and hope amongst the people in the midst of dire conditions of poverty and compromised health. Against all odds they chose to rise above their situation. Their immeasurable kindness and courage inspired me to contribute to the discourse on HIV and AIDS. Secondly, I have always enjoyed studying psychoanalytic theory and specifically discursive practices on identity formation and sexual difference. I combined these research interests with my personal interest on HIV and AIDS. Finally, I chose to work on media representation, specifically newspaper reports because I had worked for many years as a journalist and producer in both print and electronic media. Therefore this study is a combination of my various interests. It has fuelled my passion and consumed me for the past several years.

With this study, I aim to critically analyse representations of gender and sex in newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS. The link between gender and sex and HIV and AIDS is made specific as I argue that sex is about sexual identity and gender issues. Discursive practices on gender affect discursive practices on sex. Therefore understanding gender differentiation is important for contextualising representations of sex and HIV and AIDS. I use a feminist lens to frame my analysis of the data. I employ feminist psychoanalytic theory and specifically the oedipal complex as the establishing trajectory for the argument on gender differentiation. This discussion then frames the discourse on sexual difference leading to the basis of mutual recognition as an alternate understanding for resisting gender polarity.

Mutual recognition can be observed in the pre-oedipal phase during individuation/separation when the child learns that she is a subject through other subjects as opposed to the oedipal complex that sets up the model for masculine dominance and feminine submission. Mutual recognition opposes the idea that masculinity is based on the repudiation of femininity. Instead mutual recognition demands that both masculine

and feminine subjects enjoy the ‘pleasure of sharing’ (Benjamin, 1988: 53) through ‘sameness and difference’ (Benjamin, 1995), implying that others are like the self – subjects, but different because they are autonomous. This ensures that there is a respect between the sexes and not a hierarchical binary that is created through the oedipal complex. With mutual recognition as the basis for sameness and difference, there is a respect for others for being different, which extends beyond systems of domination (Haraway, 2004) such as race, class and sexuality.

Mutual recognition together with *jouissance*<sup>1</sup> is the basis for finding transient harmony from the constant tension in *eros* and *thanatos* (life and death drives). The messaging of *jouissance* and mutual recognition ought to be nuanced so that sexual pleasure disassociates sex with *thanatos* and risky sexual behaviour and shifts the risk of death towards the ‘little death’ (Zoonen, 1994: 24) or orgasm. Shifting the emphasise towards sex and *eros* or pleasure in living extends into a sense of responsibility towards the self and other.

I also apply a Foucaultian critique of representation and phallogocentrism<sup>2</sup> in understanding how the symbolic and imaginary realms affect the real realm of gender and sex specifically in newspaper reports. A feminist media critique is used as the lens to critique such representations with a focus on ‘distorting’ (Zoonen, 1994) and resisting images of women’s subjugation (Mulvey, 1989) by representing women’s autonomy and pleasure (Campbell, 2000).

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1. *Jouissance* according to Slavoj Žižek’s (2006: 79) understanding of Lacan refers to the pain of losing control and in so doing gaining pleasure through loss of self with the other and more importantly acquiring a sense of wholeness in the lost pleasure. Žižek also suggests that Lacan would have seen *jouissance* as a ‘twisted ethical duty’ of ‘enjoyment’. *Jouissance* in the context of sex refers to the ‘little death’ (Zoonen, 1994: 24).

2. ‘Phallogocentrism’ refers to a privileged position of masculinity within the structure of language, meaning that language is male biased. ‘Phallo’ refers to the phallus and ‘logo’ refers to the written and spoken word. Thus phal-logo-centrism refers to the phallic-biased structure of language. It is a term coined by Jacques Derrida to describe Jacques Lacan’s (Grosz, 1990: 202) use of language to emphasise how language influences intrapsychic processes that order our thoughts and our realities. Furthermore it implies that language is invested in power structures that are phallic-oriented which pervade our thought processes and are essential in our identity formation.



Thus in this study, I attempt to critically evaluate and raise consciousness around systems of domination that mainstream representations in media, normalising the workings of male hegemony. So I attempt to shift these representations in the hope of fostering a more caring and nurturing society.

## **Purpose**

The central problem for this study is that mainstreaming media representations can influence certain perceptions. Likewise critically evaluating representations (McNeil, 1993: 153) can shift perceptions and resist normalising practices of sexual identity. Thus representations of gender and sex in newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS can be nuanced to show appropriate and useful ways of understanding both gender and sex in relation to the AIDS pandemic.

The contribution of this study towards the body of knowledge on HIV and AIDS is that it enters the discursive debate from a critical and social perspective that relates to the media. In initiating dialogue with the media on HIV and AIDS and sexuality, I attempt to critically evaluate the ways in which media often powerfully captures public imagination around discourses on gender and sex. In South Africa, media can be useful in tackling myths and beliefs that are pernicious and that tend to perpetuate rather than oppose the AIDS pandemic.

The problem will be regarded as solved if I can find ways to improve or challenge the implicit and explicit images and representations of gender and sex in newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS in the hope of finding better ways to deal with the pandemic. I will thus critique existing media representations of gender and sex with regard to newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS and flowing from this critique provide a set of general guidelines for media reporting on these matters. I hope with this study, to raise consciousness (McNeil, 1993: 153) about nuancing representations on gender and sex that oppose and resist the workings of male hegemony and other systems of domination. In order to be able to distinguish between nuanced representations of gender and sex within the context of HIV and AIDS, I will draw extensively on feminist critiques of standard, psychoanalytical theories of human sexuality and sexual identity formation. I will show how sexual difference can be reported in ways that foster a healthy respect for

self and other and specifically a healthy respect for sameness and difference in our society.

## **My Theoretical Positioning**

My theoretical position in this study is to make use of a number of critical feminist approaches in evaluating media representations on gender and sex in the context of newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS.

The study of sexuality is not new to feminism. Melanie Klein (1932; 1933; 1952) reinterprets Freudian theory from a feminist perspective by challenging Freud's assumption of women's subjugation in his understanding of the oedipal complex and gender differentiation. Contemporary feminist readings are relevant for understanding the shifts in femininity and masculinity (Frosh, 2002; Connell, 1995; Sontag, 2001; Butler, 1991; Cavallaro, 2003) with regard to the shifts in the public and private domains.

As this is a feminist qualitative research study, I align myself with postmodern feminism. I have decided to use feminist psychoanalysis and a Foucaultian critique of language and representation to inform my theoretical framework. My methodology relies on textual analysis employing my foundational theoretical framework of feminist psychoanalysis and a Foucaultian critique of language and representation. My approach does not privilege race, class, gender or sexual preference. Instead I attempt to interpret the empirical data critically relying on the theoretical framework and, in particular, mutual recognition, knowing that reality is complex. This implies that narratives, whether written or verbal, are part of thought patterns and intrapsychic processes that demand simultaneous analysis within the axes of significance of issues such as race, class, gender and sexuality. Therefore intersectionality, which is an overlapping of various discourses such as race, class, gender and sexuality and, is understood as nuanced so that systems of domination work in various contexts such that white middle-class women might be more privileged than unemployed black men, is thus used as a rigorous part of the method of analysis.

In as much as intersectionality is an analytical tool that falls within the larger frame of analysis, textual analysis is employed and informed by my theoretical framework of feminist psychoanalysis and a Foucaultian critique of language and representation.

Textual analysis complements both theoretical frames by highlighting and challenging the notion of the unconscious-self as a fixed identity (Mouffe, 1992). The subject or individual is a composite of many experiences and has various identifications. The various identifications place the subject in shifting positions so as to allow the subject to be, for instance, dominant in one relationship whilst being submissive in another. Even though there is no fixed subject position, this does not mean that we cannot talk about notions of collective subjects and categories such as race (Bhavnani, 1994), class and gender (Butler, 1991). These categories have to be seen in context to partial fixation of shifting subject positions (meaning dominance through gender, race, class or sexuality). Thus the context is constantly shifting based upon collective subject positions. For media representation, these shifting subject positions can be highlighted through newspaper reports.

Stuart Hall's (1999: 9) idea of representation is that it is a method of analysis investigating the 'aporia of gender neutrality' meaning that the concept 'gender neutral' is a misnomer or contradiction because it is based on an idea of male rationality as the standard and thus operates at a disadvantage when females are brought into the question on gender. 'Gender neutral' is then a blind spot, which follows on in Cartesian modernism and is moreover phallogocentric. In the feminist critique that I endorse and utilize in my critical analysis, the male gaze is the lens from which the dominant perception of the female/feminine body (Mulvey, 1996) is seen as well as the way in which women view their own bodies and their sexuality. Chanter (1997: 15) claims that 'they [women] were seen but not read, read without being seen' and what she refers to here is that there is an invisibility of women as women in the public imagination. It is therefore important for women to take ownership of the images of their bodies. Thus a feminist interpretation is necessary in order to review the dominant masculine lens of male and female bodies and sexualities in mass media such as newspaper reports because it allows the space for a re-appropriation of images of women's bodies and sexuality. This is important in the context of the spread of HIV and AIDS because it could help demystify the binary structure of the concept 'gender' thereby encouraging mutual recognition, helping to create respect for self and other and engendering more responsible sexual behaviour.

Within the frame of mutual recognition, it is significant to note that the oedipal complex becomes re-interpreted by feminists so that it does not hold as much currency in the debate on gender as is suggested through classical Freudian psychoanalysis. Instead with the use of the Foucaultian critique of language and representation it becomes crucial for rethinking gender polarity. The Foucaultian critique of language and representation questions the establishing trajectory of knowledge production and how it structures the theory of language. Moreover the Foucaultian critique of language and representation challenges the power/knowledge nexus so that language and representation are not tacitly accepted without a lack of resistance towards systems of domination. Barbara Johnstone (2002: 30 – 31) argues that through repetition of perceptions certain ideas become mainstreamed and thus become dominant discursive practices. Therefore within systems of domination and with the power/knowledge nexus it is crucial to resist perceptions such as the workings of male hegemony and race, class and sexuality that privilege one group over another. Within this context, it then becomes significant to challenge those dominant perceptions through critical evaluation and consciousness-raising (McNeil, 1993: 153).

Mutual recognition is thus the standpoint from which sexual difference and all difference (Braidotti, 1989) is approached. Within the trope of mutual recognition there is a strong sense of respect for self and recognition with other thus enhancing a healthy sense of responsibility to self and other. In media representations of sexual difference it is crucial that media organisation ideologies (Van Zoonen, 1994) are premised on the foundation of mutual recognition that challenges the 'gender neutral' blind in order to shift the hierarchical gender binary. It is in this light that media representations need to be critically evaluated to understand the underlying hegemonic practices especially if these practices are pernicious with regard to gender constructions around the AIDS pandemic. I propose to use the above mentioned range of analytical tools, drawing on, in particular, feminist philosophical insights, as well as other critical theories of interpretation to evaluate and analyse newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS and gender and sex.

### **Brief Overview of Methodological Considerations**

In this study, I critically analyse media representations of gender and sex in the context of HIV and AIDS. I attempt to understand how gender and sex are respectively constructed within discursive practices on HIV and AIDS contained in the corpus of data, which is a

series of newspaper reports in South Africa. My research aims to highlight the significance of gender and sex in newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS by critically assessing how gender and sex are made sense of in the context of the AIDS pandemic.

I will analyse reports from three newspaper organisations: Independent News and Media, Avusa Media Limited and the *Mail & Guardian*. My corpus of data includes reports from national weekly newspapers such as the *Mail & Guardian*, *Sunday Times*, *Saturday Star* and *Sunday Independent*. Daily newspapers range within the region of Gauteng and include *The Star*, *Business Day* and community newspapers (*CP*). The timeframe for the reports is: 01 May 2005 – 4 August 2005. The newspapers were chosen for their locality to the city of Johannesburg in order to ensure that the findings would apply to a local context and specifically to the location of the University of Johannesburg so that it can be used to better understand the university population. The corpus of data consists of approximately two hundred newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS.

Textual analysis as the method of analysis for this study is founded on the theoretical assumptions listed in chapter one and consists of feminist psychoanalysis and a Foucaultian critique of language and representation.

The theoretical framework structures the rules for the method of analysis that is laid out in the methodological chapter i.e. chapter two. Chapter two also illustrates the way in which textual analysis is applied to the text (newspaper report). It does so by fragmenting an actual newspaper report from the data and shows how the theory can be applied to the interpretation of the newspaper report. Thus the interpretation of the case studies in the thesis are not confined to philology or the study of words but is governed by the [con]text of the newspaper report, that is the meaning that is signified in the text (Fairclough, 1995).

In this study, textual analysis also provides ways in which to show examples of nuanced newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS by providing guidelines at the end of the analysis. This is to illustrate through practical examples ways of improving media messaging on HIV and AIDS and gender and sex.

As textual analysis in this study is based on interpretative analysis and as such is open to critique (Fairclough, 1995), the findings in this study are not wholly conclusive. Instead

through this study, I attempt to highlight factors that contribute to understanding messaging on HIV and AIDS and gender and sex at this particular moment in time.

## **Mapping the Way**

The study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is based on the theoretical framework of this study. In the first chapter, I deal with a feminist reception of Freudian psychoanalytic theory and a critique of language and representation. The second chapter is the methodological chapter that describes textual analysis and how the theory informs the interpretation of the analysis. The second chapter also includes an illustration of the method of analysis for transparency and accountability in the process of interpretation. Chapters three and four are empirical chapters. Chapter three deals with case studies on texts (newspaper reports) that deal with shifting constructions of gender, specifically looking at shifting constructions of masculinity and femininity in order to better represent sexual difference with the aim of mutual recognition and through consciously resisting phallogocentrism in media representation. Chapter four deals specifically with *eros* and *thanatos* and shifting the link between sex and death towards sex and life. This chapter attempts to improve messaging on sexual behaviour by shifting representation away from risky and dangerous sexual behaviour towards nuancing pleasure and the 'little death' (Zoonen, 1994: 24) during *jouissance*. This is done by showing how *jouissance* (loss of control of self with other in the moment of pleasure) need not be resolved through risky sexual behaviour but through mutual recognition and the pleasure in sharing with the other (Benjamin, 1988: 53). The final chapter of this study is a conclusive chapter listing guidelines for journalists writing on HIV and AIDS. The findings of this chapter emanate from the case studies. The guidelines within this chapter are a practical application of the study and its findings.

## **Chapter one: Gender, Sex and HIV and AIDS**

### **Introduction**

The study as a whole aims to understand and critically respond to the current constructions of masculinity and femininity and the representations of sex in newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS in South Africa. It is moreover an overtly feminist study, which uses feminist psychoanalytical theory in particular to ground an understanding of gender and sex for the purposes of analysing media representations of gendered sexualities within the context of HIV and AIDS reporting. In the current chapter, gender is argued as a social construction and as such can be shifted away from the workings of male hegemony so that it is more reflective of mutual recognition. In the Introduction mutual recognition is explained as the relationship of self to other that goes beyond hierarchy and polarity through the understanding that the self is reliant on the other to become autonomous. Yet the paradox of autonomy implies that the self only becomes autonomous through recognition with the other.

In the first section, gender as a social construct is explained by framing gender within the evolution of the Nature/culture debate. Nature/culture stand within each other so that there is no Nature without culture and vice versa. The very division of Nature/culture is a cultural product. Gender is argued as preceding sex (Braidotti, 1989; Butler, 1991) so that the biological argument follows from the cultural impact of gender on sex. In the second part of the first section, a feminist reading of the oedipal complex proposes an exit from the dominance and submission model (hierarchical gender binary) through mutual recognition, which can be achieved in the pre-oedipal phase. In the second section, the argument for an alternate understanding in resisting the hierarchical gender binary by rethinking language outside of phallogocentrism is presented. The discussion then follows that the gap between the public and private divide, which is understood as an extension of the traumatic splitting-off the mother/child dyad, can be bridged by expressing the repressed. In the third section, the discussion for an alternate understanding for resisting normalising practices of sexual identity shows how

heteronormativity<sup>3</sup> becomes a straight-jacket for legitimising sexual practices and that by opening up discourses on sexual difference, heteronormativity has a more open and fluid understanding of sexual identity. Thereafter the argument on mutual recognition extends from gender into discourses on race and class and is presented as an exit strategy for shifting binary oppositions of gender, class, race and sexuality. In the final section, feminist media theory shows how representations of the hierarchical gender binary can be challenged so that femininity and masculinity can be represented through the lens of mutual recognition.

For the discussion on the oedipal complex, Jessica Benjamin – the American feminist psychoanalyst, is used for her critical feminist reception of Freudian theory to map the discussion on gender and sexuality, starting with an exposition and *interrogation* of the notion of gender. The oedipal complex is situated in the establishing phase of child development on gender differentiation and as such it also forms the foundation of the theoretical understanding of constructions of masculinity and femininity. Drawing upon these discussions feminist theorists such as Donna Haraway, Jane Flax and Adria Schwartz are employed to interpret Freudian concepts of gender and sexual difference in relation to the formation of identity or subjectivity in the construction of sexuality.

The Marquis de Sade's work is used as a contribution towards understanding the renegotiation of the public and private divide in the form of expressing the repressed sexual desire. It is in the expression of the repressed sexual desire that the space for shifting risky sexual behaviour towards more responsible sexual behaviour exists. Therefore drawing on this example, the expression of the repressed, lies a key aspect of a healthier notion of sexuality and sexual desire. Thus the importance of representing sexuality in a more inclusive context whereby sexuality is not limited to a

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<sup>3</sup> Heteronormativity is defined as a means to 'legitimize and privilege heterosexuality and heterosexual relationships as fundamental and "natural" within society' (Cohen; 2005: 24).



heteronormative frame but rather is represented in a myriad of possibilities of images and points of view opens the space for new narratives and tropes on sexual difference.

Finally, the following chapter describes the method of analysis by illustrating the methodology of this study – textual analysis. It attempts to show how textual analysis is used to interpret the data in the study relying on the theories presented in this chapter. This is done by fragmenting a case study and highlighting the method of analysis through the application of the logic of the theory delineated in this chapter. Textual analysis is then shown in the actual operation of the reading of the text. Moreover, it comments on the aim of the study, which is to show how shifting discursive practices have either an appropriate (beneficial) or inappropriate (pernicious) influence on thinking about gender and sex with a focus on shifting these representations towards a view on mutual recognition.

## **Gender is a Social Construct**

The term ‘gender’ is for the purposes of this argument framed within post-structuralist feminist theory in that it is argued that gender is a social construct. Donna Haraway (1991) offers the following description of ‘gender’:

Words close to ‘gender’ are implicated in concepts of kinship, race, biological taxonomy, language, and nationality. ... ‘Gender’ is at the heart of constructions and classifications of systems of difference (130). ... Despite important differences, all the modern feminist meanings of gender have roots in Simone de Beauvoir’s claim that ‘one is not born a woman’ (de Beauvoir, 1949, 1952: 249) and in post-Second World War social conditions that have enabled constructions of woman as a collective historical subject-in-progress. Gender is a concept to contest the naturalization of sexual difference in multiple arenas of struggle (131). ... In the political and epistemological effort to remove women from the category of nature and to place them in culture as constructed and self-constructing social subjects in history, the concept of gender has tended to be quarantined from the infections of biological sex (134).

Haraway argues that the concept ‘gender’ is used to construct meaning outside of biology and Nature so that ‘one is not born a woman’ but is rather made into ‘a woman’ and

specifically into a cultural positioning of ‘woman’<sup>4</sup>. Gender is then ordered within a binary opposition of a privileged masculine position in relation to a subordinate feminine position. The biological mapping of a sex as either male or female then becomes concerned with systems of domination or positions of power. Thus gender is concerned with culture and not Nature, implying that gender is a term that is intersectional with issues of race and class and is context-specific (2004: 56). The political climate, notions of kinship, family structures, and the organisation of the State in relation to male and female bodies, as well as the structure of languages<sup>5</sup> are all part of the complexity of gender. Gender discourses and denotations are therefore never neutral descriptors, but they are in very real terms cultural and political prescriptions that order identities hierarchically. According to Rosi Braidotti (1989) gender difference is based on woman’s lack of the phallus, which is a symbolic difference and not a ‘real’ difference but it becomes a metaphor for all difference.

The term ‘gender neutral’ is an *aporia* (a radical contradiction) because gender is codified through cultural signifiers. Tora Holmberg (2006: 9) states that the boundaries between Nature and culture or in the case of this argument – gender/sex – are blurring in that we have moved beyond Judith Butler’s (1991) claim that gender is performed. I distance myself from Holmberg here in that the biology of a female is significantly different from a male in that females can bear children. But the biological and reproductive functions of a female should not exclude females from access to power or

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4 Nature/Culture is explained by Edmund Leach (1970: 112) as ‘what distinguishes the human being from the man-animal is the distinction between Culture and Nature, i.e. that the humanity of man is that which is *non-natural*’. Nature/Culture is then about separating human beings from animals through notions such as humanity (logic and speech). Thus culture is a negotiation between human beings to further the aim of humanity. However both nature and culture are not static and thus both are evolving. Nature is argued as evolving as a necessity for purposes of survival and likewise culture is also evolving as certain practices become more relevant or redundant in the negotiation of a shared humanity. But culture is very separate from nature if we are to apply Edmund Leach’s understanding of these two notions. Culture is about separating the human being from the animal and thus through inference culture is about separating human beings from natural animal instincts. Therefore culture is a resistance to the natural animal instinct in what is considered “the humanity of man”. But culture is negotiated and constructed and what is seen to be humanity can also be shifted and negotiated. Therefore Nature too is not static but can also be altered challenging Leach’s position on the Nature/Culture distinction.

5 The structure of language is what Derrida calls phallogocentrism in that it is based on a hegemonic masculine position that organizes the imaginary and thus reality. Gender is then about masculine privilege that is structured into the system of language, which then influences identity formation.

resources. Thus I support Haraway's position that gender is part of a system of domination. However Holmberg does posit creative options for rethinking gender/sex and the debate on Nature/culture inferring that technological advances should be seen in relation to the process of evolution in Nature, culture and technology, implying that women have access to resources through technology thereby shifting the discourse on gender.

Mans Andersson (2006: 14 – 15) supports Holmberg's position when he finds examples in the animal world that show how biological shifts are affecting gender behaviours, emphasizing the process of evolution within both Nature and culture. He cites the example of hyenas:

In the spotted hyena, the female clitoris has developed into an erectable structure almost indistinguishable from the male penis. The females are dominant over the males, the female penis plays a part in communicating power and the alpha female leaves her kids in the kindergarten. These animals are altogether very lovely and socially very complex, but they certainly cross boundaries.

Andersson (2006: 13) further claims that Darwin had suggested that during times of competition for sexual selection boundaries shift in order to accommodate the drive to reproduce. This standpoint challenges many of the formative positions on reproduction and natural selection. Andersson believes that Darwin's claim on sexual selection was not fully supported because it challenged notions of female subordination in the animal world. In view of Holmberg's article and in relation to Andersson's support of the evolution of Nature, everything stands within Nature. In fact, the argument supports that Nature/culture is continuously changing according to shifting contexts. Therefore the Nature/culture distinction for Holmberg and Andersson is an artificial distinction because both Nature and culture shift according to what is best for survival, which makes culture a part of Nature and vice versa.

Returning to Holmberg's discussion on Nature and culture it becomes evident how discursive practices of power affect the debate in relation to both Nature and culture, which sit in shifting positions (2006: 9):

In the last decade, biological research and gender studies have produced new understandings of sex and gender that in many ways have led to increased tensions between these scientific fields. Sometimes these tensions have been so intense that they could be described as outbreaks of “science wars” over the causes of the gender differences, represented respectively by “biologism” and “crazy feminism”, which in later debates was labelled “extreme feminism”. The controversies sometimes arise from the confusion that often surrounds post-structuralist theory of the biological body, which states that the body is “socially constructed”. The critical question is what the ontological and epistemological status of this construction is. It could mean, and sometimes does, that we can never know of the biological body per se, only of our conceptions of this body. But it can also mean that the biological body becomes, that is it *materialises* out of cultural practice and discourse (Butler 1993). The standard objection to the constructionist perspective is that it neglects reality and that gender researchers therefore deny the biological body. Now, following Bruno Latour (1999), we could say that the more effort invested in these constructions – and one can without doubt say that the discourse on sex-differences is a rather rehearsed one – the more “real” and firm does it become. In this example from post-structuralism, nature becomes incorporated into culture. In biological research, the *reverse* movement can be observed. In genetics, for example, “gender” as well as “behaviour” sometimes become incorporated into nature: they become *natural types* (Holmberg 2005a).

The Nature/culture argument is very much culturally bound. Dani Cavallaro (2003) in *french feminist theory* is a feminist who cites that gender precedes sex in that gender determines the biological mapping of sex and thus places it in the foray of social constructions. The labelling and defining of the biological is also ‘materialised out of cultural practice and discourse’ so that the lines between Nature/culture or gender/sex become indistinguishable from social constructions. Therefore the natural body becomes the discursive body because it becomes blurred into discourse and social constructions. However since gender is a social construct it can be fragmented and renegotiated. Thus the gender/sex argument is always concerned with the relationship between Nature/culture. Understanding the Nature/culture argument leaves hope for responsibly emerging representations of gender/sex so that gender/sex moves beyond a hierarchical binary of male dominance and feminine submission model.

Critical gender discourse exposes and ‘contests’, as Haraway stated above, ‘the naturalization of sexual difference in multiple arenas of struggle’. This study focuses on one such arena of struggle, namely the mainstreaming of sexual identity, agency, and sexual difference in newspaper reporting on HIV and AIDS in South Africa. In other words, a critical (feminist) approach to gender construction will be used in order to expose and contest the way in which sexual identity, agency and sexual difference are implicitly normalized within newspaper representations of the HIV and AIDS issue in South Africa. With this aim in mind, the systematically privileged masculine position within the dominant gender construct will now be mapped. For this, Jessica Benjamin’s feminist reception of classical Freudian theory on gender formation (through the oedipal complex) will be used to elaborate on (1) the understanding of the concept gender and (2) how the imaginary and intrapsychic processes of sexual identity formation encompassed within the oedipal complex is viewed and (3) how that operates in real terms of realising hegemonic masculinity.

The oedipal complex is set-up within a binary that privileges masculinity over femininity (Benjamin, 1988: 184):

Whereas psychoanalysis unselfconsciously took the oedipal boy as its standard – the male as the model of the individual – much of modern thought claims to speak for the neuter subject, gender-free and universal. Yet the idea of the individual in modern thought is tacitly defined as masculine even when women are included. Identifying the gender content of what is considered to be gender-neutral can be as difficult as undoing the assumption of essential gender differences. We must look for male hegemony where social and cultural theories have seen the workings of neither sex nor psyche.

Benjamin claims that male hegemony is ubiquitous and therefore media representations must be analyzed for ‘the workings’ of male hegemony. In classical Freudian psychoanalysis gender differentiation is placed firmly within the oedipal complex (Benjamin, 1988; Wright et. Al, 1992; Nagera, 1990, Frosh, 1987). In psychoanalytic speech, this means that the oedipal complex is about the intrapsychic development of gender identity and how that contributes towards sexual difference by constructing the boy child into masculine and the girl child into feminine and hence maintaining gender

polarity and hierarchy. The story of gender differentiation or the oedipal complex differs for both boy and girl. For a boy to discover his individuality and to differentiate or separate from his mother, he has to identify with his father who represents power and an exit from the omnipotence of oneness with his mother. His father is the intervening or second adult who promotes the boy's entry into the external or public domain. The father or *second other* represents the symbolic phallus of the external sphere. The symbolic phallus represents to the boy an escape from the mother/child dyad of the private sphere. In order for the boy to be accepted into the external domain he has to repudiate femininity. Sexual difference is then based on the access to the symbolic phallus or lack thereof<sup>6</sup>.

The boy when identifying with the father acknowledges the father's power and authority and submits to that authority knowing that it is a generational difference (that the boy is a child and the father is an adult) and that the boy is secure within his own masculine subjectivity. The boy's repudiation of femininity and the mother affirms his masculine subject position. Thus the boy associates femininity with the lack of both the phallus and subjectivity so that for him femininity becomes associated with profound lack, incompleteness and a feminine object position versus a masculine subject position. The boy splits off his feminine fantasies, which is a likeness to the mother in the pre-oedipal phase (Benjamin, 1988: 170) in order to enter into the phallic order of the public domain and to assume his masculine subjectivity.

In the oedipal phase the girl has a very dissimilar experience to the boy. 'For Freud, woman's renunciation of sexual agency and her acceptance of object status are the very hallmark of the feminine' (Benjamin, 1988: 87); hence the girl cannot completely identify with the father and successfully split-off from the mother because of her physical lack of the penis. Thus, for her, differentiation from the mother is distorted and incomplete. The girl cannot repudiate her mother because of her sameness and identification with her mother; she has to accept that her *lack of the phallus* will negate

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<sup>6</sup> It is not the physical presence of the penis that is the signifier but rather the symbolic that makes sexual difference a social construction.

her access to the external or public domain. Therefore she has to acknowledge her similarity to her mother and forego her desire to enter into the public domain as a subject. She realises that like her mother she lacks subjectivity and must embrace femininity in order to gain access to power and to the masculine subject position (or to power via the masculine) (ibid: 87):

The problem that Freud laid before us with all too painful clarity was the elusiveness of woman's sexual agency. He proposed, in fact, that femininity is constructed through the acceptance of sexual passivity. According to Freud's theory of feminine development, the little girl starts out originally as a "little man". She loves her mother actively until she discovers, in the oedipal phase, that she and mother both lack the phallus. She becomes feminine only when she turns from the mother to her father, from activity to passivity, in the hope of receiving his phallus; her effort to get the missing phallus leads her into the position of being the father's object.

The girl, therefore, idealises the father's power and his access to the external or public domain ('to get the missing phallus'). Benjamin at this point turns to Hegel to explain the girl's false sense of power through the identification with the father (1988: 51 – 84). She points to the lack of *mutual recognition* (meaning recognition between two subjects) because the girl occupies an object position and the father occupies a subject position. However she also criticizes Hegel's theory of the master/slave dialectic from a psychoanalytic perspective in that she says there can be no mutual recognition between the master and the slave. Instead recognition between master and slave is skewed. According to Benjamin, both in Hegel and Freud's theories, domination and submission is the only possible evolution in the master/slave dialectic or the oedipal complex (ibid: 53–54):

The hypothetical self presented by Hegel and Freud does not *want* to recognize the other, does not perceive him as a person just like himself. He gives up omnipotence only when he has no other choice. His need for the other – in Freud, physiological, in Hegel, existential – seems to place him in the other's power, as if dependency were the equivalent of surrender. When the subject abandons the project of absolute independence or control, he does so unwillingly, with a persistent, if unconscious, wish to fulfil the omnipotence fantasy. This is a far cry from actually appreciating the other as a being in his or her own right.

Jessica Benjamin's pivotal critique of classical Freudian theory lies in the issue of differentiation. She argues that 'differentiation, i.e. the individual's development as a self that is aware of its distinctness from others' (1988: 12) contests the central claim of hostility in Freud's drive theory. She argues that if individuation/separation occurs successfully in the pre-oedipal stage, the baby travels into the oedipal stage with a lucid notion of her subjectivity. However if the baby does not successfully achieve mutual recognition with the primary caregiver, then the baby lives in a state of omnipotence or narcissism believing that the parent will cater to all its needs. Thus she agrees with Hegel that in the absence of mutual recognition the baby becomes 'omnipotent' (ibid: 33):

For Hegel, as for classical psychoanalysis, the self begins in a state of "omnipotence" (everything is an extension of me and my power), which it wants to affirm in its encounter with the other, who, it now sees, is like itself. But it cannot do so, for to affirm itself it must acknowledge the other, and to acknowledge the other would be to deny the absoluteness of the self. The need for recognition entails this fundamental paradox: at the very moment of realizing our own independence, we are dependent upon the other to recognize it.

She elucidates her argument by referring to the way in which a woman gains a distorted sense of identity through association with the masculine position and recognition of his access to the public domain and thus to power, implying that the feminine grasps for the missing phallus, which is omnipotent. Similarly in the master/slave dialectic the slave has a distorted sense of identity because the slave recognises the master's power and authority. The lack of mutual recognition is due to the fact that the master does not need to recognise the slave's position as a subject. The master's power is omnipotent. However Benjamin argues that Freud paid too little attention to the pre-oedipal phase (1988: 170). She suggests that through mutual recognition in the pre-oedipal phase the paradox inherent in individuation allows the child to view the mother as a subject and thus the boy need not repudiate femininity in the oedipal stage in order to be allowed into the public domain. Thus, for Benjamin, Freud's argument on the oedipal phase is distorted when it comes to identity formation.

Paradoxically the lack of mutual recognition for Benjamin collapses the master/slave dialectic because the master becomes dependent on the slave's recognition of him as



master to affirm his position, 'If I completely destroy the other, she ceases to exist – that is, I cease to be an autonomous being' (1988: 39). This skewed recognition between master and slave plays out in the need for both master and slave to occupy subject positions because the whole act of recognition can only occur if both parties are subjects. Based on her reading of Freud and Hegel, Benjamin concludes that the only exit available out of this problematic binary is through mutual recognition. She purports that with recognising the other as a subject and in turn respecting the boundaries of the other a healthy 'constant tension' (ibid: 36) creates a sense of pleasure in sharing with the other, 'In mutual recognition the subject accepts the premise that others are separate but nonetheless share like feelings and intentions. The subject is compensated for his loss of sovereignty by the pleasure of sharing, the communion with another subject' (ibid: 53). And elsewhere she formulates it as follows, 'Recognizing the other has been the exceptional moment, a moment of rare innocence, the recovery of a lost paradise' (ibid: 78).

Benjamin claims that the need to be recognised by the other is the moment of paradox; the child cannot be an individual without the recognition of other individuals. This she calls the intersubjective position. The child is dependent on others to be subjects in their own right in order for the child to become a subject herself, implying that the mother must be seen like all others as a subject. Benjamin (1988: 165 – 167) shows us how Freud's oedipal complex contradicts the possibility for a subject position for the child and mother when femininity is relegated to an object position. She argues that for Freud this masculine/dominance and feminine/submission in the gender binary is the basis for gender differentiation. She infers that Freud's oedipal complex is flawed in that it does not allow for mutual recognition. Therefore the oedipal complex in classical Freudian psychoanalysis creates and sustains a gender difference based on woman's lack of the phallus, which is a symbolic difference and not a real difference. It is in this process of gender differentiation that Benjamin takes issue with Freud (ibid: 166):

The idea of phallic monism is clearly at odds with the acceptance of difference that the Oedipus complex is supposed to embody. It denies the difference between the sexes; or rather it reduces difference to absence, to lack. Difference then means plus-or-minus the penis.

Benjamin (ibid: 134–81) thus disputes the description of the oedipal phase in classical Freudian psychoanalysis by stating that the authoritarian or aggressive father as in the case of *Oedipus Rex* does not necessarily enable the boy's entry into the external domain but rather displaces individuation with a type of skewed recognition or *misrecognition* so that the boy understands his place in relation to the place of dominance that his father occupies. Moreover, during the pre-oedipal phase, if the mother can successfully maintain her subjectivity and simultaneously allow the child to differentiate, then that process can lead to mutual recognition, thus the child need not necessarily rely on the father to introduce her or him into the public world. The mother then too, as a subject, facilitates the child's entry into the public domain in that the mother represents a harmony between the private and public domains and not a concrete stratification between these two domains. The process of gender identity formation is then nebulous and less static and it does not necessarily lead the child into a destructive phase (whereby the child loses a sense of self) and regresses into the respective positions of dominance and submission.

Returning to the formative argument on gender differentiation, Benjamin's (1988) critique of Freud is based on Freud's premise that the oedipal phase is when the child becomes either masculine or feminine. According to Benjamin's reception of Freud, it is in the genital phase of child development or the oedipal complex that the child gains entry into the public world: 'for children of both sexes, this split means that identification and closeness with the mother must be traded for independence; it means that being a subject of desire requires repudiation of the maternal role, of feminine identity itself' (ibid: 134). Benjamin's reading of Freud suggests that he believes it is during this entrance into the external domain that gender difference is observed for the child. (I use the term child because at this stage the baby is at least between the ages of 3½ and 5 years old and is no longer considered a baby but rather a child). Benjamin claims that mutual recognition can replace the oedipal complex and thus displace the hierarchical gender binary of masculine/dominance and feminine/submission. This she claims can be achieved in the pre-oedipal phase because recognition requires that the mother occupies a subject position.

Benjamin is rooted in the school of ego psychology and object relations theory. In *The Bonds of Love* Benjamin describes ego psychology as focused on the child separating from the union with the mother (1988: 63). Object relations theory stipulates that the child is a social being and as such becomes a subject through relations with others. Both theories complement each other in that they show that through individuation/separation (the child separating from the mother in order to become an individual/subject) and intersubjectivity (the child becoming a social being/subject through recognition with other subjects or mutual recognition) the child develops a healthy sense of self. These processes in child development occur in the pre-oedipal phase, with the implication that the child has successfully split-off from the mother *before* gender differentiation occurs (ibid: 62-63). Benjamin argues that object relations theory (ibid: 16–18) (referring to the child's relationship to her environment) can be located in relation to Freud's drive theory of the oral and anal phase of child development. She claims that as a child develops cognitive abilities already within these phases, the baby learns mutual recognition: 'the idea of mutual recognition seems to me an ever more crucial category of early experience ... research reveals infants to be active participants who help shape the responses of their environment, and "create" their own objects ... infancy research has gradually widened psychology's angle of observation to include infant *and* parent, the simultaneous presence of two living subjects' (ibid: 16). Instead of classical Freudian psychoanalysis' claim that the baby views the world as hostile, Benjamin argues, the baby goes through a process of gradual individuation/separation, which leads to mutual recognition between infant and parent. This does not negate the fact that the baby experiences anxiety due to individuation and separation, but it does mean that the baby learns that recognition promotes differentiation by allowing and encouraging the baby to view herself as a subject. This space of fuzziness in the gender identity process of child development is of interest when rethinking and re-imagining possibilities in social constructions around femininity and masculinity.

In her article, *Sameness and Difference* (1995), Benjamin argues that within the pre-oedipal stage the child is unaware of his or her gender. The boy still maintains fantasies that he can be pregnant. The girl does not know the limitations of her gender; she has

fantasies that are masculine. It is only in the oedipal stage and under pressure from the socio-symbolic order (the workings of male hegemony) that these fantasies are split-off and the girl represses her fantasies of the masculine in order to adopt a feminine gender. *Vice versa*, the boy splits-off his fantasy of femininity to become a masculine subject. Benjamin concedes that gender identity is crucial to notions of self and that there is very little flexibility about gender identity in that it is necessary for splitting-off from the mother in order for the child to become autonomous (ibid: 12). Autonomy thus requires that one becomes either a woman or a man. Nonetheless limitations of one's sex does not limit one's fantasies. Thus gender constructions can be opened in order to accommodate these fantasies that are limitless beyond gender identity formation.

Benjamin (1995) plays within the frame of paradox and nuance when she talks about autonomy because autonomy requires the child to be a subject. However she explains that paradox is necessary in allowing the child to become either a man or woman negating the hierarchical gender binary of masculine/dominance and feminine/submission. For Benjamin paradoxes are crucial in sustaining tension (1988: 36) as opposed to resolving contradictions (1995: 11). She purports that in the intersubjective position (the child becomes a social being/subject through interacting with other subjects) there is a multiplicity of traits that encompasses an individual in which case identity formation can allow for shifting positions whilst still maintaining a unitary sense of self (ibid: 13). She thus creates the space for individuals to challenge notions of self in the pre-oedipal stage, before splitting-off from the mother during the oedipal phase, thereby allowing the child an opportunity to recognise him/herself as being separate from the mother whilst retaining a sense of subjectivity and at the same time enjoying meaningful triadic relationships with both the mother and the father (Benjamin, 1998: 17). In Benjamin's title *Sameness and Difference* (1995) her most crucial point is that in order for a child to be a subject the child has to understand that she is the same as other subjects but due to autonomy and individuality she is different. Therefore *Sameness and Difference* is about mutual recognition (the paradox of recognition between subjects) and respect for difference amongst autonomous individuals/subjects. Moreover my reading is that

Benjamin's understanding of paradoxes does not deny a fluid gender identity, implying that during adulthood gender identity can shift to allow for transgendered identities.

Adria Schwartz in her article, *Sexual Subjects* (1998), begins to probe the question whether pre-oedipal freedom can be recaptured or reactivated later in post-oedipal stages. She positions herself within the relational school aligning herself with Jessica Benjamin and the concept of mutual recognition. She has an inclusive argument, meaning that the child does not have to repudiate femininity in order to become autonomous in the oedipal phase because she claims that the child does not have to have a traumatic separation from the mother if the child individuates from the mother through mutual recognition in the pre-oedipal stage. This position is in opposition to the classical Freudian position with its insistence on the necessity of a *traumatic* splitting-off from the mother.

Drawing on Freud's argument, she concedes that during the pre-oedipal stage the child identifies with both parents but that the child has to split-off from the mother and thus de-identify with the mother. However this de-identification with the mother is different from the classical Freudian repudiation of femininity. In contrast to Freud, Schwartz states that gender is a social construct and that the boy and girl are both taught (through imitation and performance [Butler, 1991]) how to be both feminine and masculine. In other words, within the pre-oedipal phase the baby identifies with both masculine and feminine positions and therefore has no gender and if mutual recognition is successful in the pre-oedipal stage then it is not necessary to repudiate femininity in the oedipal phase. Thus gender polarity becomes irrelevant with the advent of mutual recognition. Constructions of masculinity and femininity then become expressions of the self and not positions of dominance or submission.

Schwartz (1998), subsequently, emphasises that for a girl child to choose a lesbian identity is an over-inclusive position, which does not limit the girl to choose one gender over the other but that she can identify with both masculine and feminine positions. The process of mutual recognition in the pre-oedipal stage makes it possible for the girl to have an over-inclusive identity because she is autonomous and therefore a subject. Similarly for the boy mutual recognition allows him to develop into an autonomous being

without having to traumatically repudiate the m/other/femininity, which is the central focus of the oedipal complex in classical Freudian psychoanalysis.

Schwartz's (1998) argument promotes the possibility for gender differences to be opened up. She argues for change within the range of gender constructions so that there are more possibilities for negotiating sexual difference. Thus Schwartz shows how in a post-oedipal phase gender biases due to social constructions can be challenged within a social context by showing how gender differentiation can assist the process of mutual recognition and a rethinking of both masculine and feminine constructions. To this extent, both Benjamin and Schwartz show how gender identity formation can be fluid and open to sameness and difference beyond a dominance and submission model.

Benjamin and Schwartz frame their arguments according to gender notions that are central to notions of the self. Schwartz and Benjamin's critical reception of Freud appeals to a need for change around gender constructions by allowing for the possibility to resist the phallogocentric symbolic itself (the workings of male hegemony), which is ever pervasive. Furthermore this argument substantiates the symbolic structure of language, which operates on an imaginary or rather intrapsychic level that still affects the way in which we think of ourselves as constructed within a privileged masculine position and that through consciousness-raising and critical evaluation (McNeil, 1993: 153) of representation, it is possible to shift the dominance and submission model inherent in the hierarchical gender binary towards mutual recognition. Moreover with Schwartz's premise to rethink the feminine, she opens the space for reimagining the feminine in the symbolic order (Campbell; 2000). We are not pre-discursive bodies therefore to be able to create more options in the system of gender we have to apply imaginative ways of rethinking the self and other. Thus the challenge lies in shifting and playing with the notion of gender and representation.

Benjamin and Schwartz are critical of the timelessness and universality presumed by Freud's version of the oedipal phase and both are thus helpful in this endeavour. Using Benjamin and Schwartz's logic of mutual recognition (recognition between subjects) as an alternate understanding to the hierarchical gender binary, it is then argued that mutual

recognition can be applied to the context of race/ethnicity and class because it side-steps the dominance and submission model or the master/slave dialectic. Moreover cultural influences' play a part in identity formation and that the culture of mutual recognition can play a part in the intrapsychic processes of child development by encouraging a culture of respect through tropes of interculturality for recognition of sameness and difference. Both theorists' argue that cultural changes also transforms the oedipal phase for children and that as a result, in a more open culture where gender roles are less fixed, child development and gender differentiation also allow for greater flexibility and a plurality of possibilities for gender identity formation. However the ability to resist the fixed gender roles in society is always going to be about consciousness-raising and critically evaluating representation in order to shift the thinking away from the dominance and submission model and the subtle bias of a phallogocentric language.

As Benjamin's observations are still considered valid in that they are framed within a patriarchal context and thus parallels can be drawn from this theoretical positioning. In the context of HIV and AIDS this understanding of gender differentiation is important because it frames the intrapsychic processes that sustain male hegemony. Moreover for the purposes of this study it is then crucial to look for 'the workings' of male hegemony in newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS. Therefore this study investigates whether male hegemony is subtly represented or is being resisted through alternate representations of feminine subjectivity. This also means that with a culture of mutual recognition, media representation no longer portrays the other as lacking, it means that the other is seen as a subject like oneself and therefore it engenders a sense of empathy between the self and other thus breaking the stigma and shame around HIV and AIDS.

### **Resisting the Hierarchical Gender Binary**

The hierarchical gender binary is codified within hegemonic masculinity (the workings of male hegemony) and as was shown earlier is maintained through intrapsychic processes such as the oedipal complex. I argued that intrapsychic processes manifest in and are consolidated by cultural and social systems. These systems were explained by Claude Levi-Strauss in *The Savage Mind* (1966) with the use of kinship theory. He claimed that

kinship theory reflects the guiding principles of patriarchy. For Levi-Strauss the myth of patriarchy assumes that the imaginary phallic father in the sky organises society and power. In *Elementary Structures of Kinship* (1949), Levi-Strauss claimed that in most societies there is a dominant myth that the father is killed by the sons who then share the absentee father's power and authority and also the women in the family. Levi-Strauss developed this idea and further elaborated on it drawing on Freud's articles in *Totem and Taboo* (1913). For both Freud and Levi-Strauss the father lives in the imaginary and symbolic order of cultural practices and is the highest force of power.

The dominant myth of kinship theory ensures that almost universally, the women of a community are governed by the men and have little to no authority other than governing over other women for the men. Benjamin (1988: 87) argues, as was stated earlier, that women gain distorted senses of identity because they recognise their husband's power – an intrapsychic process, which starts in childhood when the girl child abdicates her potential subjectivity to her father. Moreover according to Benjamin and following Levi-Strauss' ideas on kinship, the incest taboo is about the exchange of women with other families by the men to create harmony amongst the families. Women are then invested in the control of female sexuality as part of their access to marginal power but also in perpetuating the institution of patriarchy.

Jacques Lacan, who was also influenced by Levi-Strauss, claims in *The Language of the Self: The Function of Language in Psychoanalysis* (1968) that the kinship myth exists also within the structure of language. Language is male biased or phallogocentric, a term that originates from the deconstructionist critique of language, codifying our thoughts and unconscious processes, which are central to identity formation. Lacan purports that the conscious and unconscious minds are structured according to the same principles of language. For Lacan, it is the imaginary and symbolic order of the father that subtly perpetuates the perceptions of hegemonic masculinity and even though there might be mutual recognition in the pre-oedipal stage, the overwhelming workings of male hegemony maintain patriarchy. Lacan argued that the unconscious mind is not a mystery but rather mirrors the conscious mind or is interconnected with the conscious mind. The 'phallogocentric' nature of language implies that women occupy the space of 'lack' in the



structure of language, and thus also in the structure of the unconscious (Benjamin, 1988; Campbell, 2000). Lacan claims to be Freudian<sup>7</sup> but he reinterprets the Freudian notion of the oedipal complex by claiming that language can replace the physical presence of the father to split the mother/child dyad. Thus the Lacanian argument is that patriarchy is subtly inferred in the symbolic order. However to oppose patriarchy even in the inference of language, consciousness-raising and critical evaluation (McNeil, 1993: 153) of representation is necessary with a lens towards mutual recognition.

According to the Lacanian interpretation of the oedipal complex the symbolic presence of the father inferred through language (phallogocentrism) and culture intervenes to split the mother/child dyad. Moreover the French school of psychoanalysis, implying Jacques Lacan (1968), would be in agreement with feminists' such as Benjamin and Schwartz in that culture symbolises the external world and that language is part of culture. Therefore culture has seen the workings of male hegemony and language perpetuates women's submission. Thus, for Lacan, we uphold a system of patriarchy that is highly resistant to change. It is in this moment that feminists' concerns for conscious resistance to cultural aspects such as language become important in shifting the hierarchical gender binary of masculine/dominance and feminine/submission towards mutual recognition. Hence, for Jan Campbell (2000), the position of lack that women occupy can be observed as lacking profoundly in language, which she argues can be contested through descriptions of women's pleasure and autonomy.

Following on this point, for Benjamin and Schwartz, who play with the idea of change through social construction, logic would then dictate that not only must we resist the traumatic splitting-off of the mother/child dyad of classical Freudian psychoanalysis mirrored as the dichotomy of the public/masculine and private/feminine spheres but that perpetuating hegemonic masculinity in cultural spaces and practices should also be resisted. Therefore representing images of women's autonomy and pleasure opposes representations of female sexual passivity and resists phallogocentrism and the cultural

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<sup>7</sup> Lacan would also argue that if Freud had Levi-Strauss and Foucault and other contemporary theorists available when writing his theory, then Freud too would have come to the same conclusions as Lacan.

perpetuation of hegemonic masculinity. Language is not fixed instead it is negotiated. Therefore shifting representation away from patriarchy opposes the workings of male hegemony. The next point substantiates the argument that resisting phallogocentrism supports the aim of mutual recognition.

Michel Foucault claims that language is imperfect; 'With language, the system of signs is passively accepted in its imperfection, and only an art can rectify it: the theory of language is immediately prescriptive. Natural history establishes of itself a system of signs for denoting beings, and that is why it is a theory' (1977: 205). There is however nothing preventing the contestation that signs and by implication language should be implicitly accepted. According to Benjamin (1998, 1995) and Mouffe (1992) it is crucial to transform the personal and by inference the political implying that language too must be transformed.

In *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (1977), Michel Foucault purports that within language, the naming of signs is arbitrary; 'the signs no longer have any value apart from the slender fiction which they represent' (ibid: 48). Moreover he claims that language originated from convenience and resemblance (ibid: 18). It was the association of similarities of shared properties within Nature that constituted the origination of language. Therefore the relationship of signs is very much based on resemblance and shared properties. Furthermore Foucault claims that the theory of language that constitutes the system of signs is structured 'to be fixed in a binary from which would render them stable ...' (ibid: 42). Foucault argues that the 'fixed binary' was the basis for the logic of convenience and resemblance to Nature for the system of signs (ibid: 18):

A resemblance that becomes double as soon as one attempts to unravel it: a resemblance of the place, the site upon which nature has placed the two things, and thus a similitude of properties; for in this natural container, the world, adjacency is not an exterior relation between things, but the sign of a relationship, obscure though it may be. And then, from this contact, by exchange, there arise new resemblances; a common regimen becomes necessary; upon the similitude that was the hidden reason for their propinquity is superimposed a resemblance that is the visible

effect of that proximity. Body and soul for example, are doubly 'convenient': the soul had to be made dense, heavy, and terrestrial for God to place it in the very heart of the matter.

The fixed binary of the soul/body convenience is ordered within a hierarchy. It is important to note that language is caught in this 'fixed binary that renders it stable', making language hierarchical and thus biased due to a 'hidden reason' between signs. The hidden reason is provided by Foucault as a critique of humanism and the theory of immanence with the suggestion of God through the convenience of the soul. But for Levi-Strauss (1949, 1966), Lacan (1968) and Derrida (1978) this hidden reason has a strong ideological leaning of the law of the father/phallus/God, meaning that the ideological leaning of the hidden reason for Foucault through inference is patriarchal. However contesting the 'hidden reason' of the soul/body convenience means freeing language from the hierarchical relationship of the 'fixed binary that renders it stable' so that language is then opened for negotiation away from phallogocentrism towards a more nuanced leaning of mutual recognition. Therefore language according to this logic can be freed from the workings of male hegemony.

The theory of language might be rendered stable according to a fixed binary, but as was stated earlier, language is not fixed instead language is negotiated. Language occupies the virtual world of speech and meaning is always negotiated. To this extent, feminism and postcolonial discourse impacts language and the ways in which we rethink discursive practices on gender, race, class, culture and sexuality. Representation then becomes the tool to rethink and challenge or reinforce notions of gender, race, class and sexuality (Hall, 1999). This means that within representation is the possibility to communicate shifts within the system of signs so that others may understand those shifts. The implication of this is that representation can thus challenge how we view the world by representing alternate viewpoints and thus affecting shifts within language. Therefore at this point the argument takes a distance from Lacan's claims that phallogocentrism

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8 For Lacan the phallogocentrism of language replaces the intervening father in the mother/child dyad and structures the imaginary according to hegemonic masculinity.

intervenes to split the mother/child dyad whilst maintaining patriarchy. Instead shifting language away from the workings of male hegemony by representing women's autonomy and pleasure shifts male bias in the socio-symbolic order and moreover with mutual recognition in the pre-oedipal stage, patriarchy becomes increasingly unstable thus providing the space for gender differentiation to be renegotiated.

Representation according to Foucault (1977) requires an interrogation of culture, cultural values and beliefs and how they influence our reading/understanding of reality; 'As long as representation goes without question as the general element of thought, the theory of discourse serves at the same time, and in one and the same movement, as the foundation of all possible grammar and as a theory of knowledge' (ibid: 337). Foucault quite simply states that if representation is not critically evaluated it becomes tacitly accepted as a truth, a form of knowledge, otherwise it becomes too convenient to create 'approximative, imperfect and largely spontaneous kinds of knowledge' (ibid: 346). In the strategy to resist cultural representations of hegemonic masculinity, it is important to use consciousness-raising (McNeil, 1993: 153) through a feminist agenda as a means of displacing the hierarchical gender binary.

In *Lacan* Slavoj Zizek (2006) understands representation to be a constant interplay between creating and annihilating at the same moment. In making sense of the 'text' we are constantly shifting between the symbolic, imaginary and real realms and annihilating the previous realm. The annihilation of the previous realm recreates a new space and new trope and thus the context and meaning of the 'text' is ever changing. According to the Lacanian notion this process is facilitated through 'self-questioning' (Zizek; 2006: 5, 12, 18, 75) or self-reflexivity (Flax, 1994; Haraway, 2004, 1991; Harding, 1986; Benjamin, 1995; Mulvey, 1989). The moment we become conscious of the experience we recreate the experience. Thus self-reflexivity is part of feminist readings of Foucault's strategy of consciousness-raising and critically evaluating (McNeil, 1993: 153) the self. Therefore representation is not something that lies beyond the self but imposes on the self a self-questioning. Zizek (2006) suggests that in the reading of the 'text' (which could be an image or a written text), the meaning of the text is experienced in the symbolic realm, which influences the imaginary realm of gender differentiation and has real consequences

in the realm of the hegemonic masculine world order. This implies that texts' that are male biased represents gender differentiation in a way that perpetuates hegemonic masculinity. However texts that challenge hegemonic masculinity such as representing women's autonomy and pleasure (Campbell, 2000) challenge the workings of male hegemony and impose the feminine into the semiotic. Therefore language can be freed from the fixed binary of patriarchy if the feminine is brought into the symbolic realm through a feminist consciousness and by critically evaluating representation.

Representation is very central to Foucault's (1977) interrogation of the power/knowledge nexus, meaning that representation is about knowledge production. The relationship between power and knowledge production is to reinforce certain systems of domination and in the case of patriarchy, it is there to maintain the workings of male hegemony. Therefore critically evaluating representation is crucial for challenging the fixed binary of patriarchy embedded in the theory of language.

It is clear that for Foucault the theory of language is not without an ideological leaning, meaning that language is part of knowledge production; 'Languages though imperfect knowledge themselves, are faithful memory of the progress of knowledge towards perfection. They lead into error, but they record what has been learnt' (1977: 87). When patriarchy is the dominant ideology in the symbolic realm of a thought, which is formed within language, the concept of the hierarchical gender binary is then privileged thus perpetuating hegemonic masculinity. The relationship between the symbolic realm of the thought process and the real ramifications of that in daily life experiences is crucial for understanding how the symbolic order affects the real world order. This is a significant point for sexual difference because if patriarchy is no longer the dominant ideology then language and the imaginary realm shifts so that sexual difference has the space to be renegotiated outside the hierarchical gender binary.

Laura Mulvey claims in *Male Gaze* (1989: 79) that representation is influenced by phallogocentrism. The lens that frames the text for her is a masculine lens. According to Mulvey's standpoint the world we live in operates on hegemonic masculinity and the lens through which we all, feminine and masculine, view the world is phallogocentric. Thus

for Mulvey the male gaze needs to be reappropriated. This implies that the re-appropriation of the male gaze needs to be adjusted in order for it to resist the hierarchical gender binary. It then follows that women need to appropriate a lens from which to view themselves and the feminine. Thus Campbell's (2000) suggestion echoes, feminine autonomy and pleasure needs to be represented in order to displace the male gaze.

Following this logic, it then implies that within the larger project of displacing the fixed binary of patriarchy, implying masculine dominance and feminine submission, it is important to introduce the feminine subject position that is excluded from the male gaze. Mulvey (1989: 85) infers that we need not ascribe to a particular point of view but like Foucault we must employ a critical eye in resisting normalizing practices of sexual identity. She forces us to re-view our worldview by being critical of what is being represented, self-questioning (Zizek, 2006: 5), self-reflexive; begging us to ask ourselves: is it biased or not and does it provide us with a better sense of self and, in particular for this study is it based on the principles of mutual recognition so that we can go beyond gender, race, class and sexuality. Mulvey's (1989) repositioning of the lens is a practical displacement of phallogocentrism in the game of the text. However the lens as an instrument is never innocent. Therefore the question of the positioning of the lens should always be critical of the perpetuation of systems of domination and in particular hegemonic masculinity with a view towards mutual recognition, implying a freedom from a hierarchical binary.

In this section what we see in the picture that has been painted on the hierarchical gender binary is that there are fractures within the workings of male hegemony. These fractures are signs of hope for shifting the hierarchical gender binary and for opposing the repudiation of femininity within the oedipal complex. It is crucial to note that the fluidity of constructions of masculinity and femininity in newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS are part of the resistance of the hierarchical gender binary through representation. Therefore in the analysis of media representations on gender differentiation it is important to focus the argument on resisting the hierarchical gender binary through the use of mutual recognition. Furthermore the argument made by feminist psychoanalysts' on gender differentiation contributes towards understanding the shifting positions in the

public and private domains. These shifts in cultural signifiers in media representation show how differences and fluidity play a part in constructions of masculinity and femininity. To this extent, the analyses in this study are framed under the larger rubric of textual analysis, which in turn is determined by various theories such as the obvious feminist psychoanalytic theories substantiating the position of mutual recognition. It is important to always be conscious of the fact that the theories presented in this dissertation serve as a practical understanding of how media representation is interpreted. Moreover it is important to note that gender representations need to highlight the fluidity in constructions of masculinity and femininity as minor remedies for resisting the hierarchical gender binary because media representation is part of culture. Therefore shifting cultural signifiers through media representation may in part shift intrapsychic processes of child development and hence of gender. Benjamin puts it succinctly in *The Bonds of Love* when she concludes: ‘To attempt to recover recognition in personal life relentlessly or to evade politics and give up the hope of transformation – though all these failures do happen in real life. It means to see that the personal and social are interconnected, and to understand that if we suffocate our personal longings for recognition, we will suffocate our hope for social transformation as well’ (1988: 224). To iterate Chantal Mouffe (1992: 32) ‘the personal is political’.

### **Alternate Understandings for Rethinking Sex and Pleasure**

Freud claimed that we are a mass of contradictory desires (Wright, et al, 1992: 442). In his book *The ego and the id* (1962) Freud spoke of dualism as the basis and foundation for human life. The binary opposition of *eros* and *thanatos* is a way in which to view the world; they are opposite sides of the same coin. Both these opposing drives (*eros* = life drive; *thanatos* = death drive) create the basis for growth by simultaneously creating and destroying life thus always perpetuating motion and a cycle of events. The binary opposition of *eros* and *thanatos* sits in a dialectic. However before understanding the duality of *eros* and *thanatos* it is important to understand the paradox of expressing the repressed. Exposing the subtleties in paradox is necessary for shifting worldview. This means that part of the discussion on *eros* and *thanatos* is about exposing the paradox of expressing the repressed. For this argument I rely on the Marquis de Sade’s critique of

the public/private divide. Sade (Coward, 1999) criticises the sanction of onanism and shows how through expressing the repressed sexual desires what is seen as public (sexual being) and private (masturbation) a negotiation of these spaces can make sexual instincts more responsible.

Gert Hekma in his article *Sade, masculinity and sexual humiliation* (2001) writes about Sade in a way that challenges the boundaries between the traditional liberal distinction of public and private. Hekma claims that Sade rebelled against his times by writing on onanism, referring to Sade's work on masturbation. Sade expressed in his writings what was being repressed in the public domain by the State and religion. Sade therefore opened up the space between the public and the private realm around sexual desire. According to Hekma, Sade revolutionised the concepts of the public and private domains by showing the nebulous distinction that is existent between these two spaces. In playing with images of powerful people in his stories Sade (1999) showed how the State comes into the private domain by organising the citizenry according to who is powerful and who is not.

Death, subsequently, is a theme that is ever present in Sade's writings because for Sade it is in death that the State intervenes between the public and private domains and takes control over bodies. Death is also used as a means to control others through the concept of *lust murder*, which is when the State intervenes between public and private matters (Hekma; 2001: 5). Implicit in Sade's work is the idea that the space between public and private must not be divided, separated or made exclusive because abuses of power that occur in private become more subversive and pernicious. He infers that these abuses in private become more fantastical and deadlier because they are hidden. Hekma claims that; 'For Sade, sexual pleasure is not a private, but a semi-public affair' (ibid: 3) suggesting that sex should occupy a space between the public and private domains. This 'semi-public' space for sex is also the space for expressing the repressed through public dialogue (media representation) so that sexual practices do not become private, hidden and dangerous.



Sade postulates that sexual desire is natural and as such should be expressed in the public domain as a natural practice amongst the citizenry and not a hidden taboo that is only sanctioned through marriage under the laws of the State. For Sade, this point highlighted the fact that sex within his time, according to the State, was practised within the confines of heteronormativity, making homosexuality an immoral and illegal act. Heteronormativity then became the straight-jacket for legal and legitimate desires. However within the Sadean critique the State should not intervene in sexual practices that encompass sexual difference in the formation of subjectivities because as he argued sexual desire is natural and not restricted to the normative practice of heterosexuality. This is a salient point when rethinking condom distribution in jails where homosexuality is practiced and where HIV and AIDS is prevalent.

Sade's contribution to the discussion on sex and sexuality is valuable for this chapter because he emphasizes the need for expressing sex and sexuality as a semi-public practice. Sex should not be seen as a taboo and relegated to the private domain but rather it should be seen as an expression of sexual desires and instincts that must be open to public scrutiny and debate so as to produce more meaningful and responsible representations of sex and sexuality. It is an especially interesting and useful argument that elucidates the fluidity of the space between public and private domains and that the lived experience of the body is not exclusive to either domain but rather becomes an expression of the self.

Sade is correct in saying that sexual desire is natural in as much as it must not be restricted to normative practices such as heterosexuality. However deviating from Sade's position, it is also crucial to understand sexuality, through the oedipal complex, as being embodied within social constructions and that the sexual body is always written upon through discursive practices. Therefore Sade's view of sex as 'natural' or 'given' and occupying an amoral space is flawed because once there is engagement with the other there is always an ethical obligation towards the other. Whatever is 'natural' must always be outside discursive practices. But as was argued earlier Nature/culture are continuously evolving and both stand within each other. Nature (sexual) in this discussion implicates culture because sex and sexuality stand within discursive practices

but that these discursive practises are always shifting and changing and being resisted through interpretive paradigms.

The act of sex is located within the lived experience of the body and is affected by social constructions such that women's experiences of *jouissance* (pleasure) will be different to men according to narratives of power. Sade's claim that Nature (sexual) is free is incorrect to the extent that the definition of 'Nature' and 'the natural' is never free from social and political bias and as such Nature too is fallible. Instead as a way forward with Sade's point on expressing the repressed through the use of a semi-public space, perhaps we can come to a better understanding sex and sexuality by bridging the gap between the public and private divides, which is the perpetuation of the traumatic splitting-off of the mother/child dyad.

In order to understand sex and sexuality it is crucial that we understand the opposing drives, *eros* and *thanatos*. *Eros* and *thanatos* are similar to the psychoanalytical understanding of sameness and difference (the rare moment of dependency on the other to become autonomous), it is in this paradox that *eros* and *thanatos* exists; without destruction there is no creation. There is no life without death, no creation without destruction. It is out of the ashes of the dead that new life emerges. This is the foundation for the genesis myth. It is the underlying understanding of existence; both *eros* and *thanatos* are the instincts that oppose each other yet they exist simultaneously confronting the dynamics of existence. *Eros* is the drive to live and create and to be creative whilst *thanatos* is the drive to destroy or reduce to the inanimate or without life form. It is in the tension that exists within these two opposing drives that a search for harmony is sought. Harmony is then seen as a state of pleasure within the tension of *eros* and *thanatos*. However harmony is always transient because the tension between *eros* and *thanatos* is constant.

The threat of HIV and AIDS balances between these two opposing drives, *eros* and *thanatos*; it stretches the contradictory desires to the extreme, to live on the edge (of death). Such a desire for living on the edge can be discerned in Milan Kundera's description of his character in the novel *Life is Elsewhere* (1973: 82):

He was repelled by the pettiness that reduced life to mere existence and that turned men into half-men. He wanted to weigh his life on balance, the other side of which was weighted with death. He wanted to make his every action, every day, yes, every hour and minute worthy of being measured against the ultimate, which is death. That was why he wanted to lead the file, to walk the abyss, his head illumined by a halo of bullets, to grow in everyone's eyes until he had become as immense as death itself.

The passage above illustrates the classic description of *thanatos*. The death drive seeks a return to a state of nothingness or inanimateness. To return to a state of inanimateness is to become larger than life. It is the potential to go beyond life to a state where life is inconsequential so that creativity is irrelevant. But to become nothing or inanimate is to be creative in the act of being destructive. Thus the above passage in Kundera's work highlights the paradox in *eros* and *thanatos*; the search for the creative process in the moment of becoming inanimate. Therefore *thanatos* is significant only in context to *eros*.

Underpinning the argument of *eros* and *thanatos* is the pleasure principle or *jouissance*. *Jouissance* refers to the attainment of transient harmony from the 'constant tension' (Benjamin, 1988: 36) within the dualism of *eros* and *thanatos*. *Jouissance* or pleasure is also about losing control of the self during orgasm or 'the little death' as in the Lacanian dictum (Zoonen, 1994, 24). It is in the juxtaposition between these two opposing drives, *eros* and *thanatos*, that a sense of repetition is required to find transient harmony from the 'constant tension', the state between pleasure and unpleasure. However as Benjamin purported the 'constant tension' is in the moment of recognising the other, which creates a sense of pleasure in sharing with the other<sup>9</sup>. Pleasure is not so much in finding harmony as it is in the rare moments of transient harmony from the 'constant tension'. Thus the 'constant tension' is not a contradiction but rather a paradox. The desire for transient harmony within the 'constant tension' of *eros* and *thanatos* creates new formulations (Zizek, 2006) around these drives that leads to a state of pleasure. Therefore within the space of 'constant tension' between *eros* and *thanatos* new formulations of transient

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<sup>9</sup> The 'constant tension' here refers to the paradox in the analogy of sameness and difference.

harmony and pleasure come into existence to challenge and shift the way we think about these two opposing drives. It is not about a fixed worldview that relies on a binary opposition of *eros* and *thanatos* but rather it is in the paradox of these two drives that a space exists to shift these drives towards more subtle forms of transient harmony and pleasure that are less prone to the real 'risk of death' (Benjamin, 1998: 64).

The pleasure principle oscillates in the constant tension between pleasure and unpleasure. According to the pleasure principle, sex is about seeking pleasure between these juxtaposed drives, *eros* and *thanatos*, the risk of death (*thanatos*) and the thrill of being alive (*eros*). Benjamin (1988: 64) puts it succinctly when she says, 'excitement resides in the *risk* of death, not in death itself', as is also clear from the Kundera quote above. All desire can be ascribed to death (Wright; 1992: 56) meaning a state without tension, an inanimate state. Sexual pleasure is about a return to 'wholeness' in the prenatal stage (Nagera, 1990). It is a return to a state of pleasure marked by a lack of tension. But this return to a state of pleasure in 'wholeness' is a rare and transient moment in the 'constant tension' and can be reformulated (Zizek, 2006) to be a loss of self in the moment of orgasm. Therefore *jouissance* does not have to be a real risk of death but rather a rethinking of death in terms of a moment of loss of self during orgasm – 'The subject is compensated for his loss of sovereignty by the pleasure of sharing, the communion with another subject' (Benjamin, 1998: 53). An alternate view to 'risk' through mutual recognition would encourage loss of self with other through trust and love, affirming the paradox of sameness and difference – 'Recognizing the other has been the exceptional moment, a moment of rare innocence, the recovery of a lost paradise' (Benjamin, 1988: 78). Thus *jouissance* can be viewed as a unity with the other (Nagera, 1990) and not a real 'risk of death'.

Cavarero (2002) is in agreement with Benjamin (1988) when she criticizes the classical notion of *eros* and *thanatos*. Cavarero claims that the notion of sexual pleasure as risk taking suggests that it is part of the masculine perversion of repudiating femininity within the oedipal complex and is not necessarily the feminine experience of pleasure. Cavarero's position would infer that *jouissance* is about unity with the m/other, which is a return to the pre-oedipal notion of the mother/child dyad. However this ephemeral

moment of pleasure is a paradox and thus the state of unpleasure is the desire to fulfil a desire to return to unity and oneness with the m/other. Again this alternate view to *jouissance* is an alternate understanding to recapture the pre-oedipal notion of pleasure through mutual recognition. This view is in opposition to the hostility of the traumatic splitting-off the mother/child dyad in classical Freudian psychoanalysis. This means that Cavarero posits an alternate perspective to the repudiation of femininity in the classical Freudian theory of the oedipal complex. What she is suggesting is the emphasis on the pre-oedipal notion of sameness and difference through mutual recognition with a meaningful relationship with the m/other. This unity with the m/other does not negate the idea of autonomy instead it reinforces the paradox of mutual recognition. The moment one is recognised by the other one is autonomous but this recognition implies losing total independence.

In this section, expressing the repressed has been argued as an alternate understanding for rethinking sexual pleasure through a semi-public space. Mutual recognition is the alternate view to the 'constant tension' in *eros* and *thanatos* so that the self and other engage in a rare moments of harmonious acts of pleasure outside of risky sexual behaviour. Thus expressing the repressed in a semi-public space whilst exposing these rare moments of harmony from the constant tension in *eros* and *thanatos* is a more nuanced way of responsible representations of sex. Expressing the repressed is a way in which to blur the division of public and private spaces so that sexual desires are not made to be taboo or hidden. These alternate understandings are crucial for resisting the masculine perversion of repudiating the other as well as normalizing practices of sexual identity, which are limiting and biased. Therefore rethinking *eros* and *thanatos* in relation to sex and pleasure is about creating new formulations around pleasure that might act as minor remedies to shift sexual behaviour away from risky and dangerous behaviour towards more responsible behaviour. It is to this extent that media representation will be analysed to see if they resist the separation of public and private divides by expressing the repressed in a semi-public space as well as representing sex in ways that shift from real risk of death towards more nuanced ways of mutual recognition. The following section highlights how mutual recognition is the exit strategy from the gender, race and

class bind, through the use of intersectionality. Intersectionality allows for critical evaluation of systems of domination that overlap and become significant in some contexts as opposed to others.

## **Intersectionality and Mutual Recognition**

The argument thus far has shown how gender differentiation during the oedipal complex creates a binary and a polarity that privileges masculinity over femininity. Mutual recognition is argued as an alternate understanding to the hierarchical gender binary leading towards a more harmonious process of gender differentiation and autonomy. Shifts in cultural influences can aid and sustain the process of resistance to hegemonic masculinity and phallogocentrism so as to facilitate a more fluid gender differentiation. The resistance to hegemonic masculinity and phallogocentrism challenges the production of knowledge. At the root of this resistance to knowledge production lies intrapsychic processes, which then also need to be challenged. Knowledge production is about power and trajectories that impose 'systems of domination'. These systems of domination influence intrapsychic developments through the overlap of the public and private domains. As was argued earlier, the public and private domains are mirrored in the splitting-off of the mother/child dyad. Therefore it is necessary to resist both the repudiation of femininity in the private domain as well as hegemonic masculinity and phallogocentrism within the public domain. The other alternate understanding for resisting hegemonic masculinity and phallogocentrism is by bridging the public and private domains through expressing the repressed in a semi-public space and opposing the repudiation of femininity in the classical Freudian reading of the oedipal complex. Intersectionality in this study is about looking at the overlapping of spaces and discursive practices that influence the notions of power operable in various contexts.

In postcolonial and feminist theories, resistance is built up as a conscious means to rethink the structural bias of hegemonic practices. Both theories challenge knowledge production of gender, race and class. According to postcolonial theory and feminism these categories of gender, race and class are not fixed notions but are fluid and fragmented. In the process of fragmentation discursive practices such as race or class

influence the context of the individual in the development of the self. Thus the notions of gender, race and class intersect to create new systems of domination and new constructions of what it means to be privileged in a masculine or feminine position for example white women might be more privileged than black men in certain contexts.

Kimberly Crenshaw in her article 'Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color' (1994) writes that gender identity is just one aspect of an individual's subjectivity. Crenshaw argues that race and class issues are equally as central to a notion of self. Ruth Frankenburg (1993) states that some white women evade the question of race by declaring themselves colour blind. In Frankenburg's article she identifies how power operates and how colour evasiveness allows white women to split race off from issues of class or gender. The evasion of colour by some white women that Frankenburg interviewed presents evidence that implies they did not recognise themselves as a race, they merely accepted that they exist as part of a dominant discourse that need not necessarily be interrogated or challenged because it occupies the normative space (whiteness). Thus what might not seem to be evident and considered as race is nevertheless intrinsic in the notion of identity formation. Race (whiteness) in this instance is similar to hegemonic masculinity whereby a privileged masculine position is accepted blindly with very serious consequences regarding power. Lisbeth van Zoonen explains hegemony succinctly when she writes (1994: 24):

In Althusserian theories of ideology the individual is interpellated by dominant ideology; in other words, individuals are inexorably drawn into dominant ideology. Gramsci's notes on 'hegemony' provide an important addition to such a concept of ideology. Gramsci used the term 'hegemony' to refer to the *process* by which general consent is actively sought for the interpretations of the ruling class. Dominant ideology becomes invisible because it is translated into 'common sense', appearing as the natural, unpolitical state of things accepted by each and everyone.

Discursive practices on race and class are no different to the psychoanalytical arguments on gender differentiation through the frame of the master/slave dialectic. Just as the hierarchical gender binary privileges and upholds male dominance within the master/slave dialectic so too does racial differentiation privilege whiteness over blackness

and the same can be said for the ruling elite and class privilege. Even though Freud argued that differentiation was necessary for autonomy, it is the hierarchical bias in differentiation that is necessary for interrogation (Benjamin, 1988). Thus Zoonen's (1994) understanding of hegemony calls for a critical evaluation of dominant discourse. Subsequently Benjamin (1998) argues against Freud's assumption that gender differences create autonomy instead she views and states that it is not gender differences that are created during the oedipal complex but rather gender polarity. The fact that the boy repudiates femininity and views the feminine as 'lacking' creates a position of power. Thus Freud's assumption that differentiation is necessary for autonomy is naïve in that it is blind to discourses of power. Therefore Benjamin's term gender polarity is more indicative of the nature of gendered positions and power relations. With gender polarity being an establishing signifier in the understanding of difference and power for the child, race and class become additional signifiers of difference and power in the construction of subjectivities.

Power and polarity are central to discursive practices on gender, race and class. Being cognisant of these issues allows the subject to recognise the ambiguities present in these discursive practices and how they manifest in identity formation. Moreover playing within the space of these discursive practises fragments these discourses and shifts the fixed notion of categories such as gender, race and class thus destabilising these categories. Therefore the logical conclusion for Crenshaw and Frankenburg around issues of power and polarity is the intrinsic intersectionality of gender, race and class that shifts and fragments these discourses, opening them up to the possibility of fluidity in the development of the self.

Jane Flax like Jessica Benjamin is a postmodern American psychoanalyst. Both Benjamin and Flax are concerned with the notion of power differences in the formation of subjectivity. These psychoanalysts are interested in engaging in dialogue between psychoanalysis, feminism and postmodernism. In Flax's book *Disputed Subjects* (1994) she questions the meanings of knowledge, power, subjectivity, gender, justice and responsibility. For Flax, the issue of dominance is central to the issue of power (referring to the repudiation of femininity in order for the boy to become autonomous). Power is not



so much understood within the traditional context of sovereignty and the maintenance of dominance through force but it is rather associated with the normative in the process of self-regulation, meaning that people accept and adhere to the cultural norms and practices that are male biased. People adhere to power because it is justified and viewed as a given truth. Thus Foucault's suggestion that consciousness-raising and critically evaluating representation is important in shifting power dynamics.

Another perspective on the question of gender, race and class is also to better understand Hegel's master/slave dialectic discussed above. For Benjamin (1988), Hegel's master/slave dialect frames the larger picture on society and power dynamics. Benjamin (1988) and Flax (1994) purport that society is already structured within hegemonic masculinity and as such a privileged position of power exists for men. Thus men are normative in that picture. Following on from Frankenburg and Crenshaw, it is obvious that within the normative positions of race and class, a power imbalance exists and is entrenched with a normative bind that privileges whiteness and the ruling elite. Therefore as an exit strategy from the gender, race and class bind it is important to revisit the concept of mutual recognition that falls outside the parameters of gender, race and class and views the individual in relation to the other. Later in the study, the argument on the methodology - textual analysis – will be framed according to whether mutual recognition exists or not in media messages that deal with issues on gender, race and class.

Under the frame of mutual recognition, Haraway's (2004) understanding of appropriation is a necessary trajectory for creating new tropes when *re*-telling a story and [re]presenting these stories in a way that interprets the old story from a different perspective (ibid: 55). Haraway explains that in: 'a racist patriarchy, white men's "need" for racially "pure" offspring positioned free and unfree women in compatible, asymmetrical symbolic and social spaces' (ibid: 55-56). Furthermore Haraway purports that 'in the discursive frames, white women were not legally or symbolically fully human; slaves were not human at all' (ibid: 56). Haraway is very much aware of the discursive relationship of power imbalances towards marginalised groups such as women, the poor and communities that are darker shades of white (Dyer; 1997). But she also points out the dynamics and hierarchy within the mapping of the disempowered: some people are more disempowered

than others. In Haraway's attempt at *re-telling* the story she brings to it a new perspective on how power marginalizes but more importantly how marginalization itself is a fragmented process so that there is no meta-theory of power or marginalization.

In the case of South Africa, poor black women have been by far the most historically disempowered group. However with history written onto the materiality of the body, for many poor black South African women, the ontological experience of a new dispensation has not unburdened them with regard to discursive relationships between the State and the economy by allowing them access to a better quality of life. Therefore the project of representation on gender differentiation and HIV and AIDS might only help in understanding reality from a different perspective but it does not necessarily change people's material circumstances significantly or immediately. The promise of the study is that by critically evaluating media representation and through consciousness-raising with a lens on mutual recognition as an alternate understanding of the other, there might be a shift away from stigma and shame for People living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA). Moreover people living on the margins are better informed about their experiences (Haraway, 2004) and self-representation can be a way of shifting perceptions and creating greater awareness. Thus Haraway (2004) purports that it is the margins and in particular women of colour that are the cyborgs because they re-inscribe history from the present and merge the past in a manner that is empowering to them. The marginalised then become the possibility for creating 'new tropes'. Haraway (2004: 57) continues to claim that:

The positionings of African-American women are not the same as those of other women; each condition of oppression requires specific analysis that both refuses the separations and insists on the non-identities of race, sex, sexuality, and class. These matters make starkly clear why an adequate feminist theory of gender must *simultaneously* be a theory of racial and sexual difference in specific historical conditions of production. They also make clear why a theory and practice of sisterhood cannot be grounded in shared positionings in a gender system and the cross-cultural antagonism between the coherent categories called women and men. Finally, they make clear why feminist theory produced by women of color has constructed alternative discourses of womanhood that disrupt the humanisms of many Western discursive traditions.

Media representation opens up an explorative space for new tropes. I understand the project of representation might not have the potential or capacity to change material circumstances of the poor and marginalised but it can create a space for resistance and newness and creativity. In that way, new [re]presentations and tropes are significant for people engaging in work on gender, sex and HIV and AIDS especially in rethinking risky or healthy sexual behaviour.

Mutual recognition is the standpoint from which the newspaper reports will be analysed to see whether these reports adhere to this standpoint or not. In the case where mutual recognition is absent the analyses will question the lack of mutual recognition and focus on how to reinterpret the story from the perspective that draws on mutual recognition. The importance of mutual recognition as an exit strategy to gender, race and class is significant for the South African context because it is a post-apartheid country. Therefore a response to a larger discourse on nation building is also important because it goes beyond stereotypes in a society that was constructed on separation and othering. Moreover in post-apartheid South Africa the project of gender, race, class and sexuality entails a political question about knowledge production. The power/knowledge nexus is thus examined to see if systems of domination are perpetuated through media representation.

## **How the Media Works**

This study is about critically analyzing representations of gender and sex in newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS. It attempts to raise consciousness and critically evaluate how we think about gender and sex and the language we use in relation to HIV and AIDS. The objective is to find nuanced ways to represent gender differentiation so that mutual recognition is encouraged. To this extent, representation is critically evaluated so as not to perpetuate phallogocentrism. Michel Foucault in *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1* (1998: 108 - 114) elucidated the project of masculinity in the concept of identity politics and reflected on how constructions of masculinity reified gender polarity. Thus consciousness-raising of the workings of male hegemony is crucial to shift the hierarchical gender binary. However intersectionality is also crucial when critically

evaluating representation on HIV and AIDS so as to shift messaging away from stigma, shame and systems of domination.

In this chapter the workings of male hegemony was explored to show how it maintains the hierarchical gender binary. However also illustrated were some of the fractures and points of resistance within the hierarchical gender binary that promote the possibility for more nuanced ways of representing mutual recognition. Some of these fractures and points of resistance also occur in newsrooms when editors challenge patriarchy by reporting on the injustices of male dominance through issues such as unequal pay. Foucault's work on consciousness-raising and critically evaluating media representation is significant for chipping away at the fractures within the workings of male hegemony. Therefore this study further aims to promote a resistance to patriarchy by encouraging these fractures.

Liesbeth van Zoonen (1994) in her book *Feminist Media Studies* claims that the media are governed by ideologies. She infers that hegemonic masculinity is present in media representation. Zoonen's work is significant for this chapter in that it shows how a feminist interpretation of the media is crucial for resisting patriarchy and shifting representation. She purports that in order to resist the status quo and create a space for critiquing patriarchy it is crucial to foster critical thinking within media organisations. The effect of this in a thriving democracy is to facilitate social change. She proposes what she calls a 'cultural negotiation' between media organisations and audiences to furthering 'a social process embedded in existing power and discursive formations' (ibid: 8). Zoonen's 'cultural negotiation' is furthermore elaborated in the process of encoding and decoding (ibid: 62-65). She claims that this process is not linear. What she is referring to here is the encoding of a message, which in her understanding is always embedded in media organisation ideology and is never linear to the decoding or interpretation of the message by its audience. The 'cultural negotiation' is the production of meaning that is affected by this process. The encoding and decoding of the message has the possibility for being misunderstood or misinterpreted. Here she illustrates that just because an ideology frames the messaging for a media organisation that ideology might not be read or perceived in the message as it was intended. But as part of the power/knowledge nexus

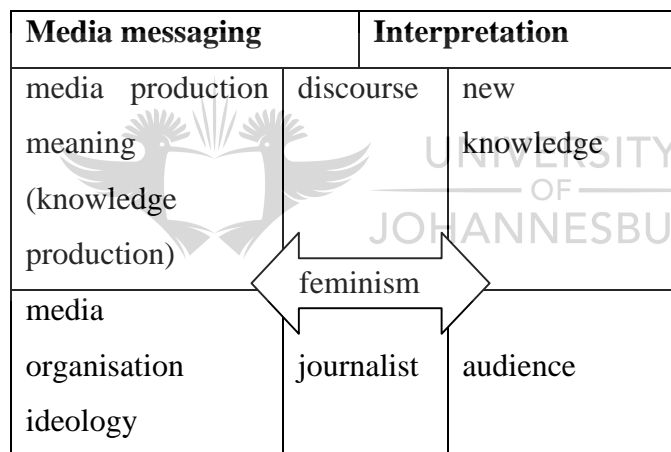
media organisation ideologies perpetuate certain narratives in particular organisations. For example a media organisation that is aligned with socialism will promote socialist values just as a capitalist aligned media organisation will promote capitalism. Therefore it is possible to look for patterns and ideas that are mainstreamed in certain media organisations. However journalists often venture outside the ideological leanings of media organisations so that not all the media reports will subscribe to the media organisation ideology. In the case of this study it is important to note that individual reports will be analyzed for their relevance on representations of gender and sex in newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS, implying that they will not be analyzed for media organisation ideology, instead they will be analyzed according to how the journalist is portraying these representations and whether or not they are based on mutual recognition.

Richard Harris in his book *A cognitive Psychology of Mass Communication* (1994) argues that there are various theories on the media that explain how the media influences public opinion. He claims that much of the research on the media is not long-term and therefore is not conclusive (ibid: 19 - 24). He argues that various theories claim that through repetition and by messages being mainstreamed audiences learn to imitate behaviour. However as Zoonen (1994: 24) pointed out the media may have a measure of social control and can influence public opinion but to what degree is questionable since audience interpretation is fluid. Harris (1994) and Zoonen (1994) agree that the media does set agendas by making certain issues newsworthy. Yet, to reiterate the point, messages are not always interpreted as they were intended to, implying that our worldview is not completely dictated to by the media. It simply means that the media can mainstream certain ideas that influences worldview but audience reception to messages is dependant on the individual's hermeneutical experience. However mainstreamed ideas can still be analyzed and patterns for mainstreaming can also be critiqued. Therefore the theoretical frame is key in the critique of media analyses because it is the lens that is used to identify patterns and to oppose representations that are not based on mutual recognition.

Zoonen's (1994) feminist media theory has implications for gender in that she purports that patriarchy is inferred in the encoding of media messages. Zoonen would be in

agreement with Foucault that media representation must be critically evaluated to oppose the workings of male hegemony and that the text must be read against the grain of the power/knowledge nexus. Zoonen (1994: 18) argues for the importance of shifting representation of gender differentiation away from the oedipal repudiation of femininity by ‘distorting’ and resisting images of women’s subjugation in order to show a representation of women that is empowering and not just stereotypical. Zoonen is in line with Laura Mulvey (1989) and Jan Campbell (2000) in that she endorses a resistance to women’s subjugation in representation through images of women’s autonomy and pleasure.

I have used a diagram to illustrate the point of how interconnected, fluid and open the process of media messaging and interpretation is:



The diagram above shows how the journalist is a discursive being and can resist normalizing practices of sexual identity through the use of voice. The voice of the journalist, specifically if it is critical with a feminist consciousness, together with the freedom of audience interpretation leads to new ways of thinking and thus new knowledge. Therefore a feminist consciousness amongst audiences together with the journalist’s voice plays a very significant role in disrupting media organisation ideology

by contributing towards opening up the space between the media message and its interpretation. Even though the journalist has limited authority and power in producing discourse when the media organisation has defined its ideology, the voice of the journalist can still subtly resist media organisation ideology. This marginal position that the journalist occupies allows her to use her voice to tell the story and as such, in nuanced ways, she has the ability to shift and resist media organisation ideology. This resistance can destabilise and 'distort' the workings of male hegemony through representing empowering images of women and thereby challenging the power/knowledge nexus of patriarchy. Self-representation is also a useful tool in distorting the workings of male hegemony by showing women's agency through the use of voice and by highlighting women as autonomous beings.

Media production of meaning is linked to discourse. In such discourse, as Foucault explains; 'Once the existence of language has been eliminated, all that remains is its function in representation: its nature and its virtues as *discourse*' (1977: 81). Here the implication is that discourse is a negotiation of meaning and in the case of the media it is meaning that is produced during the encoding and decoding process hence a 'cultural negotiation'. Discourse then becomes an understanding of reality that is implicitly accepted. But discourse and hegemony are not uncontested categories. Instead, as Foucault claims, they are 'approximative, imperfect and largely spontaneous kinds of knowledge' (1977: 346). Both discourse and hegemony are constructed and produced and as such are unstable and inconsistent. This instability in discourse is the space for challenging media organisation ideology and media production meaning. Therefore Zoonen's (1994) 'cultural negotiation' is about the production of meaning. However this 'cultural negotiation' is also a space for new meanings, new ways of rethinking systems of domination and hence for producing new knowledge. Feminism's challenge within the diagram above is to raise consciousness by shifting and destabilising the workings of male hegemony where and when it is present by facilitating the production of new knowledge, not from the side of the media, but from the side of audience interpretation with the strategy of critically evaluating representation. From this perspective one can derive that hegemonic masculinity can be resisted through feminism and consciousness-

raising just as Marxist ideology contested the dominant ruling class' ideologies that were given as natural. Thus critically evaluating representation must be an ongoing process to facilitate social change. Herein lies the hope for more nuanced representations of gender differentiation that encourages mutual recognition.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter attempted to show how masculinity and femininity are constructed within the oedipal complex. I argued that with the advent of feminism the classical Freudian oedipal complex, which is based on the repudiation of femininity can be critiqued so that in the pre-oedipal phase mutual recognition can displace gender polarity. In the analysis of newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS and gender constructions, I use the standpoint of mutual recognition to critically evaluate whether media representation adheres to mutual recognition, which is the basis for rethinking gender, race, class and sexuality. Furthermore I argue that expressing the repressed is an alternate understanding for renegotiating the public and private divide so that representations of sex occupies a semi-public space encouraging more responsible tropes on sexual behaviour. Mutual recognition and expressing the repressed are alternate perspectives that can be used as a lens from which to critically evaluate media representation in order to shift the stigma and shame associated with HIV and AIDS.

Critical thinking on media representation is crucial for rethinking the self in relation to messaging on HIV and AIDS. This implies that media representation has to go beyond gender differentiation. Simply put it means that constructions of masculinity and femininity have to be problematized so that we are not perpetuating the hierarchical gender binary. What this means is that in rethinking the self, gender has to become secondary to the self in so much as it is necessary for understandings of becoming woman or man. Moreover when rethinking the self, it becomes necessary to introduce mutual recognition as an alternate understanding of sex and pleasure so that pleasure is about new formulations of risk through loss of self with the other –the 'little death'. This also implies that sexuality is not restricted to normative practices such as heterosexuality but is freed from such constraints so that the self can engage fully and responsibly with



the other. For reports on HIV and AIDS, new formulations of pleasure are understood as pleasure in sharing with the other, emphasizing *eros*. It is also important to note that with the focus on mutual recognition respect and responsibility for self and other becomes a way of shifting sex and pleasure away from risky sexual behaviour that carries with it the real risk of death.

The discussion then followed the logic of mutual recognition towards a critique of the power/knowledge nexus in media production meaning, implying how we interpret media messages. Consciousness-raising and critically evaluating representation is a means to critique the power/knowledge nexus and to resist patriarchy in the messaging of gender and sex in newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS. Thus representation is understood as a project of knowledge production. Subsequently Laura Mulvey (1996) suggests that a re-appropriation of the lens by women displaces the male gaze. However this displacement of the male gaze requires a critical eye that relies on the psychoanalytic understanding of mutual recognition of subjects, which collapses the hierarchical gender binary. It is therefore important for women to take ownership of the images of their bodies. Thus a feminist interpretation is necessary in order to review masculine and feminine constructions of the body and sexuality in mass media such as newspaper reports because it allows the space for a re-appropriation of images of women's bodies and sexuality. This is important in the context of the spread of HIV and AIDS because it could help control the spread of the pandemic and shift the way we think about it.

## **Chapter two: a methodological frame for interpreting media messaging**

### **Introduction**

This chapter consolidates the previous chapter's theoretical frame and shows through a practical application how the theoretical frame is applied in the analysis of a newspaper report. It does so by illustrating the method of analysis followed in the data chapters by showing how the methodology used in this study engages with the theory discussed in chapter one and how that influences the interpretation of a newspaper report. Thus this chapter is about showing the logic in the method of analysis. Chapter one showed how gender differentiation through the oedipal complex privileged masculinity in order to maintain male dominance (Benjamin, 1988) whilst showing alternate understandings for resisting the workings of male hegemony through consciousness-raising and critically evaluating representation (McNeil, 1993: 153). The premise for this chapter is to show in much more detail how the process of media representation can be critically evaluated in order to highlight the theoretical lens showing appropriate or inappropriate messaging on gender and sex in newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS.

Media messages produce meaning and this leads to new knowledge or knowledge production. As was claimed in the theoretical chapter, representation is never innocent. Therefore by inference media messaging is also not innocent. Representation is part of the power/knowledge nexus implying that it perpetuates hegemony and thus patriarchy through a language that leans towards phallogocentrism. However a feminist lens can distort (Zoonen, 1994) the phallogocentrism within language through images of women's autonomy and pleasure (Campbell, 2000). Thus there are ways of resisting the workings of male hegemony. Therefore the standpoint of this chapter is based upon exposing the hierarchical gender binary of masculine dominance and feminine submission and by resisting normalizing practices of sexual identity through the lens of mutual recognition, which is presented as an alternate understanding of gender, sex and pleasure.

This chapter is structured according to an overview of the literature on HIV and AIDS with regard to sexuality as well as the methodological frame. This chapter shows why it is important to link HIV and AIDS with gender and sex. The chapter then illustrates; (i) the focus on *printed media* and specifically the use of *newspaper reports*, (ii) the *corpus of data* explains where the data is sourced from and within which timeframe (this is an archival study), (iii) the specific method used to analyse the content (and sub-text) of media messaging is *textual analysis*, (iv) an *overview of textual analysis* demonstrates the logic of the theoretical frame applied to the analysis of the text for purposes of transparency in the interpretation of the text. The last aspect of this chapter shows how an example of an interpretation of a newspaper report would be read as data analyses in the remainder of the following two chapters. Thus the final point of this chapter is to illustrate the structure of how data analysis is presented in the next two chapters.

### **An overview on literature on HIV and AIDS and sexuality**

It is important to contextualise this study in relation to other recent studies to see whether the relevance of this study meets the purposes of exposing the power/knowledge nexus operating in media representation on HIV and AIDS and in specific on representations of gender and sex. A recent study has shown that stigma, shame and privacy are issues that have affected people's access to life-saving treatment (Steinberg, 2008: 8). Therefore it is important to dispel myths about HIV and AIDS and gender and sex in order to breakdown the stigma and shame that affect people living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA). A shift in media representation away from stigma and shame towards mutual recognition could emphasize the need for more responsibility towards the self and others. Thus the study's use of the theoretical frame is to highlight alternate ways of thinking about gender and sex in relation to the AIDS pandemic so that we may shift the stigma and shame associated with HIV and AIDS towards mutual recognition.

Many studies specifically focus on risky sexual behaviour in South Africa with the aim of improving prevention campaigns (MacPhail, Pettifor and Rees, 2007). Some of the findings from these studies have shown that people were not aware of their HIV status. Furthermore these studies have also shown that heterosexual sex was more dangerous due to a lack of knowledge around risky sexual behaviour and because

HIV and AIDS within the context of heterosexuality was not viewed as dangerous because HIV and AIDS was seen as a homosexual disease (Maluleke; 2007: 15). The problem with this logic is that it does not highlight the salience of safer relationships instead it sanctions sexual orientation. National newspapers have also been focusing on stories about risky sexual behaviour such as the resistance to use condoms and pernicious sexual patterns (Daily News; 06/06/07; City Press, 11/03/07). Even though there is a significant amount of consciousness-raising around risky sexual behaviour yet the prevalence rates of HIV and AIDS remain shockingly high. Thus we can surmise that our prevention campaigns are missing the target.

‘In sub-Saharan Africa, close to 60 per cent of adults living with HIV are women, and almost 75 per cent of young people living with HIV in southern Africa are female’ (Kleintjes, Prince, et al, 2005: 1). The higher rate at which women are infected with HIV indicates a gap in HIV and AIDS research. This means that gender is still a factor that needs to be addressed around HIV and AIDS. The authors further argue that (ibid: 2):

... the gap between research, intervention and policy remains huge. There is a need to support efforts to augment research on the gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS; to incorporate new and existing research into policy; to translate policy into action; and to integrate good practice into policies. The current trends of HIV transmission and prevalence clearly reflect that the epidemic is fuelled by gender-based vulnerabilities.

Gender-based research is crucial for providing better responses to HIV and AIDS. It is for this reason that the link between HIV and AIDS with gender and sex is necessary to so that it can lead to better practices and policies related to sexual health. Moreover newspaper articles are useful illustrations of how we think about HIV and AIDS and gender and sex because mainstreaming appropriate messages can shift behaviour towards better responses to HIV and AIDS. A feminist reading of the newspaper reports can especially also shift the way we think about media representation on HIV and AIDS and gender and sex so that we can resist normalizing practices and the hierarchical gender binary. To this extent, feminist media theory with its aim of distorting images of feminine submission (Zoonen, 1994) by representing women’s autonomy and pleasure (Campbell, 2000) challenges the workings of male hegemony. Nuanced messages plays an important part in shifting

our realities. Therefore if a feminist reading was applied to newspaper reports and nuance was used as a strategy for shifting the hierarchical gender binary towards mutual recognition this could then lead to a better understanding of the self and the other with the aim of encouraging more responsible sexual behaviour.

A feminist psychoanalytical consciousness addresses the issue of gender differentiation and specifically the issues of men's behaviour that contributes towards gender polarity. In the book *From boys to men: Social constructions of masculinity in contemporary society* (2008: 51) Ampofo and Boatenga argue:

We are both unabashedly biased in our approach. We feel that men and women, but especially boys and men, must undergo transformations if we are to see more equal gender relations, and that men, especially, must understand how masculinity operates and what it does to women and men. When men are led to intimate perspectives on men, often through the eyes of other men, they are better equipped to recognise so-called hegemonic masculinities and their deleterious effects, not only on women, but also on children and on other men.

Ampofo and Boatenga's argument elucidates the project of hegemonic masculinity and how it operates on an insidious level to maintain male dominance and how men take for granted their privilege that has 'deleterious effects' on women, children and other men. Thus it is pivotal that research not only focuses on women but that the gap in research on HIV and AIDS addresses both men and women. Tammy Shefer claims that (2005: 49 - 50):

As devastating as it is, the HIV/AIDS pandemic has opened up a window of opportunity with respect to challenging gender inequalities and traditional gender roles ... These include issues of gender power relations in (hetero)sexuality, such as male control over women's bodies and their dominance in the sexual terrain, as well as the socialised roles that men and women are expected to play in their relationships and in their sexual interactions. ... While it is obviously important to focus on women and empower women to resist practices such as coercive sexuality, the continuing focus on women in educational and prevention efforts has also inadvertently resulted in women being blamed for the spread of HIV, as well as being viewed as responsible for the mitigation of HIV/AIDS. The neglect of a focus on men has inadvertently legitimised male behaviour and perpetuated the sense of women's centrality and responsibility. Educational work and research studies have tended to reproduce the stereotype of women as inevitably and always the victim, reproducing the view of women's

powerlessness, as well as the construction of men as all powerful and inevitably perpetrators. A focus on men is essential to address this imbalance.

It is also significant to note that in the book *From boys to men: Social constructions of masculinity in contemporary society* (2008), the focus is on the issue of masculinity because it is part of the hierarchical gender binary and it is crucial to understand how masculinity is shifting, if at all. According to the contributors of the book, masculinity is problematic. Gibson and Lindegaard (ibid: 134) purport that even though overwhelmingly male dominance exists, masculinity has shifted and especially the way in which the male body is thought about. They argue that with the advent of HIV and AIDS, the male body is being viewed as vulnerable, shifting the construction of masculinity away from the strong and virile body. Thus the shifts in constructions of masculinity and femininity have also affected the picture on gender and sex and HIV and AIDS. This implies that it is necessary to look at alternate understandings presented in this study such as mutual recognition, consciousness-raising and critical evaluation of representation to see if representation on gender and sex and HIV and AIDS is leading to responsible sexual behaviour, resisting the hierarchical gender binary.

Self-representation is a strategy to insert the feminine into media messaging, which means including representations by women of their own autonomy and pleasure (Campbell, 2000). Susanne Kappeler (1988: 197) claims that culture is about the way in which the subject negotiates desire through self-representation. For Kappeler, culture is 'read' as self-representation so that culture and self-representation are always negotiated. Representation is then simply a reading of culture and the subject. This is important to note when thinking about issues related to gender and sex and HIV and AIDS and how representation affects cultural shifts. If gender differentiation, which focuses on autonomy, is celebrated then heterosexuality is no longer the normative practice and femininity is not relegated to the private domain and seen as passive and submissive. Thus women's representations' of themselves is a minor remedy in shifting the hierarchical gender binary so that mutual recognition can be further realised.

## **Methodological frame**

### ***1. Printed media***

This is a qualitative research study. The methodological framework is based on a feminist critique of media representation looking at alternate understandings for resisting the hierarchical gender binary and rethinking sex and pleasure. The empirical data for this study comes from newspaper reports. It is important to understand how media representation mainstreams ideas by making certain issues newsworthy over others. This implies that certain ideological leanings of media organisations will dictate the focus of what is for that media organisation considered newsworthy. This is significant in the choice of newspapers chosen for the study. The newspapers were chosen not for their ideological leanings but for their availability to a particular class of people who have access to resources to influence policies. In terms of media messaging contributing towards knowledge production this is a salient point because these messages influence the knowledge production on gender and sex in relation to HIV and AIDS.

I employ textual analysis with a specific focus on feminist psychoanalysis and intersectionality, with a critique of representation and feminist media theory as my predominant methods of analysis. In the theoretical chapter I laid out the framework that is used as a lens to critically analyse representations of gender and sex in newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS. The theoretical frame highlights how feminism has challenged the oedipal complex of gender polarity. Benjamin (1988) argues that if mutual recognition is successful in the pre-oedipal phase then the hierarchical gender binary of male/dominance/subject and female/submission/object can be resisted. Intersectionality is also discussed in relation to mutual recognition by illustrating how the lens of mutual recognition does not privilege race, class, gender or sexuality. Instead with intersectionality each component affects the other and contributes towards the problem of stigmatisation of HIV and AIDS through maintaining systems of domination. Intersectionality complements feminist psychoanalysis in that psychoanalytical theory has highlighted that the unconscious-self (irrational) challenges the notion of a fixed identity (rational) (Schwartz, 1998). The subject or individual is a composite of many experiences and has various identifications. These various identifications' places the subject in shifting positions so as to allow the

subject to be dominant in one relationship whilst being submissive in another. Even though there is no fixed subject position, this does not mean that we cannot talk about notions of collective subjects and categories such as race/ethnicity, class and gender(social)/sex(biological). These categories are not fixed but instead shift accordingly, depending on what becomes important in a certain context to a subject. Therefore race/ethnicity might be important during race riots or gender/sex might be important during policy formulation on women's health, meaning that the context is shifting based upon collective subject positions.

Foucault's work on representation (1977) calls for a resistance to normalizing practices through consciousness-raising and critical evaluation (McNeil, 1993: 157). Zoonen's (1994) feminist media theory demands 'distorting' representation of women by challenging stereotypical images that place women in submissive roles. These strategies are used as a lens from which to critically analyse newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS and to form a critique of the power/knowledge nexus. Thus printed media and specifically newspaper reports are a useful illustration for critically evaluating representation and for exposing the power/knowledge nexus. To this extent, the corpus of data is examined for specific articles that highlight representations of gender and sex codified in the newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS.

## **2. *Corpus of data***

Data was collected in August 2005 to see if there would be sufficient newspaper reports that highlight the power/knowledge nexus of the hierarchical gender binary as well as reflect on discourses on sex and HIV and AIDS. The data was selected from the four media organisations that appeal to a middle-class readership, implying an intellectual elite that influences policy, with a circulation in the greater Johannesburg region. The media organisations were: Independent News and Media, Business Day/Financial Mail, Avusa Media Limited and the Mail & Guardian. The rationale for using newspapers targeted at the intellectual elite was to see if media organisations would perpetuate or challenge the workings of male hegemony. Independent Newspapers is home to a range of newspapers such as *The Star*, *Saturday Star* and various community newspapers. The corpus of my data ranges from daily to weekly newspapers: *The Sunday Times*, *Saturday Star*, *The Star*, *Business Day*, *Mail &*



*Guardian* and community newspapers for the Gauteng region. *The Sunday Times*, *Saturday Star* and the *Mail & Guardian* are all national newspapers. Thus the range of newspapers includes provincial as well as national papers. The timeframe for the data was 1 May 2005 – 4 August 2005. The selection of newspapers varies from progressive reports to conventional reports that are non-critical. Most of the newspaper reports selected for data analyses were critical pieces because they went against the grain by not simply reporting statistics but rather by providing context and sometimes analysis as well. Most reports were informational by which I mean, they provided details about treatment or around issues that affected PLWHA. There are thirty-one reports from the *Mail & Guardian*. Most of these reports are either feature stories, commentary as responses to feature articles, book reviews or informational columns producing statistics for HIV prevalence rates. Copies of newspapers from the archives at the Independent News and Media organisation consisted of one hundred and twenty-six articles of which some were repeated in the *Mail & Guardian*. The total number of newspaper reports collected as data were one hundred and forty-nine.

For the purposes of sorting out the data, the newspaper reports were categorised into five themes: Treatment, Economy, Health Systems, Gender and Sex. The bulk of the articles dealt with Treatment and the furore over access to treatment and the misconceptions of treatment versus nutrition. Many of the articles also dealt with the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) and their lawsuits against the government and The Rath Health Foundation. In the conclusion of this chapter a cartoon on the debate within the Treatment rubric has been included that encapsulates the argument. The Economy rubric dealt with issues on poverty, long-term effects of the financial/economic costs of HIV and AIDS on future generations as well as international aid to various programmes. The Treatment and Economy rubrics often intersected regarding cost of treatment. Moreover Treatment dealt with educational issues such as prevention and re-infection as well as intersecting with issues around nutrition and the law, meaning that legal issues also affected access to treatment. Global trends on tariffs crossed over with issues on Treatment and the Economy with the salient point made about access to treatment and pharmaceutical costs. The Health Systems category dealt mainly with policy issues in the Department of Health (DOH) as well as with the provision of statistics of HIV prevalence amongst health workers. Often Health Systems intersected with Economy and Treatment. None of these three

categories were significant for this study as they did not include or comment on representations of gender or sex. Thus the newspaper reports that were chosen for analysis in this research project were those dealing specifically with representations of gender and sex.

It is important to reflect upon the debate that featured most prominently in all the newspapers during the period of data collection. This period saw a tension between the DOH and TAC. The DOH supported the Rath Health Foundation's claim for alternate remedies such as nutritional supplements as opposed to life-saving drugs. The argument focused mainly on why TAC was challenging the DOH's support for the Rath Health Foundation's emphasis on nutrition over medicine. TAC claimed that simply proposing nutrition was not the solution for saving lives but that the distribution of medicine or the rollout of anti-retroviral treatment (ART) was crucial for prolonging the lifespan of HIV-positive people. The basis for TAC's argument was that ART would save lives. TAC agreed that nutrition must be ensured and that the government must support patients in eating healthy but only ART would ensure that AIDS patients survived. The argument does however reflect that nutrition is an issue when people live in poverty. However nutrition affects all people and pro-poor policies need to ensure healthy eating for indigent communities. For TAC this meant that AIDS patients should be part of pro-poor policies that ensure healthy diets for all but that ART needed to be rolled-out urgently in order to deal with the AIDS pandemic and prevent AIDS-related deaths. Thus TAC does not claim that nutrition is unimportant instead TAC emphasizes that in order to prevent AIDS-related deaths ART has to be administered by the government. TAC was also holding government accountable for the pledge that it had made to rollout ART. This argument, as much as it is crucial for the debate on HIV and AIDS, was not pertinent to this study. This study focuses on representations of gender and sex in newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS, looking specifically at whether or not normalizing practices of sexual identity are resisted or reinforced; this is done by looking at constructions of masculinity and femininity and, around messaging of sex and pleasure. Even though TAC, the DOH and the Rath Health Foundation argument does not fall within the scope of this study, it remains important in light of the broader socio-historical context because it frames the backdrop of the newspaper reports analyzed.

The theoretical frame informed the choice of newspaper reports that dealt with sex and finding transient harmony in *eros* and *thanatos* as well as resisting normalizing practices of sexual identity by showing shifts in constructions of masculinity and femininity. The data consisted of twenty-seven reports. However a further selection process was imposed on the data through a thematic search. The data was then reduced to eighteen reports. The questions that informed the thematic search were: how is gender represented across all eighteen reports; and, how is sex represented across all eighteen reports and; do the representations of gender and sex in the context of HIV and AIDS shift the stigma and shame associated with HIV and AIDS so that mutual recognition becomes the focus for rethinking the AIDS pandemic.

### **3. *Textual analysis***

Textual analysis is part of discourse analysis and has been described by Barbara Johnstone (2002: 2 – 3) as ‘studying language and its affects ... “language analysis” underscored the fact that we are not centrally focused on language as abstract system.’ Instead language occupies a virtual space of the symbolic and imaginary realms but it has very real ramifications for shaping and mainstreaming ideas (Zizek, 2006). To this extent, textual analysis focuses on the meaning produced within a specific context. Context then is crucial for how meaning is produced in the text. However the lens from which to analyse the text is equally as important because certain contexts become more explicit and meaningful as opposed to others.

Part of the challenge in reading a text is that identity is formulated through language so that we never stand outside language or the text but instead we use language to shift contexts and identity formation (Zizek, 2006: 18) or challenge representations within the boundaries of language. Challenging media representation is a specific method of analysis in that it attempts to highlight mainstreamed ideas (Zoonen, 1994: 62-65) whilst simultaneously interpreting the story from the theoretical frame of the researcher (Hall, 1999: 348). Textual analysis then attempts to present a level of transparency and accountability within this method of interpretation but it is also open to critique because it is bound to historical context and personal bias.

Subsequently Johnstone argues that discourse analysis is the practical application of analyzing texts whether those texts are written, spoken or visual images (2002: 20):

The roots of discourse analysis are in the analysis of traditional texts – in classical philology, literary criticism, and hermeneutics – and the controlling metaphor behind this approach to research, explicit or not, has often been that analyzing human life is a matter of open-ended interpretation rather than fact-finding, more like reading than like identifying data points that bear on pre-formed hypotheses (Geertz, 1973). So, it is especially important for us to be aware of the ways in which we may be tempted to treat all discourse as if it were like the writing in a book. It is crucial to be able to uncover the many ways in which texts are shaped by contexts and the ways in which texts shape contexts.

Since this study is about literal texts, discourse analysis is employed in a literal capacity. ‘Data points’ within the newspaper reports are crucial markers for debunking myths in context to the texts and thus the theoretical frame is critical for highlighting and exposing the method and logic of these ‘data points’. However as Johnstone (2002) claims, the interpretation of a text is always open-ended, implying that if the lens from which the text is analyzed shifts, so too will the ‘data points’ and therefore the interpretation. To this extent, this study makes clear through the theoretical frame that alternate understandings are used to resist normalizing practices of gender differentiation. These alternate understandings: expressing the repressed, consciousness-raising and critical evaluation are used specifically to present an exit from the hierarchical gender binary through mutual recognition. Mutual recognition is also used as a strategy to go beyond discourses on race/ethnicity, class and sexuality. These alternate understandings are part of the transparency of the method of interpretation so that the interpretation too can be critically evaluated by other scholars and readers alike.

Textual analysis however also creates a certain space for challenging discursive practices by placing discourse with its baggage of historical context framed by the power/knowledge nexus under the microscope. Teun van Dijk in his book *Discourse as Structure and Process – Volume 1* (1997: 20-21) claims that:

The critical scholars make their social and political position explicit: they take sides, and actively participate in order to uncover, demystify or otherwise challenge dominance with their discourse analyses ... Discourse analysis focuses on relevant social problems. That is, their work is more issue-oriented than theory-oriented ... their ultimate goal is not only scientific, but also political, namely change.

As van Dijk states it is crucial to make the scholar's position explicit so that there is a level of transparency in the analysis that highlights the scholar's agenda. This means that the researcher is never objective but holds a position, a so-called point of view that she wants to debunk. To this extent, I make my position as a feminist clear. Moreover this is a feminist project that aims to challenge and resist the workings of male hegemony in the analyses of the texts chosen for this study with a focus on shifting hegemonic masculinity towards a more nuanced understanding of mutual recognition.

Change according to Foucault is through consciousness-raising and critical evaluation (McNeil, 1993) of representation. For van Dijk, change is about scholars' positions so that 'scholars take sides' and certain issues become more important than others and therefore textual analysis is not wholly objective but is always open to interpretation. The power/knowledge nexus however is always insidious and thus for this study the power/knowledge nexus must be consciously and critically evaluated for systems of domination whether it is patriarchy or other normalizing practices of race and class. Therefore when van Dijk talks about 'change' it is about social transformation. However social transformation is not without political bias and thus the position of the scholar becomes even more crucial for transparency purposes.

Language is imperfect, 'the theory of language is immediately prescriptive' (Foucault, 1977: 205). For Foucault, language is based on an arbitrary system of signs but it is the meaning that is affected through the relationship between the signs that must be opened for critique. If we think back to Foucault (1977) and his claim about the power/knowledge nexus this then means that within the historical context the relationship of knowledge to power is about who has the power to generate knowledge. Ideology and hegemony are then about mainstreaming ideas (Fairclough, 1995: 38) and in the case of media it is about what is considered newsworthy and how systems of domination (Haraway, 2004) get reinforced through repetition and mainstreaming. This implies that the power/knowledge nexus is directly linked to discursive practices because it is the relationship between power and knowledge that a certain normative knowledge is produced. However this does not mean that language and representation cannot be subversive. The work of Campbell (2000), McNeil (1993) and Zoonen (1994) assert that language can shift through shifts in

representation and as Foucault (1977) suggests it is in consciousness-raising and critical evaluation of representation that normative discursive practices get displaced. Therefore in reading the text it is important to critically evaluate the text in relation to the power/knowledge nexus and to resist the hierarchical gender binary as well as other normative practices that form systems of domination and in particular for this study to breakdown stigma attached to PLWHA.

The critique of the power/knowledge nexus together with feminist psychoanalysis is a means for exposing the inherent bias in ideology (Fairclough, 1995: 57) especially in the dominant worldview of hegemonic masculinity and phallogocentrism. However textual analysis is also caught within an imperfect language and therefore it is crucial to be critical of 'rhetoric' (Johnstone, 2002: 31) and representation so that with discourse analysis the context becomes as transparent as possible. Thus it becomes important to clearly delineating the theoretical frame from the onset is so that the method of analysis and interpretation of the newspaper reports are especially transparent and that the issues are very clearly observed.

Feminist psychoanalysis is also caught in an imperfect language. But since language is shifting and can be subversive there is a possibility for new contexts of sexual identity formation. Furthermore intrapsychic processes will change with the advent of the social reorganisation of gender and sex. However textual analysis within the frame of this study is limited to the historical context of the power/knowledge nexus and intrapsychic processes that are prevalent of the day. A reading of the same corpus of data in the future will be different from the current context because of the transience of historical context. Moreover since this is a study of archival material the current reading of the text and the context is influenced by changes occurring within the discourse on HIV and AIDS and gender and sex, meaning that the readings will be influenced by a shift in the discourse. However shifts in discourses on gender and sex are glacial and recent studies have shown that even with shifts in constructions of masculinity (Shefer et al, 2008), hegemonic masculinity is still a predominant discourse. But discourses do shift according to historical context therefore it is important to be critical of these shifts since they determine future worldviews. As Johnstone claims, 'Discourse is shaped by expectations created by familiar discourse, and new instances of discourse help to shape our expectations about what future

discourse will be like and how it should be interpreted' (2002: 15). Therefore the analysis must also provide remedies for what future discourse should be like and to this end mutual recognition is seen as a minor remedy to binary oppositions.

Johnstone (2002) further claims that discourse contributes towards shaping our worldviews because we are constructed through language or as in the Lacanian dictum, 'language speaks us' (Zoonen, 1994: 13). Zoonen (1994) would be in agreement with Johnstone (2002) when she claims that mainstreaming ideas through media creates various discursive practices that become normative. However Johnstone (2002) also claims that we interact with discourse so that discourse is always shifting and never static. Language is also part of discourse and according to Foucault's claim (1977) language is imperfect meaning that language too is shifting to accommodate the interaction between language and discourse. Subsequently Johnstone illustrates her point of discourses shifting by claiming that (2002: 30 – 31):

Discourse imitates the world.

But the relationship between discourse and the world we think of as outside of and independent of discourse is not this simple. Debate over this relationship has a recurring theme throughout the history of philosophy, and describing how language and thought, language and culture, or discourse and society are interrelated has been one of the major goals for theorists of language throughout the past century. The consensus among discourse analysts is that discourse is both shaped by and helps to shape the human lifeworld, or the world as we experience it. In other words, discourse both reflects and creates human beings' "worldviews." People bring worlds into being by talking, writing, and signing. ... "Europe" became a place when people needed a name for it. Wars stop being "conflicts" or "military actions" and acquire dated beginnings and endings, as well as historical significance, partly through acquiring proper names such as the Second World War or the Seven Years' War. The category "nature" is not really "natural", either. Does nature include humans? (If it does, then perhaps public land should be open for recreational use; if not, perhaps it should be conserved for other species.) Can human activity that involves commerce be natural? (If so, then commercial logging on public land can be described as part of an ecologically sound method of forest management; if not, logging seems to violate natural law.) The interest groups that acquire the right to decide what "nature" is, what counts as "nature" and what does not, get to help shape the future of the environment. Like other words, "nature" is not "just a word" that refers to something that already exists in the world, but rather an idea which is created and

contested as people name it and talk about it. Using one word or another, or arguing for one definition or another, can in itself be a way of staking a claim in a debate. (Think, for example, about the rhetorical force of merely using the word “life” or the word “choice” in the context of debate about abortion.) If words simply referred to real things, we would not have “fighting words,” and we would never need to fight over definitions. ... The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis holds that the ways in which people categorize things in the world are affected by the ways in which their language categorizes things grammatically. In Sapir’s words (1949: 162), “the fact of the matter is that the ‘real world’ is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group.” The extreme version of this idea, sometimes referred to as “linguistic determinism,” is that categories of language *determine* categories of perception, so that a person would not be able to imagine things in any other way than the way dictated by his or her language.

Johnstone’s understanding is that discursive practices’ influences our worldviews. In other words, worldviews are reinforced through discursive practices and those discursive practices are perpetuated by the sheer dominance of perception and the way in which we categorise things such as binary oppositions of male dominance and female submission. Therefore perceptions’ through repetition becomes the dominant discursive practice or mainstreamed.

In the study of media texts, specifically newspaper reports, it is important to note that representation on HIV and AIDS must nuance mutual recognition in order to shift stigma and shame associated with HIV and AIDS towards more appropriate messaging on HIV and AIDS and gender and sex that reinforces responsibility towards self and other. Media representation on HIV and AIDS must be critically evaluated to see whether this kind of representation is breaking down stigma and shame of PLWHA. This is a significant point because as Steinberg (2008) explains it is because of stigma and shame that many people do not seek treatment and die from AIDS-related diseases. In order to shift the messaging on HIV and AIDS it is crucial to find alternate and helpful ways of representing HIV and AIDS. Thus the aim of the analysis of the corpus of data is to resist normalizing practices of gender polarity and the association of sex with taboo or danger through the use of mutual recognition, and by expressing the repressed sexual desires in a semi-public space through consciousness-raising and critical evaluation of newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS.



The way meaning is sought in the text will differ from individual to individual based on the interpretation of the text. Barbara Johnstone (2002: 228) claims that discourse analysis is a heuristic approach to understanding 'texts' better, 'Discourse is fundamentally the result of flexible strategies, not fixed rules: no interaction is exactly like any other, there is always another way of doing things, idiosyncrasy and novelty are always possible and usually interpretable'. As was mentioned earlier, the meaning of discourses shifts according to who interprets the text and how they interpret the text and when they interpret the text. Therefore discourse analysis has no specific rules but it does have a process of transparency from which analysis and interpretation is conducted against the backdrop of an explicit theoretical frame in order to maintain accountability to its findings and an openness for critique. To this extent, the theoretical frame has been demonstrated in the reading of a newspaper report in the overview of an analysis of a text. More importantly the alternate understandings stipulated in the theoretical frame are flexible strategies for future discourse and are thus also open to further interpretation.

#### **4. *An overview of an analysis of a text***

Scruples about sex in jail waste opportunity for valuable lesson

The headline evokes the imagination of the reader by exposing and challenging a moralistic stance with the use of the word 'scruples'. The nucleus juxtaposes the words 'sex' and 'jail' thereby creating a contradiction because 'sex' is not permitted in 'jail' and thus the act of 'sex' in 'jail' is to engage in an illegal activity in a confined space. However the confinement of a 'jail' is already a State intervention around punishment for illegal activities. Therefore 'sex in jail' which is illegal is a direct challenge to the State. This immediately places an interest in the story due to the contradiction of 'sex in jail' together with a moralistic leaning towards the loss of a 'valuable lesson'.

The illegal activity of 'sex in jail' draws on the Marquis de Sade's argument made in chapter one about the division between public and private spaces. Sade believed that the State intervened in private spaces by sanctioning and censuring sexual behaviours like masturbation thus imposing the public into the private domain as a means of controlling the sexual behaviour of its citizenry. This meant that what was seen as

private became more 'hidden' (Hekma, 2001: 3) from the public domain. Through Sade's writings he showed how these 'hidden' practices became more pernicious and dangerous. Thus 'sex in jail' which is illegal and is moreover in a confined public space forces the act of 'sex in jail' to be 'hidden' and thus dangerous. The State's separation of private and public spaces forces sex to become repressed. The Marquis de Sade thus advocates for sex to be expressed in a semi-public space so that it is not repressed but instead can be viewed in healthy and responsible way.

According to the Marquis de Sade's argument, sanctioning onanism (and by implication sex) can lead to dangerous and risky sexual behaviour. This he demonstrated in his various books with famous public figures and gross sexual atrocities (Hekma, 2001, Sade, 1999) – and this point will be further demonstrated later in this newspaper report – implying that his position on sex in jail would be that sex in jail should be legal and not hidden. Sex in jail should occupy a semi-public space so that private acts that occur in public spaces do not become dangerous or risky. This would ensure that sex is not taboo but is understood as a natural impulse and is encouraged to be practised in a safe and responsible manner (Coward, 1999: xvi). Thus Sade (Hekma, 2001) argued that expressing the repressed, implying expressing sexual desire shifts sex away from stigma and taboo, which leads to a healthier notion of sex and sexual behaviour and practices as opposed to hidden and dangerous sexual activity.

J O N N Y S T E I N B E R G

This is the author's by line, which is standard practice. This particular journalist is also the author of two well-acclaimed books: *The Number* (2004) and *Three-Letter Plague* (2008). These books focus on stigma and HIV and AIDS. *The Number* is famed for its riveting work on documenting homosexual practices in prisons amongst Cape gangsters. Therefore if the reader knows this background, the journalist's name would already allude to a critique of the prison system through inference of his seminal work on prison gangs and homosexual activity amongst them. This is a crucial point because the readership of this newspaper report are part of the middle-classes and are thus fairly well versed in current literature on controversial books. Moreover as was discussed in chapter two, the journalist's voice is crucial in

challenging worldview even though that voice might be marginal in the encoding process (Zoonen, 1994: 62-65).

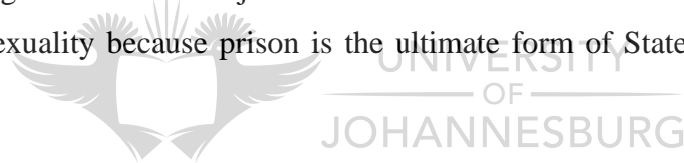
LATE one night in mid-2003, two male prisoners at Zonderwater Maximum Prison were having consensual sex, as South African prisoners have been known to do – for more than a century.

This topical sentence of the article begins with a pronounced fact that homosexuality exists in prisons and it is not an unusual occurrence. Since this is not an unusual occurrence it requires a deliberate response. Thus the initial statement of the article is already provoking the reader to ask the question, what is the best response to ‘sex in jail’? Steinberg’s critical voice questions morality through the inference of the word ‘scruples’. Moreover the headline acknowledges and accepts homosexuality in prisons by stating the ‘opportunity for a valuable lesson’, which infers an opportunity for safer and responsible ‘sex in jail’ thus shifting the emphasis away from heteronormativity. Since the premise is made that ‘sex in jail’ is consensual it means that mutual recognition exists between the consenting men. Therefore the State cannot intervene when two consenting adults agree to have sex irrespective of their sexual orientation. Furthermore it is unconstitutional for the State to censure consenting sex amongst adults therefore sexual orientation is irrelevant. However ‘sex in jail’ is the crux of the argument and proximity of the words ‘scruples’ and ‘sex in jail’ highlights the argument about questions of morality and safer sex. Thus Steinberg is setting-up the argument with the headline and the topical sentence.

They were doing so in the relative privacy of a makeshift enclosure created by attaching blankets to bedposts. Some time after midnight, the blankets screening them were ripped off the bedposts, and they were exposed.

The article is graphic and evokes the fantasy of forbidden sex. The use of the word ‘expose’ implies that the act of sex was hidden and taboo because it is illegal to have ‘sex in jail’. This hidden or illicit act of sex moreover leads to risky sex because there is no access to preventive measures such as condoms when sex is criminalized. Exposing the sexual act by the authorities in a humiliating fashion for what was clearly a private and intimate moment leads to associations of sex with shame. Sade’s critique of expressing the repressed implies that ‘sex in jail’ should be accepted and

the space between the public and private divide should be negotiated to ensure safer and more responsible sex. This also leads to the next point, which is that if 'sex in jail' is legal then responsible sexual behaviour should be encouraged through making information and condoms available to prisoners. Steinberg's claim in his book *Three-Letter Plague* (2008) highlights how shame and stigma affect PLWHA and their ability to access treatment. In Steinberg's opinion, shame hinders safe and responsible sexual behaviour. Thus the indices for shame and stigma must be removed so that we can respond to HIV and AIDS in a better way. This implies that the State acknowledges and accepts homosexuality especially in spaces such as jails thus shifting the State away from a heteronormative bias. According to Levi-Strauss (Leach, 1970) patriarchy ensures heterosexuality through the need for exchange of women by men in kinship theory. This then means that if 'sex in jail' was legitimized the prison system as part of an arm of the State is resisting the hierarchical gender binary and normalizing practices of sexual identity. Jonny Steinberg is thus remarking on the cruelty and injustice of the authorities in their treatment of prisoners but he is also commenting on the innate injustice embedded within the structure of the State towards homosexuality because prison is the ultimate form of State control over its citizenry.



They were charged with, and found guilty of, breaking the prison's ban on sex. As punishment, they were denied secondary privileges, such as reading and leisure activities, for 30 days, suspended for six months.

In chapter one, the work of the Marquis de Sade (Hekma, 2001) discussed the issue of space. For Sade the space between public and private was a form of State control over its citizenry. Sade believed that the State intervened in the lives of the citizenry when it came into private spaces. Sade explains that the State cannot separate public and private spaces when it comes to sexual pleasure and he uses the example of onanism (Hekma, 2001: 1-3) to describe how sexual pleasure will occur in any event in private except that human beings will be riddled with guilt and shame. This shaming is not conducive to fostering a healthy sense of self and other and does not further the ends of mutual recognition. Therefore, according to Sade, it is important that the State accepts that sexual pleasure occurs in a 'semi-public' space (Hekma, 2001: 3). In the case of homosexuality in prisons the State shows that prisoners' rights are restricted

or are fewer than those of non-prisoners. Thus the hidden act of sex is repudiated and shamed because the prisoners' rights to sex are not condoned as part of prison life. Hence prisoners are punished for engaging in a natural (in accordance with my reading of Sade (Hekma, 2001: 5) in chapter one) sexual impulse. Furthermore the prisoners' are severely punished for engaging in consensual sex and their prison life is disrupted.

In response to this incident, the judicial Inspectorate of Prisons commissioned its national manager, advocate Kamraj Anirudhra, to write a legal opinion on sex in prison. He argued that prohibiting sex was unconstitutional, primarily for two reasons. First, an old common-law principle, which has been absorbed into constitutional law, states that prisoners retain all the rights of an ordinary citizen except those taken away as a necessary consequence of their incarceration.

The legal opinion based on the query found that the prisoners were not in any way behaving unconstitutionally by engaging in consensual sex. This means that homosexuality is not sanctioned by the State. However prisons have a ban on sex, which means that prison laws go against the constitution. Subsequently a case can be made to lift the ban on 'sex in jail'. Moreover consciousness-raising of homosexuality corresponds with theorists such as Adria Schwartz (1998) and Judith Butler (1991) who claim that heterosexuality is a learnt behaviour. Schwartz (1998) argued in her article *Sexual Subjects* that a more open gendered identity leads to a more inclusive sexual orientation. However the illegality of 'sex in jail' is in part a law that is phallogocentric implying that the law is male biased and, as Levi-Strauss (Leach, 1970) would argue, overwhelmingly patriarchal. Therefore the prison authorities were punishing the secret/private sexual lives of prisoners by exposing and humiliating the prisoners, which in part plays into the patriarchal bias of heteronormativity.

The issue of prisoners 'retain[ing] all the rights of an ordinary citizen except those taken away as a necessary consequence of their incarceration' is indicative that the issue of 'sex in jail' is problematic because it is unconstitutional to ban sex in jail. Sexual deprivation is being challenged as not 'a necessary consequence of ... incarceration'. This means that conjugal rights should be given to prisoners, which is a debate that still continues in South Africa. Moreover Frank Shayi (2008) argues that it is a constitutional and a human right for prisoners to have conjugal rights and the

ban on sex in jails should be lifted. Conjugal rights can be compared to the rights of incarcerated pregnant mothers to raise their children in jail. These are basic human rights that need to be adhered to so that incarceration does not equate a lack of recognition of the human being.

Sex between consenting men on the outside has been legal for some time now; unless the prison authorities were to convince the courts that private consensual sex between two prisoners would threaten order, there is little legal basis for banning it. Second, Anirudhra argued that banning sex violated prisoners' right to be held in conditions consistent with human dignity. Enforcing celibacy, he argued, "would lead to depravity, emotional problems and predispose (a prisoner) to unacceptable behavioural problems".

The opinion expressed here clearly states that homosexuality is a legal practice and as such is not against the State. However the opinion also opens the space to challenge whether homosexuality would disrupt order in the prison system. It is significant to note that homosexuality is being questioned through the inference that 'private consensual sex between two prisoners (meaning homosexuality) would threaten order'. It is not questioned whether any sex between prisoners and non-prisoners would threaten order. Thus within the opinion there is still a bias against homosexuality in prisons. However the opinion does state that, 'there is little basis for banning' sex in jail, implying that legally 'sex in jail' should be accepted. More importantly, with the advent of the AIDS pandemic, condoms should be made freely and easily available to curb the spread of the pandemic. To this extent, the South African government has implicitly acknowledged and accepted that 'sex in jail' occurs because since 1996 condoms are being distributed in South African prisons. But 'only 3 facilities actively distribute condoms' (<http://www.aegis.com/pubs/hepp/2000/HEPP2000-0701.html>), implying that there remains a gap between policy and practice. However the question remains that why in 2005 is there still a ban on 'sex in jail' and why did the prison authorities shame the prisoners engaging in consensual sex when 'sex in jail' has been recognised implicitly? Jane Flax (1994: 55) argues that bio-power is about restoring good and bringing balance to a situation that consists of good and bad; there is a responsibility to maintain order in society for the good of all. Therefore imprisonment should be about rehabilitation and maintaining 'human dignity' of the prisoners. Yet imprisonment and sexual deprivation erodes the human rights and dignity of

prisoners. To this extent, it is in the State's interest to preserve the human rights of prisoners so that the process of rehabilitation is ensured and the only punishment for crime is incarceration.

'Sex in jail' is not merely a simple human rights issue; it has much to do with pleasure in a system that is based on punishment and rehabilitation. In chapter one, pleasure and unpleasure were discussed in relation to the 'constant tension' between *eros* and *thanatos* (Benjamin, 1988: 36). This oscillation between these two drives, *eros* and *thanatos*, is about 'walking the abyss' (Kundera, 1973: 82), the excitement lies in the risk of being caught. Similarly 'sex in jail' carries with it the risk of exposure because it is banned. To some extent, the risk factor adds to the excitement of 'sex in jail'. It is a means to release tension from the notion of being incarcerated, which can be viewed as the constant tension between the two opposing drives, the drive for pleasure in *eros* and unpleasure in *thanatos* or exposure.

The oscillation between pleasure and unpleasure is not without problem. As was discussed in chapter one, Cavarero (2002) claims that this oscillation between tension in pleasure and unpleasure resides in the oedipal repudiation of femininity and that the pleasure principle is therefore male biased. She claims that pleasure outside the oedipal complex construed within the pre-oedipal phase of object relations theory and ego psychology allows pleasure to be re-thought through a sense of calmness, unity and wholeness because it is based on mutual recognition. 'Enforcing celibacy' is unconstitutional and is not consistent with engendering mutual recognition and human dignity. Sade argues that the 'dichotomy of public and private ... privatises desire' and criminalises 'public indecencies' (Hekma, 2001: 3). For Sade, the State's relationship to the citizenry should occupy a semi-public space in order to foster good private relationships between the State and its citizenry. This means that prisons should not enforce celibacy but instead accept and ensure that 'sex in jail' is occurring in a responsible manner. Thus pleasure within this paradigm places emphasis on risky sexual behaviour in the excitement of being caught and not in the loss of self with other in the moment of *jouissance*. Mutual recognition is then not nuanced in the messaging and the prison systems fails to rehabilitate and influence healthy sexual behaviour.

In March this year, Correctional Services Minister Ngconde Balfour responded to Anirudhra's opinion with visible queasiness. He said he hadn't read the opinion but that “you definitely forfeit some rights when you're arrested”, presumably, in the minister's estimate, the right to sex being among them. If Balfour persists in holding to this position he will have done himself a disservice on two counts: first, for being shortsighted; and second, for missing a golden opportunity.

Steinberg is very clearly describing the Minister of Correctional Service's heteronormative bias by using the word 'queasiness' to illustrate the discomfort experienced by the Minister around unbanning sex in jails. This 'queasiness' is a valued judgment on the part of Steinberg. The heteronormative bias of the Minister alludes' a patriarchal bias. Homosexuality is then seen as destabilizing male dominance because femininity is no longer the object of sexual control. Therefore the 'queasiness' is understood as a betrayal of the masculine subject position for a marginal sexual identity that occupies an object position. Challenging the system then is met with 'visible queasiness', implying unease, at the least.

As was stated earlier, the human rights of prisoners should ensure the right to dignity. Following on this logic, 'sex in jail' should be a human right to live out natural impulses with consenting human beings; irrespective of whether those human beings are imprisoned or not. There should not be a question of forfeiture of human rights due to imprisonment. The issue should be about consensual sex in jail as a part of maintaining human dignity of prisoners.

Steinberg is confronting the Minister in this article by showing-up the contradiction between policy and practice; what the Minister has said and what the constitution allows for. Thus Steinberg is showing the Minister to be ineffectual in upholding the constitution. But Steinberg is also commenting on something more important; he is inferring that the Minister is prejudiced because he is not able to ensure that 'prisoners retain all the rights of an ordinary citizen'. For Steinberg, this is what makes the Minister 'shortsighted'. The Minister fails to see the opportunity to reform the prison system and make it more conducive to human rights and human dignity and thus for mutual recognition in the process of rehabilitation.



Shortsighted because the ban on sex in prisons has been unenforceable for the past four generations, and there is little to suggest that things are going to change now.

The word 'shortsighted' is being reiterated here. This is important to note because Steinberg is yet again passing judgement on the Minister. The Minister's myopic view on 'sex in jail' is further substantiated through the ineffectual and ostensibly unconstitutional ban on 'sex in jail'. According to Steinberg, Balfour does not have a long-term view on prison reform and suggests that the Minister is short-changing the State through his lack of respect for the constitution. Moreover the issue suggested by Sade (Hekma, 2001: 3 -5) that if spaces are divided so that sex becomes hidden, it will not take away from the practice of sex, it will only make the practice of sex hidden, taboo and dangerous because it relegates it to the private domain. As was stated earlier, the tension between pleasure and unpleasure produces risky sexual behaviour when sex becomes hidden and taboo and this has consequences for HIV and AIDS. Therefore Steinberg is showing that it is illogical to 'ban sex in jail' because it leads to risky sex, which can be deadly with costly and serious implications for the State.

Read accounts of the oral history prison gangs have been transmitting from generation to generation and you will find that sex is the central issue of prison life. Prisoners have ploughed decades of storytelling and myth-making into the task of making it intelligible and acceptable. Banning it is as sensible as prohibiting prisoners from dreaming. The ban can be enforced with arbitrary inconsistency at best, and thus serves only to nourish corruption and blackmail.

In chapter one, I showed how the issue of space is very salient in relation to Sade's point on negotiating space between the State and its citizenry in what he calls 'semi-public' space (Hekma, 2001: 3). However *eros* and *thanatos* suggests when a tension exists between these two opposing drives, risky sexual behaviour becomes a means of alleviating the tension. Thus when 'sex in jail' is banned this tension from the natural impulse gets repressed and the alleviation of this tension becomes subversive in that the act becomes dangerous and risky and leads to irresponsible sexual behaviour. Moreover repressing sexual instincts becomes an obsession to release the tension or to find transient harmony from the constant tension. Negotiating a 'semi-public' space for sex in jail should be 'the central issue'.

According to Steinberg, the inner life of prisoners cannot not be denied or restricted. My theoretical frame informs my reading of these sentences in the following way, the issue of space is important in expressing the repressed. It is important that the inner life or private domain of thoughts does not get repressed but is given the space to express issues that are important to prisoners so that there is no repudiation of the other in the form of repression (Benjamin, 1988). Steinberg is making a very significant point for the repealing of the 'ban on sex in jail'. He is illustrating how the hidden nature of 'sex in jail' is open to pernicious and bad practices such as 'corruption and blackmail'. This is part of the damage of relegating 'sex in jail' to a hidden, illegal and shameful activity.

The golden opportunity being missed is that of preventing a great many people from getting sick and dying, both in prison and out.

Steinberg's use of emotive language such as adjectives like 'golden opportunity', which is reiterated to conjure the imagination around a precious and rare moment for making a wrong a right, is the opportunity to reduce the further rapid spread of disease by promoting responsible sexual behaviour through acceptance within the prison system of human sexual expression. This is crucial for illustrating the point about mutual recognition, in order to be responsible to oneself one must recognise the subjectivity of the other and thus respect the other and engage with the other in a responsible manner. Thus mutual recognition in this frame is also about a deep sense of respect between warders and prisoners. On a practical level, removing the compulsion towards risky sexual practices (because all sexual practices are rendered risky by an oppressive environment) can prevent diseases, which is what was suggested earlier. Therefore it is a 'golden opportunity' to enforce the constitution and to create the 'semi-public' space for responsible sex in jail. This also implies that by removing shame and stigma associated with sex in jail better responses to the AIDS pandemic can be sought.

As anyone involved in HIV prevention is aware, knowing that unsafe sex can kill does not prevent nearly enough people from having it. The reasons are difficult and complicated, but among them is that denial of mortality is deeply embedded in human culture.

With the tension in *eros* and *thanatos* it is not death itself that is desired but the closeness to death that reveals the drive to live and to life. This juxtaposition and tension in *eros* and *thanatos* is what leads to risk of death. Cavarero's (2002) argument has alluded to shifting the masculine construct of pleasure to a pre-oedipal nostalgia of harmony and unity that leads to healthy sexual pleasure. Although the *eros* and *thanatos* dialectic can shift to accommodate a healthier sense of self outside of seeking to fulfil the risk associated in the death drive, the conditions for pleasure need to be safe through mutual recognition so that loss of self with the other during *jouissance* can lead to the successful unity and wholeness with the other.

Steinberg is attempting to present an argument that calls for the logic of safer sex that should be conducted in a responsible manner in order to create transient relief from the constant tension between the opposing drives of *eros* and *thanatos* in that it produces a healthy understanding of self and other that is also important for rehabilitating offenders i.e. prisoners. Again, through inference he is reiterating the issue of human dignity in ensuring repealing the 'ban on sex in jail'.

Whether we live in the backwaters of Eastern Cape or in inner-city Johannesburg, we are all quick to uncouple infection from death and to banish the latter from thought and from view.

Placing the body central to the self is an important shift in rethinking the self and the other especially for the project of mutual recognition. With the body as central to the self a deep respect for self is located in the understanding and respect of the self as body, of the body as the self (Davis, 1997; Andermahr, 1997; Hoogland, 1997; Grosz, 1994). This is in opposition to the dichotomy of 'uncoupling of infection from death'. Deep respect for the body equals a deep respect for self. If this paradigm is prevalent it will shift the dialect of *eros* and *thanatos* to Cavarero's (2002) understanding of pleasure as calm with a sense of wholeness so that pleasure is a respect of self and other. It also promotes mutual recognition between the self and other and negates the oedipal perversion of pleasure sought in the repudiation of femininity and the other.

History has generally shown that prevention campaigns have the best chance of changing sexual behaviour when death becomes visible.

*Thanatos* (Freud, 1962; Benjamin, 1988) is not about death but about the risk of death. Subsequently when death becomes the end result the constant tension between

*eros* and *thanatos* ceases to exist. Thus actual death is a reminder that transient harmony is what is sought from the constant tension of *eros* and *thanatos*. However prevention campaigns must uncouple sex and death because *thanatos* is not about the actual death of self but rather the risk of death in the 'little death', which means that the link between sex and death is not about actual death but about *jouissance*. This little death in *thanatos* can be achieved through loss of self with the other during orgasm. But this can only happen when mutual recognition exists. Therefore sex should be associated with safer relations and need not be irresponsible and risky because the transient harmony from the constant tension in *eros* and *thanatos* can be achieved during *jouissance*. This means that sex must be associated with a healthy sense of pleasure (Caverero, 2002) through having a meaningful and safe relationship with the other. This is also a crucial point of the study, which is to inform prevention campaigns so as to create a better and more nuanced understanding of the self/the body, the other/the other body and sexual behaviour.

When terminally ill people cannot be hidden, when the very face of a community is visibly altered by decimation, the link between infection and death becomes too stark to deny. Which makes prisons pretty unique. In jail, people get ill and suffer in public view.

Prisons are places of confinement and are thus unique. This means that the design of prisons is not to have hidden/private spaces. Therefore death and disease are visible and public in prisons. This point further elaborates the issue of *thanatos*. Death is real and it is visible and present. The very real effects of disease and fear of death force private matters of the self/body to be confronted. Fear builds into the constant tension of risk of death and the vulnerability of the body to disease. However confronting actual death must be coupled with *eros* so that fear is not emphasized in *thanatos* and risk-taking behaviour. But rather *eros* becomes the idea of pleasure in the pre-oedipal phase of mutual recognition (pleasure in sharing with the other) and that pleasure is uncoupled from the perverse oedipal repudiation of the other.

There is nowhere to hide.

Sade (Hekma, 2001) specifically focuses on the private becoming public as a good thing because it allows for awareness and consciousness-raising. Making the private public also prevents dangerous hidden practices. However public spaces must be

spaces that are nurturing as opposed to alienating because illness can also be a marker for isolation and stigma. Therefore disease in prisons must be treated in a dignified and caring way as opposed to isolating ill prisoners from healthy prisoners. This dichotomy of spaces serves to play into prejudice and is not conducive to empathy and good responsible behaviour or mutual recognition.

In 1995, 186 prisoners in SA died of natural causes. By 2001, the figure was 1 169. And that underestimates the visibility of the epidemic behind bars since terminally ill prisoners are in general released and sent home to die.

The variants' in numbers of fatalities of prisoners is significant because it comments on the higher levels of ill health in prisons. This rapid increase in fatalities in prisons signifies a problem with disease control in jails. To this extent, Steinberg is illuminating the problem of hidden sexual practices and the comparable rise in fatality rates in prisons. He is specifically commenting through inference that hidden sexual practices or banning 'sex in jail' is harmful and dangerous and has a direct impact on the spread of diseases in jails.

Furthermore Steinberg comments on the lack of care of prisoners with illness; the prison system does not care for them instead prisoners get sent home to die. This can be traumatic on various levels because some prisoners have little or no support systems such as family or they instead have challenging relations with family so that returning home to die is not a viable option. Also prisoners' attachments to one another are not considered in the event of returning ill prisoners home. Thus the prison system is reflective of an uncaring State.

Prisoners became viscerally aware of the connection between sex and death before most South Africans; they have no choice but to watch the progression of illness from day to day.

Steinberg has become more pronounced in his forthcoming opinions about sex and death. He clearly states that unlike other spaces prison is confined and public and gives prisoners the intimate understanding of the AIDS pandemic. He shows how AIDS cannot be hidden in jail. Significantly the use of the word 'choice' highlights how prisoners have limited options and choices due to their confinement. This also highlights the issue of unprotected sex in jail as a lack of choice that leads to irresponsible and risky sexual behaviour with a very real risk of death.

When I did nine months of research at Pollsmoor prison a couple of years ago, prisoners' fear of HIV/AIDS was palpable.

Jonny Steinberg is referring to himself in the article therefore personalising the article. It also places central to the report first and foremost Steinberg's voice that stands above and beyond the media organisation ideology. However the media organisation ideology is progressive by encouraging space for critical commentators such as Steinberg. Steinberg thus dominates the report by placing his voice and his opinion central to the article. He talks about his experience of research in prison and the real fear of death that he witnessed. This angle within the article adds the human touch to the article, which is part of Steinberg's strategy to shift the normative frame of heterosexuality by empathising with homosexual practices in jail.

Gangsters talked a great deal about death with apparent nonchalance.

The macho construction of the gangster image is represented through bravado and lack of fear of death. Thus the nonchalance of death amongst gangsters in prison is not unusual. This particular masculine construction is a hyper-masculinity because it stands in total opposition to femininity.

But when discussion turned to HIV/AIDS most became mute. Their experiences of HIV/AIDS betrayed their casual banter about death as bravado.

The AIDS pandemic challenges even hyper-masculine constructions of the fearless and all-powerful gangster. Thus the hyper-masculinity of gangsters is tamed in the face of the AIDS pandemic because the risk of death in *thanatos* is not a risk but rather actual death. Therefore silence on the part of gangsters is a signal of the lack of power and immense fear of death through disease. Thus gangsters show their vulnerability when it comes to the AIDS pandemic.

Expression of strength for gangsters leads to dominance in gangs and is a means for showing their power and credibility within the gangs (Steinberg, 2004). Shefer, et, al. (2008) argues that masculinities shift in various contexts. Therefore a sick gangster is not a powerful gangster. Thus the vulnerability and limitation posed through HIV and AIDS is a real threat to gangster dominance.

It seemed to me that conditions could not have been riper for turning this fear into genuine reflection: about safe sex, about treatment, about self-care.

As was stated earlier, prevention campaigns are most potent when the reality of death is looming. Thus safe sex becomes imperative when the body publicly succumbs to AIDS (Sontag, 1990). This is the ultimate reminder of the self/body's vulnerability to disease and death (Bordo, 1989; Deleuze and Guattari, 1988). Also the search for transient harmony in pleasure becomes an 'opportunity' to seek an alternate view from real death in the face of the AIDS pandemic when the body becomes vulnerable to the virus.

In these circumstances, keeping the prohibition on sex in prison, and thus burying it deeper underground, is tragically irresponsible.

Steinberg again pronounces his opinion about the State's refusal to lift the 'ban on sex in jail' when he clearly states that it is irresponsible for the State to maintain the 'ban on sex in jail' when the AIDS pandemic is flourishing. Moreover he is warning that continuing to ban 'sex in jail' makes it a so-called hidden sexual activity that becomes risky and ultimately leads to death. The State has an obligation to maintain the health and wellbeing of all its citizens and more importantly it has the ethical responsibility to maintain the health and rehabilitation of prisoners.

- *Steinberg is a freelance writer.*

The media organisation – *Business Day* – is clearly stating that Steinberg is a contributing writer and not a fulltime journalist of the newspaper. However his prestige as a writer is also emphasized. Moreover this is testimony that the newspaper is committed to progressive reports and welcomes contributions from controversial and critical writers such as Jonny Steinberg.

##### ***5. An example of an analysis of a newspaper report as it will be written up in the following data chapters***

The format for the analysis in the data chapters is illustrated below. This is to show the logic of the theoretical frame as it is applied in the data analysis and to make transparent the interpretation of the analysis. It is imperative that the transparency of

the interpretation of the article be elucidated because interpretation by definition is subjective. Therefore the interpretations offered in this study are open to further exploration, interrogation and debate by the reader. I refer to Gadamer's work on the partiality of interpretation to highlight this point (1975: 107):

It is also, as we know, wrong to limit the 'freedom' of interpretative choice to externals to marginal phenomena and not rather to think of the whole of an interpretation in a way that is both bound and free. Interpretation is probably, in a certain sense, re-creation, but this re-creation does not follow the process of creative act, but the lines of the created work which has to be brought to representation in accord with the meaning the interpreter finds in it. Thus, for example, performances of music played on old instruments are not as faithful as they seem. Rather, they are an imitation of an imitation and in danger 'of standing at a third remove from the truth' (Plato). In view of the finite nature of our historical existence there is, it would seem, something absurd about the whole idea of a uniquely correct interpretation. ... Here the obvious fact, that every interpretation seeks to be correct, serves only to confirm that the non-differentiation of the interpretation from the work itself is the actual experience of the work. This accords with the fact that the aesthetic consciousness is generally able to make the aesthetic distinction between the work and its interpretation only in a critical way, i.e. where the interpretation breaks down. The communication of the work is, in principle, a total one.

Interpretation is always an imitation. It is not the truth but rather 'standing at a third removed from the truth'. Therefore interpretation is always open for critique. Moreover it is in the transparency of the interpretative analysis that the imitation becomes clearer to the reader. The interpreter is always in the reading of the text and thus the interpretation will differ according to the relationship between the interpreter and the text.

The previous overview of textual/discourse analysis showed through a sentence-by-sentence analysis how the theoretical frame was applied. However with the case study below a sentence-by-sentence analysis will not be conducted. Instead the case studies will be presented within themes that illustrate representations of gender and sex. This implies that the case study will be broken down into sections that will illustrate the theories behind the interpretation of the analyses.



I have begun my analysis of the article with an interpretation of the report ending with a set of observations<sup>10</sup> that will be consolidated at the end of the study in a chapter on guidelines. For this example I have chosen to use the exact same example as above because it will help to illustrate the relationship between the theoretical frame and discourse analysis in the actual formatting of the case studies as well as to highlight the transparency in the interpretation and analysis of the article.

This is a report from *Business Day*, 16 May 2005. *Business Day* is considered a progressive newspaper because it uses critical writers and challenges normalizing practices of sexual identity. This will become clearer in the method of analysis because the report challenges heteronormativity. The length of the article is 776 words. This is considered a feature article. The page number is not included in the copy so it cannot be established how significant an article this is in place of prominence. The headline reads: 'Scruples about sex in jail waste opportunity for valuable lesson'. I have chosen this particular story as an appropriate example of reporting on HIV and AIDS. The main reason for my choosing this article is because it challenges the status quo on heterosexuality by challenging the State apparatus of prisons and therefore the way in which the State implicitly constructs human sexuality. It also highlights how an appropriate report exposes the hidden bias of patriarchy in the normative practice of heterosexuality. Thus this newspaper report explicitly shifts representation and challenges normalizing sexual practices.

The newspaper report is written by Jonny Steinberg and begins by reporting on a charge against two male prisoners at Zonderwater Maximum Prison. It proceeds to explain that the prisoners were charged specifically for engaging in sex, which was consensual. Furthermore it explains that the Minister of Correctional Services commissioned a legal opinion about this charge. The legal opinion found that the prisoners were not behaving unconstitutionally. However the conclusion of the report does not provide information as to whether the charges against the prisoners were dropped or not? Subsequently it is inferred that the charges were not dropped despite the legal opinion offered because the report assumes that 'sex in prison' will in future be buried 'deeper underground'. The report also contains data on the rising levels of

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<sup>10</sup> This style of presenting observations at the end of each case study emanates from the work of Maaïke Meijer (1999) specially focusing on ways of improving or avoiding certain trends in news reporting.

HIV prevalence in prisons and a connection is also been made between HIV and AIDS and death. The report makes 'sex in jail' newsworthy because hidden and risky sex leads to death. Steinberg is arguing that sex needs to be accepted as part of prison life so that it is not being hidden and risky. His claim is to ensure that instead of engaging in risky sexual behaviour in prisons, responsible sexual behaviour should be promoted through condom distribution. The conclusion of the report has a strong message to end the ban on 'sex in jail' because it leads to risky sexual behaviour and ultimately to death. Steinberg also calls for prevention campaigns for HIV and AIDS as means for saving lives.

The opening paragraph describes the scene of the *offence*. It does so by describing the hidden aspect of prison sex, emphasising 'the makeshift enclosure created by attaching blankets to bedposts'. The article then continues to show the violent exposure of the sexual act by the prison authorities: 'the blankets screening them were ripped off the bedposts, and they were exposed'. The report makes explicit the way in which sex was kept secretive. Sex in this context is occurring in a semi-public space (Hekma: 2001, 3) because it is occurring in an enclosed space in a prison. The exposure by the prison authorities caused humiliation and shame to the prisoners by *catching them in the act*. This catching of the prisoners during the act of sex highlights the intolerance by the prison authorities towards homosexual sex. Steinberg then shows how homosexuality is received by the Minister of Correctional Services: 'Ngconde Balfour responded to Anirudhra's opinion with visible queasiness'. Steinberg's description of the Minister's reaction is a valued judgment and is biased because it influences the reader against the Minister by highlighting the discomfort in the Minister and the censure towards homosexuality in prisons. This is unnecessary because the report makes clear the unconstitutionality of banning 'sex in jail'. Moreover to shift normative bias it is not useful to become biased in the report, it robs the report of its salience and newsworthiness.

The article is considered an appropriate article on representations of sex and HIV and AIDS because it shows how linking sex and taboo creates risky sexual behaviour with very real consequences of death. This point is very clearly made by Steinberg when he states, 'prisoners become viscerally aware of the connection between sex and death before most South Africans; they have no choice but to watch the progression of

illness from day to day'. This brings into focus the point made in chapter one about sexual taboo through repressing sex and thus making sex a hidden and dangerous practice. The association of sex with danger leads to risky sexual behaviour. However expressing the repressed and finding transient harmony from the constant tension between the opposing drives, *eros* and *thanatos*, makes sex a semi-public discourse (meaning a space between the State (public) and the citizenry (private)) so that healthier, safer and more responsible sex can occur.

Even though this is considered an appropriate article in the sense that it is critical about banning 'sex in jail', it falls short of presenting practical and logistical suggestions for making sex in prisons safer and more viable in what is a very confined and public space. Also Steinberg comments on homosexuality in prisons but fails to comment on conjugal or sexual rights for all prisoners; neither does he address the pervasive problem of rape in prisons. To this extent, the article is biased in its exclusivity of consensual homosexual practices. However Steinberg makes the argument for resisting normalizing practices of sexual identity and therefore it is important to approach sexual difference from the perspective of mutual recognition because it does not place importance on one sexual practice over another. Schwartz (1998) argues that an over-inclusive sexual identity is neither concerned with homosexuality or heterosexuality but is free to choose either sexuality because autonomy is not defined by repudiation of the other. As a concluding remark, Steinberg argues that if sex is acceptable and legitimized in prisons then prevention campaigns as well as treatment and safe sex methods can be made available to prisoners.

In terms of style of the article, Steinberg uses his voice explicitly to emphasize the human interest angle in the story when he states:

When I did nine months of research at Pollsmoor prison a couple of years ago, prisoners' fear of HIV/AIDS was palpable. Gangsters talked a great deal about death with apparent nonchalance. But when discussion turned to HIV/AIDS most became mute. Their experience of HIV/AIDS betrayed their casual banter about death and bravado.

The use of 'I' in this statement is Steinberg's attempt to make the point that the fear and threat of 'HIV/AIDS' in his experience is real. It also shows the construction of

masculinity of the macho gangster shifting in relation to the fear of death and HIV and AIDS. The macho bravado of gangsters is lost when it comes to HIV and AIDS because the pandemic highlights the vulnerability of the body to illness and death; it points to mortality in relation to which the gangster's virtues of strength, bravado and power are irrelevant. It also highlights the acceptance and acknowledgement of homosexuality amongst prisoners in relation to the vulnerability of the body to the pandemic. This means that sexual taboos around homosexuality cannot be afforded any longer when the body becomes so vulnerable. Therefore in the context of the article normalizing practices of sexual identity are no longer a priority as the focus is shifted towards safer sex that preserves the dignity and right to life of all.

### Observations:

Newspaper reports should shift focus away from sexual taboos.

This implies that the link between sex and death must be uncoupled in order to emphasize responsibility to oneself and other through the practice of mutual recognition. In the case of this article, mutual recognition is the solution that Steinberg proposes through lifting the ban on sex in jail. He does so by focusing on the fact that prisoners retain all the rights as ordinary citizens and therefore need to be afforded the same right to human dignity.

Linking sex and death shows the vulnerability of the body to illness.

This observation is linked to the former observation in that the reality of death builds into the fear of HIV and AIDS as well as the stigma around HIV and AIDS. The article supports prevention campaigns that reinforce safer sex whilst shifting messaging away from risky sexual behaviour through hidden sexual practices.

The acceptance of homosexuality as a sexual identity is crucial for resisting normalizing practices of sexual identity.

By showing homosexuality as an acceptable practice endorsed by the constitution the normative sexual practice of heterosexuality is challenged. This is important because it allows for the constitution to protect the rights of all citizens irrespective of sexual

orientation. The article shows this by explaining the constitutional rights around sexual identities.

The voice of the journalist is crucial for authenticity and for highlighting the human interest angle to the story.

The voice of the journalist is very powerful when a reader can relate to the journalist as a person. This means that the voice through the use of 'I' shows the reader a personal angle to the story. This brings the reader closer to the journalist through mutual recognition because the journalist then occupies a subject position. Steinberg very cleverly uses his voice and his experience to build a relationship between himself and the reader.

Media messages are crucial as a tool for emphasizing prevention campaigns.

Newspaper reports can serve to challenge representation on HIV and AIDS and also reinforce helpful messages on HIV and AIDS by presenting critical pieces that contribute towards new knowledge on HIV and AIDS. The article is appropriate in that it shows how hidden and risky sexual practices can be pernicious.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter attempted to illustrate how the theoretical frame informs textual and interpretive analyses. I employed a practical illustration of interpretative analysis of the newspaper report. This demonstration of the newspaper report was the initial analysis conducted. A second part of the data analysis was to fragment the analysis into themes and thereby comment on emerging patterns in relation to discourses on gender and sex and HIV and AIDS. The analyses are open to critique from the reader however the rigor in maintaining the theoretical leanings remains the transparent process of the analyses. Since this is an archival study the patterns emerging are meant to be a historical comment and a measure of representations of gender and sex and HIV and AIDS. This chapter then hopes to illuminate and make transparent the interpretations in the following data chapters.

The theories presented in chapter one propose to resist the hierarchical gender binary and shift normalizing practices of sexual identity through various alternate understandings such as; mutual recognition, expressing the repressed, consciousness-raising and critical evaluation of representation. The theoretical framework also attempts to resist male dominance and phallogocentrism by specifically critically evaluating representation and rethinking language by presenting alternate ways of representing gender and sex in the context of HIV and AIDS. Therefore this chapter is a way of practically engaging with this shift in representation of gender differentiation and rethinking the power/knowledge nexus with a shift towards mutual recognition.

Chapters 4 and 5 are data chapters. Chapter 4 deals with representations of gender and HIV and AIDS with the aim to resist the hierarchical gender binary in constructions of masculinity and femininity. Chapter 5 deals with the opposing drives of *eros* and *thanatos* and the uncoupling of sex and death to highlight sex and pleasure, ensuring more responsible sexual behaviour. I have chosen these two themes for the data chapters because they deal directly with the research question of the study, which is a critical analysis of the representations of gender and sex in newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS. Emerging patterns from the data analysis will be presented in chapter 6 with an outlook on how to shift representation in order to better focus on mutual recognition, expressing the repressed and consciousness-raising in newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS. These suggestions can then be employed by the media and practitioners working on HIV and AIDS especially in the area of prevention campaigns.

# Scruples about sex in jail waste opportunity for valuable lesson

6 MAY 2005

LATE one night in mid-2003, two male prisoners at Zandervater Maximum Prison were having consensual sex, as South African prisoners have been known to do for more than a century. They were doing so in the relative privacy of a makeshift enclosure



**JONNY STEINBERG**

created by attaching blankets to bedposts. Some time after midnight, the blankets screening them were ripped off the bedposts, and they were exposed. They were charged with, and found guilty of, breaking the prison's ban on sex. As punishment, they were denied secondary privileges, such as reading and leisure activities, for 30 days, suspended for six months.

In response to this incident, the Judicial Inspectorate of Prisons commissioned its national manager, advocate Kamraj Anrudhra, to write a legal opinion on sex in prison. He argued that prohibiting sex was

unconstitutional, primarily for two reasons. First, an old common-law principle, which has been absorbed into constitutional law, states that prisoners retain all the rights of an ordinary citizen except those taken away as a necessary consequence of their incarceration. Sex between consenting men on the outside has been legal for some time now; unless the prison authorities were to convince the courts that private consensual sex between two prisoners would threaten order, there is little legal basis for banning it.

Second, Anrudhra argued that banning sex violated prisoners' right to be held in conditions consistent with human dignity. Enforcing celibacy, he argued, "would lead to depravity, emotional problems and predispose (a prisoner) to unacceptable behavioural problems".

In March this year, Correctional Services Minister Ngconde Balfour responded to Anrudhra's opinion with visible queasiness. He said he hadn't read the opinion but that "you definitely forfeit some rights when you're arrested", presumably, in the minister's estimate, the right to sex being among them.

If Balfour persists in holding to this position he will have done himself a disservice on two counts: first, for being shortsighted; and second, for missing a golden opportunity.

Shortsighted because the ban on sex in prisons has been unenforceable for the past four generations, and there is little to suggest that things are going to change now. Read accounts of the oral history prison gangs have been transmitting from generation to generation and you will find that sex is the central issue of prison life.

Prisoners have ploughed decades of storytelling and myth-making into the task of making it intelligible and acceptable. Banning it is about as sensible as prohibiting prisoners from dreaming. The ban can be enforced with arbitrary inconsistency at best, and thus serves only to nourish

corruption and blackmail.

The golden opportunity being missed is that of preventing a great many people from getting sick and dying, both in prison and out. As anyone involved in HIV prevention is aware, knowing that unsafe sex can kill does not prevent nearly enough people from having it. The reasons are difficult and complicated, but among them is that denial of mortality is deeply embedded in human culture. Whether we live the backwaters of Eastern Cape or in inner-city Johannesburg, we are all quick to uncouple infection from death and to banish the latter from thought and from view.

History has generally shown that prevention campaigns have the best chance of changing sexual behaviour when death becomes visible. When terminally ill people cannot be hidden, when the very face of a community is visibly altered by decimation, the link between infection and death becomes too stark to deny.

Which makes prisons pretty unique. In jail, people get ill and suffer in public view. There is nowhere to hide. In 1995, 186 prisoners in SA died

of natural causes. By 2001, the figure was 1 169. And that underestimates the visibility of the epidemic behind bars since terminally ill prisoners are in general released and sent home to die. Prisoners became viscerally aware of the connection between sex and death before most South Africans; they have no choice but to watch the progression of illness from day to day.

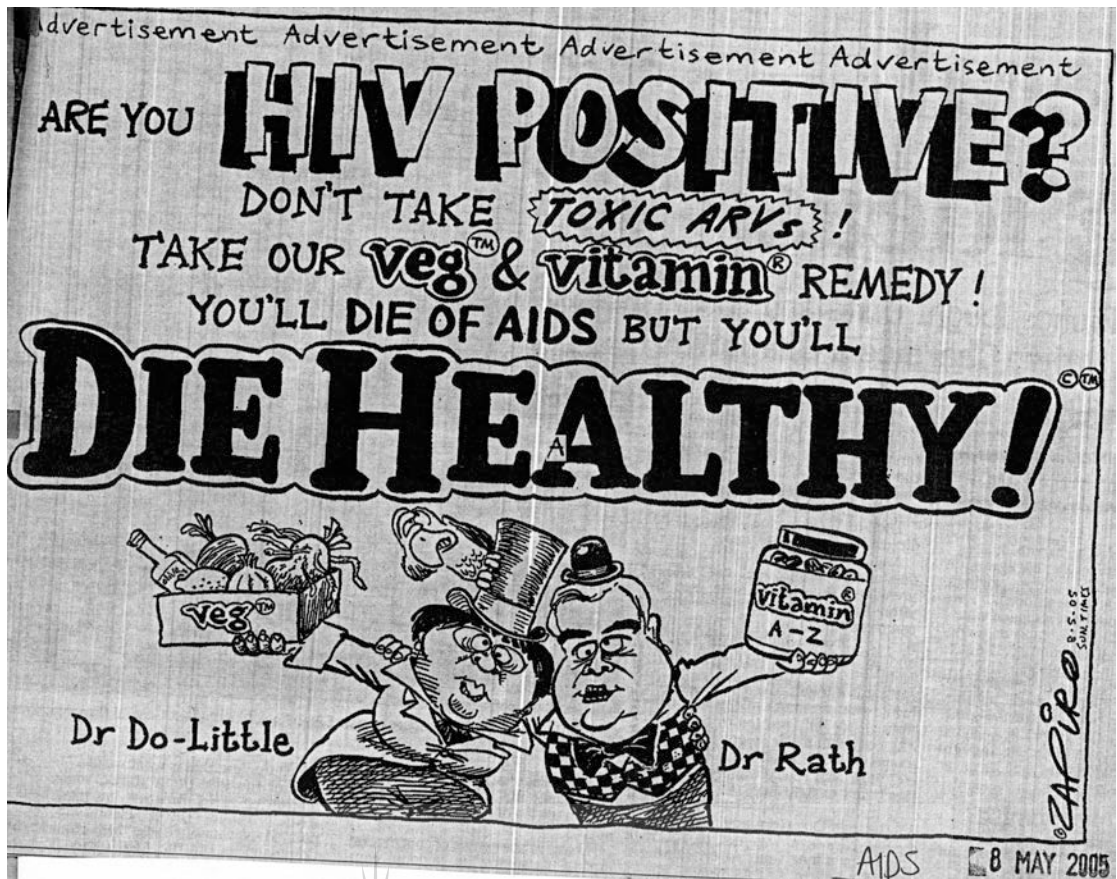
When I did nine months of research at Pollsmoor prison a couple of years ago, prisoners' fear of HIV/AIDS was palpable. Gangsters talked a great deal about death with apparent nonchalance. But when discussion turned to HIV/AIDS, most became mute. Their experience of HIV/AIDS betrayed their casual banter about death as bravado.

It seemed to me that conditions could not have been riper for turning this fear into genuine reflection: about safe sex, about treatment, about self-care. In these circumstances, keeping the prohibition on sex in prison, and thus burying it deeper underground, is tragically irresponsible.

■ Steinberg is a freelance writer.



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## **Chapter three: representations of gender and HIV and AIDS; looking at resisting normalizing practices of sexual identity**

### **Introduction**

This chapter consists of ten articles. The selection of articles range from various newspapers such as: *Business Day*, *The Star* and the *Mail & Guardian*. The time period ranges from 11<sup>th</sup> May 2005 till 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2005. The sections for this chapter are; (i) strategies for resisting the hierarchical gender binary, (ii) a critical evaluation of representations of masculine constructions and, (iii) a critical evaluation of representations of feminine constructions. The case studies within each section have been arranged chronologically. These three sections have been organized firstly to show how strategies for normalizing practices of sexual identity can be resisted through critically evaluating representations of the hierarchical gender binary and then to show shifts in masculine and feminine constructions. Through consciousness-raising and critical evaluation of representations of sexual identity a more open and fluid sexual identity can be presented so that the normative practice of sexual identity – heterosexuality – is displaced and is no longer the standard for sexual identity. This means that constructions of masculinity and femininity will stand in resistance and opposition to the classical Freudian oedipal complex of gender differentiation with the repudiation of femininity that sets up the hierarchical gender binary of male dominance and female submission. Instead a more nuanced pre-oedipal understanding of mutual recognition will be the exit strategy from the hierarchical gender binary.

Expressing the repressed sexual desires is also used as an alternate understanding to open the space for a more fluid sexual identity by shifting sex out of the private domain towards a ‘semi-public’ space (Hekma, 2001). Therefore this chapter is a practical application of the theoretical frame of the study with the aim of testing and showing alternate understandings that resist normalizing practices of sexual identity, which can ultimately inform prevention campaigns. The original articles for the case studies in both

chapters three and four will be included in the Appendix for purposes of layout and for transparency in the process of interpretative analyses.

### **Alternate understandings for resisting the hierarchical gender binary**

This theme focuses on critically evaluating representations in newspaper reports that deal specifically with normalizing practices of sexual identity and HIV and AIDS with the purpose of resisting the hierarchical gender binary in these representations. Following on from this sub-section, alternate understandings for resisting normalizing practices of sexual identity is linked to a critical evaluation of representations of masculinity and femininity to show a more open gendered identity that is based on mutual recognition. There are five articles within this theme. The articles range from 13<sup>th</sup> May 2005 till 12<sup>th</sup> June 2005. The formative article focuses on the Catholic Church and moral issues regarding preservation of life and condom use. The Catholic Church can be read as a patriarchal institution that perpetuates female subjugation through the hierarchical gender binary but there are also moments of resistance that challenges male dominance in light of the AIDS pandemic. The following case study deals with women's vulnerability to HIV infection and the need to displace the hierarchical gender binary. The third article focuses on the intersectionality of poverty, sexual violence and HIV and AIDS with the aim of commenting on programmes that foster better community relations as a response to these issues. The fourth article deals with the correlation between increasing infection rates of HIV and AIDS in Burma together with government denial of the pandemic, which impacts prevention campaign efforts. The final article addresses the issue of safer sex and safer sexual relations that can foster mutual recognition leading to healthier sexual practices.

#### **Case one:**

This article appears in the *Mail & Guardian* in the week May 13 to 19, 2005, and is featured on page 18. It is considered a feature article because it is almost a full-spread page and consists of one thousand and sixty-six words. Page 18 is the *Comment and*

*Analysis* page. This article was specifically chosen because it shows that by coupling sex and sin, sex becomes associated with dangerous behaviour that can lead to death. This particular association of sex with death highlights the importance of uncoupling sex and the risk of death or *thanatos* by shifting representation away from religious morality that engenders hegemonic masculinity towards mutual recognition.

The nucleus or headline reads: *Shepherd to a dying flock*. The use of the words 'shepherd' and 'flock' indicates that the article is referring to biblical connotations. It is interesting to note that the 'flock' are 'dying'. Already this signifies that a fixed binary of the soul/body convenience is inferred through the use of word 'shepherd', implying the hidden reason – God. God is then called upon to guide the 'dying flock', referring to believers/followers. The significance of the nucleus in reference to God and religion plays into the idea of sex as a taboo and sinful and, is thus, associated with death and punishment. Moreover the reference to God also refers to kinship theory and the symbolic and imaginary structure of patriarchy. Subsequently the nucleus plays into two arguments of this study; firstly, the fixed binary of the soul/body convenience structured in the theory of language, which is phallogocentric, and secondly, it couples sex with the risk of death in *thanatos*, which plays into the idea of sex as dangerous and irresponsible behaviour.

The minor headline reads: *The Catholic Church's intentions are good, but the results of its HIV policy are devastating, argues Stefan Hippler*. The minor nucleus highlights the tensions' that exists between the Catholic Church's efforts to help 'the dying flock' and 'its HIV policy'. Moreover through the major and minor headlines, the reader can assume that the article is going to take issue with the Catholic Church's policy on HIV and AIDS and its moral stance around sex because of the reference to a 'dying flock'.

The establishing paragraphs of the article consist of the argument being made against the diminishing numbers in the Catholic Church. The author argues that interest in the new pope has sparked debate about the Catholic Church's position on the use of condoms. He says, 'Journalists and people far removed from the church's teaching are suddenly

interested in the church, its teaching and the possible changes of the teaching in these times of transition’.

The author of the article in the third paragraph draws attention to himself when he claims that he is a ‘Catholic priest’. This revelation very early into the article gives credence to the article and the criticism arising thereof. Stefan, the priest, acknowledges his role in the Catholic Church yet he criticises the Catholic Church because of its policy on HIV and AIDS. This critique of the Catholic Church from within fosters a relationship between the priest and the reader. Furthermore Stefan proceeds to critique the argument around ‘procreation’ with inference to contraception. He claims that the debate is ‘curtailed’ within the church. He reckons that the previous pope was given an opportunity to accept ‘artificial contraception’ but did not. However this lack of acceptance of artificial contraception has led to many Catholic deaths. Thus the author is interrogating the question of why artificial contraception was not accepted in light of saving lives, especially those that are Catholic.

This is an interesting point in the study because it alludes to the issue of the fixed binary of the hidden reason of the soul/body convenience in the theory of language, which operates on the symbolic and imaginary realms, whereby language is phallogocentric, affecting identity formation. These imaginary and symbolic realms affect real life choices especially when beliefs have influence over life and death issues. However the priest is challenging pernicious beliefs and is rethinking religion so that it is not in conflict with responsible sexual practices. Therefore this article is consistent with the theoretical frame in that it calls for consciousness-raising and critical evaluation around the Catholic Church’s policy on HIV and AIDS by challenging and questioning harmful messages and practices that lead to risky and dangerous sexual behaviour. Since the publication of the article, the Catholic Church’s policy on HIV and AIDS and artificial contraception has shifted, in Patel (2009: 43) she argues that the Catholic Church condones the use of condoms in line with safer sexual practices.

The article continues to critically evaluate papal teachings that do not separate the issue of sex and death from responsible sexual behaviour towards oneself and others. The incongruent 'papal teaching' on 'sexual moral theology' does not take into account that sexual behaviours become hidden especially around issues of trust and fidelity. Therefore the priest is questioning the legitimacy of papal teachings when those teachings are contradictory; is artificial contraception so bad when it stands in support of saving lives? He further purports that all measures must be taken 'to bring an end to the spread of the virus'.

Subsequently Stefan (the priest) poses a crossroads for the reader; the article challenges the issue of whether to take an alternate route to the question on artificial contraception and sex. Artificial contraception is explained through the mixture and combination of the congregation that are both sinners and saints. The priest then turns to the Orthodox Church for his alternate route and for the concept of 'oikonomia', which he explains as:

This principle accepts that there are rules, but these can be set aside for a specific reason or group of people for the sake of their well-being. This does not mean the end of a rule, but an exception, determined and reasoned by the unconditional love of God and Christ, symbolised and carried forward by the church.

'Oikonomia' is the exit from the repressive and destructive papal teaching, linking sex, death and artificial contraception. Stefan purports that 'oikonomia' is about the 'mystery of God's love' but that God's 'unconditional love' is not a cure for the AIDS pandemic. Therefore, oikonomia or not, a hard look at the pandemic is what is required in order to save lives and to break out of pernicious religious teachings that couples sex with sin and punishment and risky sexual behaviour thus leading to death. Moreover Stefan's reasoning for 'unconditional love' and 'an exception' to the rule shifts the argument away from 'moral prescriptions' of papal teachings. However 'moral prescriptions' and 'unconditional love' are all arguments framed within hegemonic masculinity. Foucault's dictum, 'power lies in monuments and documents' (1977: 7) reverberates with the understanding that patriarchy can be found in institutions such as religion and government. However these arguments that fall within the frame of patriarchy pose an

interesting alternative to the moral argument on HIV and AIDS; they propose that 'unconditional love' should be extended to the self and other in order to respond in a humane way to HIV and AIDS thus breaking the stigma around people living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA). Thus Stefan's proposal for 'unconditional love' without 'judgement' is altruistic because it is gender blind and thus meets the aim of mutual recognition. Subsequently 'unconditional love' reaffirms the belief in God but it does not challenge patriarchal beliefs that are entrenched in the law of the father (Levi-Strauss, 1949, 1966; Lacan, 1968; Derrida, 1978) and religious values.

Even though Stefan does not challenge the hierarchical gender binary directly, he is cognisant of women's submissive role in society when he 'invites' scholars of theology to further interrogate the idea of 'unconditional love' by stating:

I invite our theologians to visit a shack and hold hands with someone dying of the consequences of Aids.

I invite our theologians to visit shacks and speak to women who do not have primacy over their sexuality, for whom the church's teaching on sexual morality are not options.

I invite our theologians to visit a woman living with an HIV-positive man and advise her, face-to-face, that she is not allowed to use a condom.

I invite our theologians to talk to youngsters who are sexually active (in South Africa as early as 12 or 13 years) and advise them not to protect themselves because of moral reasons.

I am a simple priest. I am torn by what is preached and what I should preach. I can't stop hearing the voices of desperation. And I wish that we would contribute, without any doubt, to stopping the spreading of the virus so that we do not have to make an official confession of guilt 50 years later – too late for millions of people.

We need a theology of Aids, we need to incorporate this strong and life-threatening sign of the time into our existing theology. And we have to do this not from the safety of universities or a curial ivory tower, but coming from the people who suffer.

It is there where we find God and our brother Jesus, the source of our theology.

The article concludes with a further piece of information about the author. It reiterates that the author is a priest, 'Stephan Hippler is a Catholic priest who has been involved in HIV/Aids counselling for many years'. The fact that Stefan is a priest has been

mentioned at least three times within the article and it further elaborates that Stefan does HIV and AIDS counselling. This piece of information is crucial for the credibility of the article because when Stefan invites theologians to extend 'unconditional love' without 'judgement' he speaks from a position of experience. Thus the article carries with it an emotional element of 'unconditional love' through experience and respect for all human beings, which is in line with this study's position on mutual recognition for self and other. Subsequently the article also paints a stereotype of PLWHA when Stefan invites theologians into 'shacks ... to visit a woman living with an HIV-positive man'. He implies that PLWHA are poor, most likely to be Black and are heterosexual. This bias is unfortunate because it does not paint a realistic picture of the virus and its indiscriminate spread amongst people irrespective of race, class, gender or sexual orientation. To this extent, the article is inconsistent with challenging the hierarchical gender binary but it is consistent with uncoupling sex from the risk of death or *thanatos* by emphasizing 'unconditional love'.

Observation 1:

1. HIV and AIDS spreads indiscriminately amongst people irrespective of gender, race, class or sexual orientation. Therefore applying the lens of mutual recognition and respect for self and other extends beyond these categories of gender, race, class or sexual identity.

**Case two:**

This is a brief news story appearing in the *Mail & Guardian* on page 36 in the week May 27 to June 2, 2005. It consists of one hundred and seventy-six words. I refer to these specific articles as the 'M&G Barometer' articles since the nucleus always reads: *HIV/Aids Barometer*. The font size for these reports are smaller than other reports on the same page. The smaller font size is indicative that these are informational pieces. These articles give statistical figures that are current and relate to specific research studies. They are informative and often precise articles with not much information regarding specific

details. The minor nucleus reads: Estimated worldwide HIV infections: 62 709 942 at noon on Wednesday, May 25. Furthermore the article continues to report that the incidence rate is on the rise especially in antenatal clinics in Swaziland.

Although the article is not specifically related to a strategy for resisting the hierarchical gender binary it does however highlight normalizing practices of sexual identity when it specifically comments on the rapid increase of infection rates amongst pregnant women. It does this by relating statistics from antenatal clinics in Swaziland. The rising infection rate is concerning because of two factors: (1) the lack of protective measures for preventing HIV infection such as the use of condoms and (2) unprotected sex for procreation. Unprotected sex is problematic because it could lead to unwanted pregnancies and can be unsafe when coupled with HIV infection. Kleintjes, et al (2005:1, 50) argue that women are more vulnerable to HIV infection due to biological and socio-economic factors. Even though unprotected sex might occur in intimate relationships, this does not mean that those intimate relationships are based on mutual recognition and women are not necessarily in strong positions to negotiate safer sex. Therefore the rising infection rates amongst women in antenatal clinics does not provide reasons for or speak to factors that increase women and girls vulnerability to HIV and AIDS.

As was stated in chapter one, a strategy for resisting the hierarchical gender binary is to foster mutual recognition because mutual recognition negates the oedipal construction of masculinity that is based on the repudiation of femininity (Benjamin, 1988). In mutual recognition subjects engage with each other on the basis of mutual respect and more especially respect for self. In the case of intimate or casual relationships when women and girls are seen as objects and not as subjects then this aspect becomes problematic because women and girls cannot negotiate safe sex. Since this is a brief news story it does not open the debate for further interrogation. It does however provide sufficient information for the reader to question why the infection rate is on the increase amongst women in Swaziland.



### Observation 2:

1. Women are at a higher risk of HIV infection due to factors such as biology, socio-economic factors and the hierarchical gender binary. Some reports highlight how these factors contribute towards women's vulnerability by providing information on how to prevent HIV infection. These reports are more useful for framing the context of a discussion on the rising incidence rates and can be more educational.

### **Case three:**

This is a full-spread feature story appearing on page 23 in the *Mail & Guardian* during the week June 17 to 23, 2005. The headline reads: *Moving on up*. Half the page is taken up by three panels of photographs. The first photograph is of a woman standing in front of a shack and behind a wheel. The second photograph is of a group of women sitting below a clothing line with clothing blowing in the wind. The final photograph is of three people sitting in a shack with a door behind them. All three photographs are of shack dwellers. Yet clearly these photographs are rustic and idyllic framing poverty in a dignified manner. Following in the logic of the photographs, the article is about poverty.

The photographs are misleading because the interest of the reader is steered towards poverty and life as a shack dweller and not towards HIV and AIDS. Thus the minor nucleus reads: *A programme called Mpilonhle-Mpilonde is upgrading the quality of life in hostels and informal settlements around Johannesburg through group-based learning, writes Matthew Wilhelm-Solomon.* The minor nucleus already indicates that the direction of the article is about hostel and shack dwellers. The establishing paragraph begins with statistics on hostel dwellers and informal settlements. It also elaborates that most of these residents are unemployed reinforcing the issue of poverty. Nonetheless the minor nucleus of the article claimed to 'upgrade' the lives of these people. Therefore, as a reader, the anticipation and curiosity of knowing more about this programme on poverty alleviation is aroused.

The following paragraph deviates from poverty and addresses a study by 'The Reproductive Health and HIV Research Unit (RHRU)' that deals with HIV prevalence rates in informal settlements and hostels. The study condemns the living conditions of the residents claiming that there are high levels of 'sexual violence'. The study's results have been used with partners on the project to enhance the quality of life in these areas through a 'sustainable livelihood approach revolving around "quality life" clubs'. These 'quality life clubs' are programmes on 'food and nutrition, family health, water and sanitation and community relations'. These clubs have dealt with 'sensitive issues of HIV and sexual violence'.

The significance of this article in this section, alternate understandings for resisting the hierarchical gender binary, is to highlight the intersectionality of poverty, sexual violence and HIV and AIDS. The theoretical frame informs my reading of this article as a return to mutual recognition out of the bind of gender, race, class and sexual orientation. Mutual recognition is the strategy that fosters recognition amongst subjects removing the master/slave dialectic of subject and object positions. Mutual recognition extends from recognition of self to recognition of other. Thus mutual recognition as a response shifts the situation from a material circumstance to a philosophical leaning. This is an important shift when developing programmes that enhance quality of life and good community relations because as a practice mutual recognition within communities means better gender relations, a reduced level of sexual violence and a more caring and nurturing community through negating the master/slave dialectic of the dominance and submission model, whereby violence is used as a form of exerting dominance (Benjamin, 1988). Responsible communities engender responsible sexual behaviour thereby curbing the spread of HIV and AIDS. This article is consistent with the theoretical frame because it shows practical ways of engaging communities to be responsible for self and other.

The article continues to list examples of community activities for a 'sustainable livelihood approach' with insignificant or limited resources. The issue of survival is pertinent to the story when the topic is about extreme poverty and poor living conditions. Diseases such as HIV and AIDS flourish in poor living conditions. Stigmatisation and

isolation of PLWHA are some of the challenges faced in these communities. In chapter one, *thanatos* was discussed as the risk of death but not death itself because there is no return from death. Interestingly the article highlights the low use of condoms even though fear and stigmatisation of HIV and AIDS is real. Thus a stark contradiction exists around fear of HIV and AIDS and low uptake of condoms. However the 'Mpilonhle-Mpilonde programme' has made inroads into communities and hopefully the programme for safer sex will be successful through fostering strategies such as mutual recognition, expressing the repressed fear of death and consciousness-raising of HIV and AIDS. Nonetheless there is a paradox in the article in that men are mostly interested in the clubs if they feel that they will gain employment, whereas women join the groups more easily without the need for gainful employment. Thus gender divisions in the programme's uptake are based on the need to survive for men as opposed to higher quality of life for women. The hierarchical gender binary is therefore enforced through subtle forms of resisting programmes that engender change. However the cautionary note in the article warns that severe conditions such as poverty may not make any programme sustainable if social circumstances do not change.

Observation 3:



1. It is important to critically evaluate social responsibility programmes looking at shifts that foster mutual recognition in order to eradicate sexual violence and ensure healthier and safer sex so that communities can flourish.

**Case four:**

This is an 'M&G Barometer' article appearing in the *Mail & Guardian* on page 24 in the week June 17 to 23, 2005. It is a brief news story and consists only of one hundred and eighty words. The font on these 'M&G Barometer' articles are always smaller than the main story font size inferring that these are only informational pieces. The nucleus reads: Estimated worldwide HIV infections: 63 012 339 at noon on Wednesday, June 15. These informational pieces on HIV and AIDS indicate how serious the pandemic is and that the

incidence rate is on the increase. Thus the reader is made aware of the fact that the report will be about increasing rates of HIV prevalence.

The topic sentence begins with: *Growing concern* and continues to explain the rise in the incidence rate for HIV in Burma. This rising incidence rate in Burma is due to the 'state of denial' by the military government. Those most affected by HIV and AIDS are women: sex workers and pregnant women, implying sexually active women. The article continues to state that the alarmingly high incidence rate is not likely to stabilise without an appropriate response from government with regard to 'educational campaigns' and interventions through 'culture and religion'. Furthermore there is a contradiction in numbers of HIV-positive people by the Burmese authorities with the UNAIDS estimates much higher. The tone of the article is matter-of-fact and has very little analysis on the causes of HIV and AIDS in Burma. Thus the article is more informational about a rise in HIV prevalence rates than it is of responses to HIV and AIDS. It simply highlights the fact that women are presenting increasingly high HIV prevalence rates implying that they are more vulnerable to HIV and AIDS and that HIV and AIDS denial is problematic because it hinders efforts to ensure prevention. This report is inappropriate and does not test the theoretical frame in that it provides no context to HIV and AIDS denial. It simply provides statistical and geographic information.

Observation 4:

1. In areas where HIV and AIDS denial exists together with a lack of educational campaigns increasingly high HIV prevalence rates are recorded. Therefore it is crucial to message prevention methods on HIV and AIDS to mitigate the high prevalence rate.

**Case five:**

This article appears in *The Star* on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2005. It is a feature story and the layout of the article presents a provocative photograph in the middle of the article. The photograph shows two people in bed under the covers with their calves and feet exposed. It is not

certain whether this is a heterosexual or homosexual couple but it appears as if the calves and feet are that of women. The headline reads: *SA needs sex survey to wage war on Aids*. The minor nucleus reads: *Conference calls for creation of database on nation's sexual habits*. The author of the article is **Claire Keeton**.

The article talks about 'the country's second Aids conference' and the need for 'a study on sexual patterns'. This comment was made by big business – 'Anglo American Chairman's Fund Clem Sunter'. This is a crucial piece in the article because it alludes to two important factors; (1) it means that big business is concerned about the increasing numbers of HIV-positive people and the impact it has on the economy and (2) the fact that big business is rallying behind this study implies that there will be sufficient funding for the study. Moreover the study is significant for understanding the root causes of HIV transmission through sexual activity. Therefore the article attempts to understand sexual behaviour that leads to HIV infection. The article relates Sunter's claims that understanding 'sexual patterns' will lead to 'the best way to formulate a viable Aids prevention strategy'. Thus the provocative photograph in the middle of the text is successful in grabbing the reader's attention however it then challenges the reader's perception of sex as salacious.

The article juxtaposes the difference between 'having safer sex' or 'having safer relationships' by stressing the importance of sex in the context of a healthy relationship over casual and risky sex. Thus sex in the context of an intimate relationship is negotiated and not risky. In terms of 'sexual patterns' this is important because 'having safer relationships' implies closed sexual relationships as opposed to risk-taking behaviour. However the cautionary note around the 'prevention strategy' is that both 'safer sex' and 'safer relationships' are important. The premise behind 'safer relationships' coincides with the aim of this study's theoretical frame of mutual recognition as a strategy for ensuring responsible sexual behaviour through self-respect and respect for the other. Even though this article does not directly challenge the hierarchical gender binary it is good because it shows that mutual recognition can be achieved through the notion of 'safer relationships' and therefore it resists the hierarchical gender binary indirectly.

Observation 5:

1. Understanding and addressing sexual patterns is important because it can highlight the context for pernicious sexual practices and can therefore better inform prevention campaigns on HIV and AIDS that shifts irresponsible and risky sexual practices towards healthier and more responsible sexual behaviour through the strategy of mutual recognition.

**A critical evaluation of representations of masculine constructions**

This theme consists of three articles beginning on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2005 and ending on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2005. The articles appear in *Business Day* and *The Star*. There are two feature articles and one brief news story. This section aims to highlight shifting constructions of masculinity in the following reports by showing how these shifts in constructions of masculinity resists the hierarchical gender binary of masculine dominance and feminine subjugation. The first article deals with a review of Judge Edwin Cameron's book emphasizing the Judge's sexual orientation and HIV status. The following article deals with creative strategies to resist the hierarchical gender binary for prevention campaigns in hyper-masculine societies. The last article in this sub-section deals with men that have resisted the hierarchical gender binary. It shows how an HIV and AIDS support group programme has helped these men in resisting the Freudian masculine construction of repudiating femininity.

**Case six:**

This is a feature article that appears in *Business Day* on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2005. The author of the article is **Tim Trengrove**. The nucleus reads: *Cameron confronts a nation's spectres*. The headline refers to the latest book release entitled 'Witness to AIDS' by constitutional court Judge Edwin Cameron who is HIV-positive. The book had much coverage because of the high profile of the author who was at the time a high-court judge. The book is

lauded by Trengrove, 'it is a big book indeed'. The book shows how shifting masculine constructions can resist normalizing practices of sexual identity in post-apartheid South Africa:

He repeatedly stresses his own privilege. But the issue is more complex. As a gifted intellect, a white male in former apartheid SA, now a high judicial officer, he is indeed privileged. But his identity is not unambiguous. As a gay male with AIDS, he is potentially a target of opprobrium. You cannot simply say that Cameron is "an AIDS activist" or a "gay white male living with AIDS", or an "internationally renowned jurist". He is all of these, and more. His narrative shows the varied colours of our self-hoods.

The text, too, is varied. Like a great deal of contemporary writing, it is a hybrid: part memoir, part apologia, pro vita sui, part jurisprudence, part polemic. This variety mirrors the complexity of the issues it addresses, indicating that no one form can claim to adequately represent that many-faceted reality the text addresses. It is democratic in bias and shows that the rainbow nation requires a "rainbow" book.

The article is a book review with a difference; it is intersectional with gender, race, class, sexual identity and professionalism. It highlights the multi-layered aspect of identity by addressing the issue of sexual identity and intersubjectivity (or the practice of mutual recognition between the self and others). To this extent, the article highlights the complexity of identity formation. It shows how the Freudian construction of masculinity, which is based on the repudiation of femininity (Benjamin, 1988), is resisted by representing homosexuality instead of the normative bias of heterosexuality. It does this by placing Edwin Cameron's sexual orientation as a central aspect to his identity. The article is considered consistent with the theoretical frame in that it shows how masculinity does not have to be confined to the normative sexual practice of heterosexuality and therefore it resists the hierarchical gender binary.

This book review cum article plays into the positive swing of the book, which is 'living with AIDS' as opposed to 'dying of AIDS'. It stresses 'living' associating sex and *eros* by not focusing on dying and it uncouples sex from *thanatos* or the risk of death. Thus it shifts the symbolic and imaginary realms away from the fear associated in the risk of

death towards affirming sex and pleasure or *jouissance*. To this extent, the article supports a healthy understanding of respect of self and other through the practice of mutual recognition, which is explained as recognition of self as an autonomous subject engaging in recognition with others as autonomous subjects as well.

Observation 6:

1. Resisting patriarchal representations of sexual identity through the use of mutual recognition helps to shift masculine constructions away from the normative practice of heterosexuality as well as the Freudian notion of masculinity, which is based on the repudiation of femininity.

**Case seven:**

On 25<sup>th</sup> May 2005 a brief news story appeared in the Independent newspapers group. It was a Reuters report. The headline reads: *Swazi Aids fight an uphill battle*. The report deals with Swazi men's resistance to AIDS awareness campaigns. In part Swazi men's resistance is due to a dominant patriarchal society, which is endorsed by the monarch, 'In a country whose absolute monarch chooses a new bare-breasted maiden to wed each year; persuading men to stick to one sexual partner is difficult'.

In societies where many female sexual partners are permissible it is challenging to shift masculine constructions away from the repudiation of femininity towards a more harmonious gender arrangement especially when it is affirmed from top down. The Swazi monarch's behaviour perpetuates the hierarchical gender binary. However the article proposes creative strategies to shift the hierarchical gender binary by getting men in Swaziland to attend AIDS awareness campaigns. Attendance in such campaigns is low because of resistance to HIV and AIDS messaging but the creative strategy employed was to invite the men to the theatre, 'education by stealth was the only answer'. This is a useful article because it shows practical ways of resisting the hierarchical gender binary through creative and stealthy strategies for AIDS awareness campaigns.



Observation 7:

1. In communities where patriarchal values are strongly endorsed it is important to seek creative strategies for resisting normalizing practices of sexual identity that better inform prevention campaigns on HIV and AIDS.

**Case eight:**

This is the final case study within this section. It is a feature article that appears in *The Star* on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2005. The author of the article is Philippa Garson. The headline reads: *Men behaving positively*. From the headline it is clear that the article has a positive angle on men. The minor nucleus reads: *The AIDS virus is forcing infected men to rethink their behaviour and look to one another for help in living with the disease. Philippa Garson sat in on a male support group*. The minor nucleus includes the by-line but it also indicates a shift in masculine constructions with the advent of HIV and AIDS. Interestingly the use of the word 'living' also emphasizes a shift away from death and *thanatos* towards *eros*.

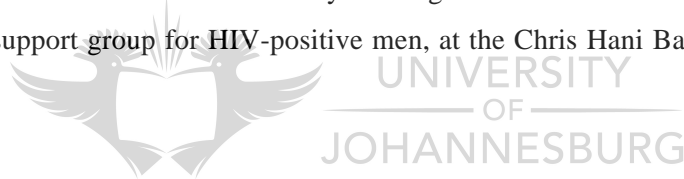
The layout of the article is dominated by a photograph of two young black men in a comfortable position with a hand-over-shoulder pose. The men are standing in front of book shelves. From the photograph it is implied that these men are either part of the support group or are AIDS activists. It is evident that the men are aware of the lens of the camera and thus the pose is one that is conscious. The photograph speaks to the audience in as much as the major and minor nucleus does. The minor nucleus is indicative of gender differentiation that falls outside the Freudian frame of masculinity because the men are helping 'one another' to deal with their vulnerability 'in living with the disease'. The men in the photograph are standing in a close and comfortable manner that indicates nurturing and caring behaviour. These moments of support and care amongst men are significant shifts for constructions of masculinity because they are shifts away from the repudiation of femininity and in fact espouse feminine constructions of care and support.

The photograph visually shows how the Freudian masculine construction has shifted to a more inclusive and fluid gender identity. The photograph could be read as two men posing as lovers or it could be read as two men posing as good, supportive friends. Either way the men are in an intimate pose and the nebulous or vague relationship that comes through in the photograph highlights the shift away from the construction of a heteronormative masculinity. Thus the headline and the minor headline together with the photograph highlight very clearly and strongly a resistance to normalizing practices of sexual identity. Moreover the article evokes the curiosity of the reader through the use of the photograph and the headline regarding change in men's behaviour.

The establishing sentences of the article state:

A Group of men stands in the middle of the room holding hands randomly across each other's bodies in a messy human knot. They step over each other's arms, contorting themselves, trying to transform the knot into the circle.

Time runs out and the knot is still a knot. Everyone laughs and returns to their seats. The tension dissipates and the support group for HIV-positive men, at the Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital, is about to begin.



The article begins with a very visual description of the exercise in the male support group that physically binds the group together. This physical closeness of the bodies shows how intimate the action is and how much trust is established within the group in order to be in this particular position. This action eases tension and establishes contact amongst the members of the group. Moreover it displaces the Freudian construction of masculinity that is based on the repudiation of femininity in the moment of splitting the mother/child dyad (Benjamin, 1988) because it physically brings these men together in a harmonious and unified way (Caverero, 2002). This then implies that physical contact amongst the men reverts to a pre-oedipal stage of touching and establishing bonds of love further displacing the oedipal repudiation of femininity and closeness with the m/other. Furthermore the article substantiates this position by stating:

“We’re trying to tell them these are the problems we are facing. They have to come up with a solution of how to untie the knot without letting go of their hands. Normally people see each other’s problems from a distance. But if we can communicate them to each other we can come up with solutions”.

In these sentences, the words of the facilitator echo the gender divide of the masculine/feminine domains or public/private spheres. Using constructive methods such as communication and touch to ‘come up with solutions’ falls within the ambit of the pre-oedipal stage of the oneness with the m/other (Benjamin, 1988, Caverero, 2002). This is a crucial point in reinforcing the headline of the article – ‘Men behaving positively!’ This bridging of the gap between public and private domains reinforces the Marquis de Sade’s notion of sex occupying a semi-public space (Hekma, 2001) that leads to healthier and open sexual practices. This is the space in which it becomes possible to express the repressed.

Subsequently the article juxtaposes this positive behaviour with the flipside of the coin:

... HIV is forcing them to rethink the typically macho behaviours that probably got them through life before – such as bottling up their feelings, having girlfriends on the side, intimidating their partners or shrugging off their health problems.

Before, they felt they didn’t have to worry too much about how they had sex or their emotional well-being. But to ignore these things now could be an express train to death. If they have unsafe sex, they will re-infect themselves with new strains of the virus.

The writer is very consciously choosing to state the consequences if Freudian masculine constructions do not shift or change because without any shifts or changes the ramifications will lead to death through re-infection. Therefore in line with the theoretical frame, reading Philippa Garson’s article indicates that Philippa is clearly showing how the repudiation of femininity in the construction of the masculine Freudian oedipal man is pernicious and deadly when she emphasizes that ‘having girlfriends on the side, intimidating their partners or shrugging off their health problems... will re-infect themselves with new strains of the virus’. This emphasis for a new understanding of

gender differentiation revives the strategy for resisting the hierarchical gender binary and introduces the need for a more inclusive and responsible sexual identity that is based on mutual recognition and respect for self and other.

The article is empathetic in that it highlights the challenges in resisting the normative masculine construct in the Freudian oedipal complex when it describes the vulnerabilities of an alternate masculinity:

A young Casanova, his eyes hidden by a kwaito-style hat pulled low, is particularly hostile today: “Do I have to be here? I want to know my rights,” he simmers before retreating into a sulky silence.

These are not easy times. Whether these men are trendy and aspirant, factory workers or self-employed, young middle-aged or elderly, HIV has shaken their lives, forcing them to rethink so much that they once took for granted...

Time is up. The group was “hot” today everyone agrees. Even the kwaito wannabe is moved to say: “I’ve learnt a lot. I feel very relieved. When you attend the group you realise you are not alone.”

This is a ‘positively’ good article because it shows how resisting the hierarchical gender binary of the Freudian construction of masculinity has helped HIV-positive men to cope with the virus but it also shows how resisting normalizing practices of sexual identity through care and support has helped these men become more responsible in their sexual behaviour. This article is consistent with the theoretical frame because it shows through practical examples and by emphasizing a good programme how to resist the hierarchical gender binary and normalizing practices of sexual identity by shifting macho behaviour towards behaviour that is more in line with mutual recognition.

Observation 8:

1. It is important to show through concrete and practical examples how good programmes shift macho behaviour towards mutual recognition and thus towards more balanced gendered identities.

## **A critical evaluation of representations of feminine constructions**

There are two articles within this section beginning on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2005 and ending on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2005. The articles appear in *The Star* and *Mail & Guardian*. These reports were chosen for their shift away from Freudian notions of feminine sexual passivity (Benjamin, 1988: 87). The two articles are appropriate news stories in that they resist normalizing practices of sexual identity. The first article deals with women's sexual agency and desire. The second article deals with triumph over adversity through self-representation by showing how mutual recognition leads to respect for self and other.

### **Case nine:**

This article was reported in *The Star* on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2005. The by-line is that of the former writer – **Philippa Garson**. The headline reads: *Don't forget girls like to have sex, sometimes skin to skin*. The minor nucleus reads: *There is more behind the high incidence of Aids in young women in South Africa than the well-worn theories about inequality and vulnerability*. The end of the article includes some information about the writer stating that 'Philippa Garson is a fellow in the HIV/Aids and the Media Project, run by the Perinatal HIV Research Unit and the journalism programme at Wits University'.

The previous case study was an article by Philippa Garson whereby she challenges the Freudian construction of masculinity. The abovementioned information about Philippa indicates that her research interests are on HIV and AIDS and media, which implies that the report might be critical of representation of sexual identity and most probably expose or interrogate alternate femininities. The headline already highlights an alternate femininity by showing a sexualized femininity that opposes the Freudian construction of femininity, which is based on feminine sexual passivity (Benjamin, 1988: 87) because 'young women ... like to have sex'. However 'skin to skin' sex is inferring risky sexual behaviour especially if it is not in the context of a safe relationship and neither the major nor minor nuclei substantiates that.

The article begins with reiterating some of the more pronounced factors that contribute towards women and girls vulnerabilities to HIV and AIDS in ‘developing countries’ such as ‘gender inequality’. However from the nuclei – major and minor – it is indicative that the article presents issues that are ‘more nuanced and complex’:

From the wealth of literature on women’s vulnerability to HIV/Aids, one could be forgiven for thinking that all women’s sexual experiences occur through gritted teeth – endured only because of the threat of violence or the promise of a meal or a new dress.

From this perspective it would appear that women don’t have sexual desires and that all men are uncontrollable, horny beasts who just can’t get enough of it.

What about all the regular sex that takes place every day between men and women, sex that women enjoy and may initiate? Surely this also makes up a part of the story of how HIV/Aids is spreading?

Highlighting female vulnerability in the fight against HIV/Aids is critical, but we should not be lulled into thinking that the story of female sexual behaviour is no more than the story of gender inequality.

And acknowledging the existence of female desire does not mean that one is blaming women for the spread of the disease. In my view, the thesis on “women’s vulnerability” reinforces the tired “Madonna/whore myth” that women are either the pure and innocent victims of men’s lasciviousness or the types who screw around, even if they are only doing so to survive.

The landscape of female sexual behaviour is surely more nuanced and complex than this.

Philippa is very clearly stating that it is not just women’s vulnerabilities that are contributing factors to the high levels of HIV and AIDS. She is also commenting on women’s sexual agency. According to Benjamin (1988: 87) Freudian notions of female sexuality are restricted to an ‘acceptance of sexual passivity’. As Cavarero (2002) discussed pleasure in sex is not confined to the Freudian masculine perversion of repudiating femininity. Instead there is an element of ‘desire’ that is in opposition to the Freudian oedipal repudiation of femininity that is based on the pre-oedipal notion of unity and wholeness in pleasure. Philippa is choosing this alternate angle on ‘desire’ when she says that women’s agency in relation to ‘sexual desires’ is also an important factor that needs to be understood. Furthermore it is crucial to understand that not all women are

victims because mythologizing women's vulnerability can be disempowering and prevent good research, representation and social change that is needed in order to achieve mutual recognition. Moreover the article alludes to the issue that women's agency resists perceptions of feminine sexual passivity and also feminine subjugation. Thus representing women's sexual agency challenges and resists the hierarchical gender binary by opposing Freud's understanding of pleasure that is defined within the context of heterosexuality and the masculine perversion of repudiating femininity (Caverero, 2002; Campbell, 2000). Philippa is then consistent in resisting normalizing practices of sexual identity by opposing the Freudian masculine construct of sexual desire when she highlights the fact that women actively engage in sexual desire and are not submissive.

The article continues to quote research conducted by Jonathan Berger who investigates the notion of desire in sexual behavioural patterns, affirming Philippa's position of women's sexual agency. Berger's research points away from myths on vulnerability that hinder an understanding of pleasure in a more diverse manner. Philippa's use of this research in the article leads towards a more 'nuanced' opinion on sexual behaviour and HIV and AIDS, critiquing discursive practices on women's vulnerability that become too readily mythologized. Moreover Philippa substantiates this 'nuanced' position in an interview with a woman who claims that she might be HIV-positive because she engaged in risky sexual practices and never thought that she would ever contract the virus. Philippa poses the question directly to the reader: 'How different is she from the many other women who, for a variety of reasons, may have lots of risky sex?' The fact that the author poses a question to the reader through inciting a confidence from an interview she conducted brings the author closer to the reader. Thus the game that Philippa plays with the reader is that she personalises the story and builds into the story an intimacy with the reader that then challenges women's vulnerability to HIV and AIDS by representing women's sexual agency. This article is consistent with the theoretical frame because it resists the hierarchical gender binary and notions of women's sexual passivity.

Zoonen (1994: 18) argues that distorting and resisting images of women's subjugation displaces stereotyping and encourages women's empowerment. Furthermore it highlights

the fact that high HIV prevalence rates amongst women is not solely due to gender inequality. Sexual relations are negotiated and within that space women's sexual agency must be considered a factor for risky sex that leads to a higher incidence rate. Therefore this article is appropriate in challenging sexual identity because it does not assume women's sexual passivity or heterosexuality but instead nuances sexual identity.

Observation 9:

1. It is important to challenge stereotypes of feminine sexual passivity as a strategy for resisting the hierarchical gender binary and normalizing practices of sexual identity.

**Case ten:**

This is a feature article that appears on page 4 and 5 in the *Mail & Guardian* in the week of June 17 to 23, 2005. The layout of the article consists of a third of each page and is thus significant in visual effect. The headline reads: *'I am a beautiful young woman'*. The article is a book review. The minor nucleus reads: *In this extract from Balancing Act, a book about gay and lesbian South African youth, one young woman tells her story: Nunu, a 25-year-old HIV/Aids activist, faces her fear.* A photograph appears on page 5 and consists of a third of the article layout. The photograph caption reads, 'Nunu speaks out against the stigma surrounding black lesbian women with HIV'.

The headline of the report is an affirmation. It is considered an appropriate report because it is about claiming one's self and living a life of dignity. The article is about the trying and powerful journey of Nunu, a rape survivor who is a lesbian and is also HIV-positive. Nunu begins the article with her experience of enjoying the company of a girlfriend at the tender age of fifteen. She continues by stating that, 'I was 16 when I decided I was a lesbian'. Nunu's confession to the reader like Philippa Garson's intimacy with the reader opens a space between the author and the reader that allows the reader into the inner sanctum of the writer. Thus Nunu's confession is an intimacy into her inner-thoughts and feelings. Subsequently the confession for liking girls at the age of fifteen is an innocent moment that leads to an experienced comment of choosing to be 'a lesbian'. For feminist



psychoanalysts' like Adria Schwartz (1998) choosing a lesbian position means that Nunu is a subject and autonomous and can make an over-inclusive choice for wanting to be with a woman because she is able to see herself and others as subjects and therefore she engages in mutual recognition.

Overcoming trauma and meeting challenges are subsequent themes in the article. Nunu speaks of her rape and her difficulties with drug addiction as well as challenges she faced when she found out that she was HIV-positive. The report is one of courage about a young woman's desire to overcome her anger and despair through helping herself and others by means of communication and support. Nunu's moment of truth was when she confronted her mother about her rape:

I told my HIV counsellor and she found a rehab place for me, but first I was supposed to tell my mother.

She called my mom in. It was me, her, my mom. I was looking at my mommy. I had to say something. And, when I told her that I'm on drugs, she said she already realised, but she never knew how to confront me. I told my mom that I'm a lesbian and that I'm HIV positive and that my cousin raped me, all at the same time. And about the rape when I was six. I just felt everything at the same time.

Our parents, as black people, it's difficult for them to talk about sex, about drugs. They feel very embarrassed. My mom asked me, "Why didn't you tell me all along?" But it was too difficult for me. I couldn't talk about sex, because my mom didn't tell me about sex.

Me and my mom, we used to fight for no reason. Like if she says something, I become angry. I used to blame her: "Why didn't you see that I was raped?" I didn't understand why she didn't notice. She also had to go to counselling. She also kept on blaming herself, until she accepted everything that happened is the past. We have to move on.

Now she is happy. She supports me. It's all about support. It's all about communication.

Nunu's report is an example of how Nunu triumphed over her adversities. Her journey is one of bravery and of love. It is a report of healing, helping others and healing oneself with the love and support of others. The construction of femininity within this report is about mutual recognition that occurs within the pre-oedipal stage, which leads to a

healthy relationship between mother and child; relationships that are based on respect, communication, support and love. This construction of femininity is also based on object relations theory that supports the notion that the child is a social being and becomes a subject in relation to others referring to the notion of intersubjectivity (Benjamin, 1988). Thus Nunu concludes her report with her responsibility to herself and to others:

I look at myself in the mirror and say, “I’m a beautiful young woman, I can’t give up at this stage.” I make sure I’m always happy, each and every day. If something brings me down, I challenge it. And I thank my community. I thank people who are around me for supporting me. I know I’ll survive with their help. And also with my own help. I’ve done so much for myself, to accept myself and forgive others.

Self-representation is a useful strategy to shift perceptions and to resist the hierarchical gender binary and normalizing practices of sexual identity (Haraway, 2004, Kappeler, 1988) by representing women’s autonomy (Campbell, 2000) and thus distorting women’s subjugation (Zoonen, 1994). Nunu’s report is self-representational but it is also an inspirational story because it combines responsibility for oneself and for others and it shows how through mutual recognition and intersubjectivity a strong and brave young woman is able to help herself as well as others. This article is consistent with the theoretical frame because it embraces the idea of self-respect and self-love and furthers the aim of mutual recognition. It shows from this trajectory how representation on femininity can be strong, powerful and empowering.

Observation 10:

1. Women’s personal experiences of courage and bravery over adversity are useful representations for resisting the hierarchical gender binary and for promoting self-respect and responsibility to oneself and towards others.
2. Lesbian sexual agency resists heteronormativity and challenges stereotypes of sexual identity.
3. Family support is crucial for overcoming stigma around sexual violence and HIV and AIDS.

4. Acknowledging one's HIV status is a step forward in eradicating stigma related to HIV and AIDS. This in turn leads to more responsible and nurturing relationships and ultimately towards mutual recognition.

5. Self-representation is a useful strategy to shift perceptions especially those that stereotype feminine subjugation.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter dealt with ten articles that mostly presented alternate understandings for resisting normalizing practices of sexual identity. The chapter used specific understandings emanating from the theoretical frame such as mutual recognition, expressing the repressed, consciousness-raising and critical evaluation to resist normalizing practices of sexual identity in representation. Thus the sections for this chapter were chosen to further the aim of resisting normalizing practices of sexual identity. The first section dealt with alternate understandings for resisting the hierarchical gender binary and showed how the hierarchical gender binary can be resisted in the articles presented. The second section dealt with a critical evaluation of representations of masculine constructions showing how the Freudian masculine construct of repudiating femininity can be resisted in media messaging. The final section focused on a critical evaluation of representations of feminine constructions that resisted the Freudian feminine construct of sexual passivity. Self-representation of a lesbian sexual identity illustrated how mutual recognition and intersubjectivity can foster a better sense of self and other leading towards supportive families and communities that break stigma around HIV and AIDS. Moreover self-representation resisted normalizing practices of sexual identity by representing women's autonomy and pleasure. These representations of femininity distorted and resisted women's subjugation. Most of the articles in this chapter were considered consistent with the theoretical frame in that they showed practical examples of how to resist normalizing practices of sexual identity.

The following chapter will focus on uncoupling sex and *thanatos* or the risk of death in media representations of HIV and AIDS. It will highlight the discussion of semi-public

spaces (Hekma, 2001) for expressing the repressed by linking sex with *eros* to emphasize responsible sexual behaviour and the notion of pleasure that falls outside the Freudian oedipal construct of repudiating femininity (Caverero, 2002). The final chapter of this study is the conclusion of the study. The conclusion will present guidelines based on the observations emanating from the analyses of the newspaper reports in the hope of representing nuanced messaging of gender and sex and HIV and AIDS for journalists and AIDS practitioners.



## Chapter four: representations of sex and HIV and AIDS; looking at shifting sex away from *thanatos* towards sex and *eros*

### Introduction

There are a total of eight articles in this chapter. The analyses range from the period 1<sup>st</sup> May 2005 and end in the week July 29 to August 4 2005. The previous chapter dealt with alternate understandings for resisting normalizing practices of sexual identity. This chapter focuses on shifting the link away from sex and *thanatos* towards sex and *eros*. The articles chosen are ordered chronologically. However unlike chapter four there are no other sections other than *eros* and *thanatos*, which will be the focus of this chapter's analyses. The newspapers featured in this chapter are: *Mail & Guardian*, *The Star*, *Business Day* and Independent newspapers (I write it as Independent newspapers because some of the articles simply state IOL which refers to Independent Online Group or Independent Newspapers Group).

The reason for focusing on representations of sex and HIV and AIDS is because rethinking representations of sex and HIV and AIDS can shift the tension in *eros* (life drive) and *thanatos* (death drive) towards more appropriate messaging that encourages more responsible sexual behaviour. The risk of death in *thanatos* leads to irresponsible sexual behaviour but it can be nuanced and shifted towards associations of more life affirming messages in *eros* and therefore towards more responsible sexual behaviour. The tension between these two opposing drives is not deferred instead it is re-thought with the notion of *jouissance* as the nuance in transient harmony from the 'constant tension' (Benjamin, 1988: 36) between these opposing drives. *Jouissance* is the pleasure of sharing with the other (Benjamin, 1988: 53) the act of recognition. In the context of sex *jouissance* implies orgasm. Therefore *jouissance* in the context of *eros* and *thanatos* implies a subtle shift in messaging away from the real risk of death towards the loss of self in the 'little death' (Zoonen, 1994: 24) or orgasm during the moment of unity with the other. This relies heavily on trust and recognition of the self with the other. This re-conceptualisation of sex and the 'little death' shifts the focus away from *thanatos* towards

*eros* and the affirmation of life, enhancing the pleasure in sharing with the other. The foundation for this shift can be found in the theoretical leanings of intersubjectivity and mutual recognition, which is a recognition of self with other that encourages unity and wholeness in the moment of loss of self during *jouissance* (pleasure/orgasm).

There is a distinction between actual death and the risk of death in *thanatos*. The risk of death in *thanatos* can be seen as nuanced in the ‘little death’ with the loss of self during the moment of *jouissance*. Uncoupling sex from a real risk of death in *thanatos*, which links sex with risky and irresponsible sexual behaviour towards a rethinking of *thanatos* as the risk of the ‘little death’ during *jouissance* and the pleasure in sharing with the other, shifts discourses of sex away from *thanatos* towards *eros*. Messaging real death as a finality is not the same as messaging a real risk of death because real death is not a resolution to the constant tension in *eros* and *thanatos*. Moreover shifting the messaging towards linking sex with *eros* is to affirm Edwin Cameron’s slogan of ‘living with Aids’ as opposed to ‘dying of Aids’ (*The Star*, 1<sup>st</sup> May 2006). The shift away from a real risk of death towards *eros* leads to more responsible sexual behaviour because the emphasis is on pleasure and the life drive and responsibility towards the self and other and, not in irresponsible sexual behaviour in the real risk of death in *thanatos*. Finding transient harmony between *eros* and *thanatos* also lies in the strategy of expressing the repressed sexual desires, which means placing sex in a ‘semi-public’ space (Hekma, 2001) by talking about sex and HIV and AIDS and not denying the reality of HIV and AIDS. To this extent, the articles chosen for this chapter will be analyzed in an attempt to shift the way we think about sexual pleasure in the hope that these shifts can carry responsible messaging about sexual behaviour that sheds light on sex and pleasure outside of associating sex with risky and dangerous behaviour that leads to the finality of death.

### ***Eros and thanatos***

*Eros* and *thanatos* are the life and death drives that sit in opposition to each other. *Eros* represents pleasure of being alive whilst *thanatos* represents the pleasure in the risk of death – it is not the finality of death but rather the risk of death. Finding transient

harmony from the constant tension in *eros* and *thanatos* leads to *jouissance*; flirting with the risk of death in *thanatos* and the feeling of being alive in *eros* (Wright, et al, 1992). This transient harmony from the constant tension in *eros* and *thanatos* constitutes the pleasure principle. The association of these opposing drives to HIV and AIDS is based on the tension within these drives and the momentary harmony that results in *jouissance*. The constant tension plays out in representations of sex as taboo, sinful and shameful and opposing feelings of finding pleasure in sex that makes seeking transient harmony through these contradictory representations a risk-taking behaviour. Therefore it is important to disassociate sex with real danger and view sex as pleasurable and life affirming and not punitive and censured. This can be achieved by emphasizing responsible sexual behaviour that affirms life and the pleasure of sex or *jouissance* as the pleasure in sharing oneself with the other. Thus *jouissance* helps to re-conceptualise the constant tension in *eros* and *thanatos* by shifting this tension towards the transient harmony in loss of control of self during the moment of orgasm in the practice of mutual recognition. Therefore a rethinking of *eros* and *thanatos* and *jouissance* is a significant shift in nuancing representations of sex and HIV and AIDS. To this extent, this study emphasizes this shift as a means to resolve the tension in *eros* and *thanatos* through a rethinking of *jouissance* as the 'little death' (Zoonen, 1994: 24) and not a real risk of death.

Slavoj Zizek (2006) describes *jouissance* as the fulfilment of pleasure through the loss of control. Subsequently Zizek (2006) also concurs that *jouissance* is experienced when the self is lost in the moment of pleasure or orgasm – the 'little death' (a Lacanian dictum). Loss of control of self during *jouissance* can be read in many ways, in the classical tension between *eros* and *thanatos* that can be resolved through risky sexual behaviour or as the study proposes with loss of control of self in the unity and wholeness (Caverero, 2002) with the other, as in mutual recognition, in the lost moment of pleasure. If *jouissance* occurs as a result of mutual recognition then this implies that *jouissance* is occurring in the context of a safe relationship based on mutual respect and trust.

Adriana Cavarero (2002) affirms the argument for an alternate reading of *eros* and *thanatos* and *jouissance* when she reverts to pleasure without having to engage in risky sexual behaviour. Inferred in Cavarero's (2002) understanding of pleasure is the association of pleasure through mutual recognition and respect for self and other that occurs during the pre-oedipal phase. Through recognition of self with other the loss of wholeness during *jouissance* can be safe and lead to safer sex and *eros* or pleasure in living. Mutual recognition thus ensures pleasure or *jouissance* through the act of recognition (Benjamin, 1988: 16; 53) because in the act of recognition the self understands that he/she is the same as the other in that both are subjects but unlike the other the self is different due to the self being autonomous, '[T]he subject is compensated for his loss of sovereignty by the pleasure of sharing, the communion with another subject' (Benjamin, 1988: 53). This basic function of mutual recognition through sameness and difference creates the moment of pleasure. Thus to experience pleasure or *jouissance* is to recognise the other and therefore loss of control of self with the other is based on trust and respect for the other. Hence mutual recognition allows the space for *jouissance* to occur in a responsible and respectful environment between the self and other that leads to nurturing and safer relationships. Subsequently safer relationships leads to more responsible sexual behaviour. Thus for Žižek (2006) a loss of self-control is the ultimate pleasure or *jouissance* but that can only happen in a safe and nurturing environment. Therefore for representations of sex and HIV and AIDS it is important to understand this nuance in mutual recognition and *jouissance* and thus shift the representation towards this stance because it can lead towards more responsible sexual behaviour.

### **Case one:**

This is a feature article appearing in *The Star* on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2006. The headline reads: *Force of the True*. The minor nucleus reads: *In his published memoir, Judge Edwin Cameron's clear authoritative voice cuts a path between the silence and panic of the Aids pandemic, writes Loren Anthony*. The inscribed handwritten note in the photocopy includes the additional information: '(Lifestyle section)'. This means that the article appeared in the



'Lifestyle' supplement. Beneath the nuclei features a photograph of Judge Edwin Cameron in his chambers. The photograph occupies at least a third of the page layout. The caption beneath the photograph reads 'PERSONAL SPACE: To date Cameron is the only person in public office in Africa who has disclosed his HIV status'. Further along the article beneath a profile photograph of the book cover a blurb states: 'I emphasized that I had been able to choose to make my statement because "I am not dying of Aids. I am living with Aids". The phrase caught on'. Cameron's choice of shifting the discourse from death towards life is also substantiated through the use of antiretroviral treatment, 'By 1997 Cameron realised he was dying of Aids and needed treatment'. Thus 'living with Aids' is not only about *eros* it is also a political statement about access to treatment that is lifesaving.

A similar article on Judge Edwin Cameron featured in the previous chapter. The article was a book review dealing with constructions of masculinity that highlighted the shift in the Freudian masculine construction of repudiating femininity towards a more open, fluid and inclusive masculine identity. It did so by emphasizing the Judge's homosexual identity, which is an over-inclusive identity (Schwartz, 1998) and produces an alternate understanding for resisting the normative practice of heterosexuality. Thus the previous article was included under the section 'a critical evaluation of representations of masculine constructions'. However this article focuses on the strategy for linking sex and *eros* or 'living with Aids' as opposed to the link between sex and *thanatos* or 'dying of Aids'. This shift from *thanatos* towards *eros* is mainly to affect better messaging on sexuality and HIV and AIDS so as to create more responsible sexual behaviour that resists normalizing practices of sexual identity. This is considered an appropriate article because it highlights the tension that exists within *eros* and *thanatos* by emphasizing a positive spin on life and living through the phrase 'living with Aids'. It shows how nuance shifts the tension in *eros* and *thanatos* towards more responsible messaging.

The article begins with the options for speaking about HIV and AIDS. It clearly demonstrates the ways in which HIV and AIDS can be discussed in the public domain through various platforms such as comedy or poetry, 'Pieter-Dirk Uys, for instance, uses

a humour that abrades ... Local people do it differently, wrenching out poems about deadly love'. The ability to speak publically about HIV and AIDS is significant because it places sex and HIV and AIDS in a 'semi-public' space (Hekma, 2001: 3) so that sex and HIV and AIDS is not repressed but instead expressed with the hope of better understanding and responding to sex and HIV and AIDS. But the article also points towards the political platform, which has been audibly silent by claiming that 'Their silence speaks volumes, meaning nothing or anything at all'. Thus the political stage has not picked up the mantle to address the AIDS pandemic. Clearly the article is critical of a political absence on the HIV and AIDS issue. However Judge Cameron has been praised to be the 'the only person in public office in Africa who has disclosed his HIV status'. This public admission by Cameron about his HIV status is significant for breaking the stigma on HIV and AIDS. Part of the reason for lauding Cameron about this stance is that his voice champions the cause of people living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA):

"I very carefully calculated my own voice," says Cameron. "In this epidemic of so many millions, there are so few voices. In affluent North America and Western Europe, you have these loud, expressive voices. In Africa it's different. Poverty, stigma and the inhibition of discrimination. It's muted the response. But I deliberately set out to speak at a very personal level, to find the hearts of a wide range of people."

There is a relief in this. Cameron's voice quickly negotiates the unturned terrain between the silence and the panic. It's a compassionate voice that brings some balance to the shrill advocacy and insensate denial still raging around Aids.

And it's voice that is authenticated by one simple fact: Cameron has the virus in his body. It's this one somatic fact that immediately links Cameron, the judge, to Gladwell, the gardener; that connects him to countless others – unspeakably poor and socially marginalised – who are living with HIV/Aids in South Africa, and dying unnecessarily from it.

You might at this point, question that connection as tenuous and presumptuous. You might ask how a well-groomed, highly educated, gay, affluent white man can arrogate to himself the right of speaking for the destitute and the dying. But there's a curious twist to Cameron's report: he comes from a background of poverty and destitution. He grew up in a children's home in the Eastern Cape.

Cameron was poor, yes, but he was also white. His white skin, so brutishly reified by the apartheid government, delivered him into the rarefied world of a top boys' school in Pretoria.

This fact has never left him. “It is the central part of my social and political consciousness. I certainly had talents, but I was able to express and build on those talents because I was white. A poor white kid could capitalise on his gifts in the 1960s and 1970s because of the privileges extended to whites.”

As much as Edwin Cameron is accomplished by becoming a judge and championing the cause of PLWHA, he is very much aware of the particular historical trajectory of apartheid and how his whiteness has been a source of ‘privilege’. Therefore even though he can identify with being poor and destitute, he is also conscious of his particular racial ‘privilege’. This self-criticism or self-consciousness is seen to bring Edwin closer to his reader because he is not exempting himself from the underlying causes of ‘privilege’ and education. According to the theoretical frame of this study, Edwin Cameron is using intersectionality as a tool to show how gender, race and class intersect to impact the other so that ‘privilege’ in one space is not ‘privilege’ in all spaces. This means that being a poor white boy, Edwin Cameron was ‘privileged’ according to race and gender, which led to a ‘privileged’ education that later led towards upward mobility. However he was not ‘privileged’ for his class background, which saw him being raised in ‘a children’s home’. Edwin’s whiteness allowed him access to resources such as education but this does not mean that he cannot relate to his early childhood experiences of poverty. This is important because it affords Cameron the space to talk about poverty from a personal position. This is a very useful way to challenge stereotypes around gender, race, class and sexuality by showing the layering and complexities in identity formation that allows for spaces to be negotiated. In the case of Edwin Cameron, he is able to relate to poverty and a marginal sexual identity yet he occupies a space of ‘privilege’ as a white male judge.

Space is of great importance in this article for two reasons, the formative reason being the space to talk about issues on behalf of others and the space to specifically talk about sex by expressing the repressed. For Edwin Cameron the space to talk on behalf of the poor is important because of his personal experience of growing up in a children’s home. However expressing the repressed is a very political issue in that it means negotiating a safe space to speak about issues of sex and sexuality and HIV and AIDS. In the theoretical frame the Marquis de Sade’s work is used to show how important it is for sex

and by inference sexuality, and in the case of Edwin Cameron – sexuality, to occupy a ‘semi-public’ space (Hekma, 2001: 3) so as to allow sex or sexuality to be spoken about in ways that better expresses sexual desire in a healthy and responsible manner. When sex or sexuality are repressed and relegated to the private domain they become dangerous, risky and hidden. Once sex, and in this context sexuality, occupies a semi-public space it can be spoken about and experiences can be shared and expressed so that sex and sexuality do not become linked to pernicious and hidden practices associated with sex and *thanatos* or the real risk of death (Benjamin, 1988). Thus Edwin Cameron’s sexuality paves the way for discourses on sexuality to be opened and expressed without shame or stigma.

It is important to show through the theoretical frame how responsible sexual behaviour can be affirmed. In chapter one, Jessica Benjamin (1995) discusses the idea of ‘sameness and difference’ in intrapsychic processes of object relations theory during the pre-oedipal phase of child development. She argues that a child can split-off from the m/other and affirm herself as a subject without having to repudiate the m/other or view the m/other as an object for merely fulfilling the child’s need. Basically, Benjamin claims that through the process of intersubjectivity (recognising others as subjects) the child becomes a subject herself without having to repudiate femininity or relegate femininity to the object status. This crucial moment of seeing others as subjects and viewing the self as a subject reinforces the title of her paper ‘sameness and difference’. She purports that the self recognizes the sameness of occupying a subject position with the other yet still recognizing the difference between the self and other. This notion of sameness and difference negates or makes redundant the Hegelian master/slave dialectic of skewed recognition between subject and object positions. This classic understanding of sameness and difference between self and other reaffirms Edwin Cameron’s position of being ‘a well-groomed, highly educated, gay, affluent white man’ who is self-consciousness of his white privilege during apartheid whilst simultaneously understanding the complexity of his identity through his choice of being homosexual and the disempowerment that came with ‘poverty and destitution’.

The article continues by listing Edwin's achievements from being a self-conscious pupil critical of apartheid to being a recipient of 'a Rhodes Scholarship at Oxford' to arguing the 'appeal against the death sentences imposed on the Sharpeville Six'. Clearly Cameron has a moral compass that allows him to be self-critical and self-conscious and because of this he can champion just causes when he states:

"I don't deserve any glory. There is no straight line, no long-standing, honourable tradition of activism. Anyone who tries to look back and see a morally unblotted life, a morally unambiguous life, is attempting the impossible."

It is very clear that this moral compass is a compass for the 'force of the true' when Cameron confesses, 'In 1985, after a single unguarded sexual encounter, Cameron contracted the virus'. The singularity of this moment in the book shows that with Cameron's 'education', 'whiteness' and 'privilege' he was still vulnerable to the virus. This is important because it shows how the body is vulnerable to the HI virus and that nobody is exempt from this vulnerability. Furthermore this form of consciousness-raising in the article is a good strategy for showing how just one risky sexual experience can lead to HIV and AIDS. This makes for Cameron's book to be a good example of someone that is an outstanding citizen but still a human being like everyone else and therefore equally vulnerable to HIV and AIDS. It is this moment of realisation that the reader, Cameron and PLWHA are made aware that we are all human beings and that we are all vulnerable to HIV and AIDS. Therefore risky sexual behaviour is not a threat of HIV and AIDS in the link between sex and *thanatos* but the real consequence of HIV and AIDS. Thus the article shows how important it is to always engage in responsible sexual behaviour.

The article concludes with a message of hope in the comparative analogy to Umberto Eco's book – *Force of the False*:

In the face of denialism and silence and absence, Cameron's openness and transparency, his modulated, truthful evocations are joyous. In another context, Umberto Eco has spoken of the Force of the False – those clear moments in hireport when people tend to believe in the false knowledge.

Sometimes this maybe serendipitous, leading to good fortune but, most often, this is dangerous and self-limiting. In many ways, the government's obdurate denialism is an example of this. In contrast, I like to think that Cameron represents the Force of the True – and this force is shiny and tolerant, bright and compassionate and hopeful.

The conclusion of the article reinforces the notion of expressing the repressed, which implies breaking the silence around sex and HIV and AIDS. Encouraging sex to occupy a semi-public space refutes denialism and exposes the dangers around risky sexual behaviour. Loren Anthony makes it very clear that HIV and AIDS must be dealt with on a political level for sex to occupy a semi-public space when he says that, 'government's obdurate denialism ... is dangerous and self-limiting'.

This is an appropriate article/book review because it shows that championing the cause of HIV and AIDS is an ethical obligation and that it is important that sex occupies a semi-public space so that it does not become 'self-limiting' and 'dangerous'. The intersctionality of gender, race, class and sexuality is good in that it shows how as human beings we are all vulnerable to HIV and AIDS irrespective of whether we are 'educated', 'white' or 'privileged'. This self-consciousness instils and reinforces the concept of mutual recognition with respect for self and others.

Observation 1:

1. As a strategy to resist normalizing practices of gender, race, class, or sexuality it is important to show that HIV and AIDS is indiscriminate irrespective of privilege.
2. Consciousness-raising is a good strategy for creating awareness of HIV transmission by highlighting personal experiences (self-representation) that show the real consequences of risky sexual behaviour as opposed to playing into the tension between *eros* and *thanatos* and the real risk of death.

## Case two:

This article appears in an Independent newspaper on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2005. It is a brief news report. The headline reads: *Father's big concern is who will look after his kids when he is gone*. The author of the article is **Shaun Smillie**.

The article begins with the father's voice in quotation. The father is concerned as inferred in the nucleus about his children's wellbeing after he dies. However the report talks firstly about the fact that his wife, the mother of the children, had died 'in 2003 of HIV/Aids' and the father is HIV-positive and fears the same fate.

The father – Doro – is an AIDS activist and 'took part in a 60-hour sit-in at the National Economic Development and Labour Council buildings in Rosebank, Joburg, at the weekend'. The sit-in was in reaction to 'the corporate sector's lack of commitment to HIV/Aids sufferers'. This is crucial for the article because it is implied that the 'corporate sector' should be integral in finding adequate responses to HIV and AIDS because people are dying and as a result children are orphaned. These issues through inference affect 'the corporate sector' and the economy.

Implicit in the article is the fact that HIV transmission occurred through heterosexuality and in the context of marriage thus challenging stereotypes associated with HIV and AIDS transmission. This is good because it leads to consciousness-raising that normative practices of sexual identity do not equal safe sex but that sexual practices have to be made safer through responsible sexual behaviour following the practice of mutual recognition and expressing the repressed. The link between sex and *thanatos* is not explicit. However real death is explicit with the death of the mother through HIV and AIDS.

The reality of death is very much an aspect of the article because, 'Besides the protest, it was a time of solemn reflection, of remembering friends and family who had fallen to HIV/Aids. For many it became a weekend of tears and consolation'. This reality of death

is not the same as the real risk of death in *thanatos*. Real death is final and does not include the notion of pleasure or *jouissance* in the unity and wholeness with the other. Therefore a reaction from 'the corporate sector' is an attempt to address the realities of death. The issue of death in this article is about making the consequences of death real such as the issue of orphans. The reality of death in this article is consistent with the theoretical frame because it does not flirt with the real risk of death in *thanatos* that is fantastical and dangerous but rather it deals with the real consequences of death such as leaving loved ones behind. It highlights the messy contingencies of death for the children surviving HIV and AIDS.

Observation 2:

1. It is important to distinguish between real death and *thanatos* (which is the risk of death) when writing on death. This is crucial for messaging death in a way that does not build into the fantasy of death that plays out in the constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos* and risky sexual behaviour. Removing the fantasy of death in representations on HIV and AIDS highlights the reality and finality of death as opposed to obtaining a temporary reprieve or transient harmony from the constant tension between the two opposing drives, *eros* and *thanatos*.

**Case three:**

This is one of two articles reported on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2005. The article featured in *The Star* with a headline reading: *A party guy's journey to Aids hell and back*. This is a feature article and the journalist is **Claire Keeton**. Below the headline is a profile photograph of a white man and the caption reads: *RETURN FROM THE DEAD: Tyrone Arthur, HIV-positive for 11 years*. In light of the theoretical frame of this study the article links sex and *eros* by emphasizing the life drive and the 'return from the dead'. The article is a message of hope in that it shows a healthy and smiling Arthur Tyrone living with HIV. It also maps a 'journey' from 'hell and back' indicative of a struggle waged to affirm his



pleasure in living and *eros*. However this is an ambiguous article because it contains both appropriate and inappropriate messages on HIV and AIDS.

The establishing paragraph of the article is very forthcoming with information on Tyrone's life:

TYRONE, Arthur, an award-winning photographer at a daily newspaper in Johannesburg, was married for four years and is heterosexual. He has never injected drugs. But he has Aids.

This formative paragraph is important in that it challenges two myths about HIV and AIDS; firstly, it challenges the myth that AIDS is a male homosexual disease and, secondly, that it is spread through drug addiction and the use of infected needles. Challenging myths on HIV and AIDS and stereotypes of PLWHA brings into focus the fact that everyone is vulnerable to HIV and AIDS and in this case – ‘an award-winning photographer’, ‘heterosexual’, white (inferred in his photograph) and who ‘was married’.

From the photograph of Arthur Tyrone the reader sees a white middle-class man, which challenges the pernicious stereotype that AIDS is a poor black disease because only poor black people are vulnerable to the pandemic for lack of resources. This myth was highlighted in the previous chapter when Stefan Hippler invited ‘theologians to visit a shack and hold hands with someone dying of the consequences of Aids’. This article is useful in highlighting the intersectionality of gender, race, class and sexuality as categories that do not affect HIV and AIDS infection. Instead HIV and AIDS is indiscriminate with regard to these categories.

The establishing sentence of the article frames Tyrone as a very normative (heterosexual) person and a high-achiever, ‘an award-winning photographer’. The report begins with a personal confession, “‘I just slept with too many women,” he says. “I don’t know who I got HIV from””. This admission very early on in the article fosters a close relationship between the reader and the smiling man in the photograph who shatters his image of being a normative (heterosexual and ‘was married’) man when he claims he has been

engaging in reckless sexual behaviour. Furthermore the headline tells a report of a man who has been to ‘hell and back’ so that this man who ‘slept with too many women’ has been punished for his promiscuity. The use of the word ‘hell’ has religious connotations so that being promiscuous in this context is seen as sinful. Therefore the message contains a double-edged sword in that it is at once a moment of hope but it is also damning in terms of linking sex with *thanatos* and the real risk of death through censure, taboo and danger thus asserting a religious and moralistic view on sex. Linking sex with *thanatos* and the real risk of death plays into risky sexual behaviour by elevating the constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos*. Tyrone’s confession of sleeping with too many women and not knowing whom he got HIV from is his revelation of his risky sexual behaviour. It is important when exposing risky sexual behaviour to show better ways of being responsible so that there is an alternate representation to risky sexual behaviour that can facilitate as an example of engaging in responsible sexual behaviour. Therefore the article is not wholly inappropriate if it redeems itself through showing a shift from risky sexual behaviour towards responsible sexual behaviour and it does so when Arthur states, ‘HIV played a big part in me finding myself at the end of my own resources’.



*Eros* and *thanatos* are dealt with in this article through the inference of religion and the ‘journey’ to ‘hell and back’. The pleasure principle in the two opposing drives – *eros* and *thanatos* – exists in the constant tension between the risk of death such as being promiscuous and the desire to be alive. This extreme association with the oscillations in *eros* and *thanatos* highlights risk-taking behaviour. However it was ‘A car accident one night [that] forced him to confront where his life was heading’. The tension between *eros* and *thanatos* does not lie in real death but in the risk of death and finding transient harmony from the constant tension in the juxtaposition of the risk of death and the desire to feel alive. Emphasizing the risk of death in *thanatos* leading to real death is not the solution to the constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos* because real death is final. Instead it is more useful to show how meaningful relationships lead to more responsible ways of engaging in sexual pleasure through the practice of mutual recognition. Thus ‘confronting where his life was heading’ and the ‘journey’ to ‘hell and back’ highlights in

a somewhat awkward way the shift from risky behaviour towards responsible behaviour by placing an emphasis on the self and responsibility towards the self.

*Jouissance* as an alternate understanding to the constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos* is a way of shifting the link from risky sexual behaviour towards responsible sexual behaviour. *Jouissance* is sought in the act of giving and receiving pleasure or finding the wholeness and unity of self and other in the moment of losing control during orgasm or the 'little death', the Lacanian dictum (Zoonen, 1994: 24). This loss of self during *jouissance* in the moment of unity and wholeness with the other can be seen as an affirmation of sex and *eros* because it shifts sex away from *thanatos* and risky sexual behaviour. However risk and danger are still present in the little death or *jouissance* with the loss of control of self, implying that the pleasure principle is still operating. Thus this shift in the pleasure principle does not displace the constant tension in *eros* and *thanatos* instead it shifts the tension towards healthier risks in the loss of self with other through *jouissance*. Cavarero (2002) argues that pleasure does not have to ascribe to the Freudian masculine construct of repudiating femininity instead pleasure can be sought in the recognition of others (Benjamin, 1988). Subsequently *jouissance* and the pleasure principle does not have to be contradictory instead it can be complementary because loss of self with other during *jouissance* can mean a trust between self and other that is reinforced through the practice of mutual recognition in that safe and intimate relationships lead to responsible sexual behaviour.

Finally, Arthur criticises the use of condoms as not being full proof, 'He didn't have unsafe sex, though he points out that condoms fail to offer 100% protection from the virus'. This cautionary note from Arthur suggests that condoms also present risk because they can break and therefore it is best to consider more responsible sexual behaviour through safer, trusting, intimate and more responsible relationships through mutual recognition. This does not imply that having one sexual partner ensures knowing one's status and knowing one's sexual partner's status. It does emphasize the importance of safer sexual relationships.

Shifting the link between sex and *thanatos* away from sex as taboo and sinful towards sex and *eros* affirms *jouissance* and a healthier sense of self and other through the practice of mutual recognition. Emphasizing sex and pleasure through the practice of mutual recognition is consistent with the theoretical frame because it sets up sex as a good practice for respect and responsibility towards the self and the other.

Observation 3:

1. Framing sex within religious discourse as taboo and sinful links sex with *thanatos* and risky sexual behaviour. The need to find transient harmony in the constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos* requires better ways to respond to this tension. The constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos* is never totally displaced but it can be nuanced in more healthier and responsible ways such as mutual recognition in the moment of *jouissance* or the ‘little death’.

**Case four:**

This is the second article that appeared on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2005. It is written by a doctor that carries the ‘pseudonym Dr Elvis Jack’. It is a feature article and consists of half the newspaper page. The headline reads: *With ARV drugs, life is a choice*. The minor nucleus reads: *Experience has shown that anti-retrovirals give HIV-positive patients a second chance at life, writes Dr Elvis Jack*. The article is a narrative of Dr Jack’s experience as ‘a doctor who works in public and private HIV medicine in Johannesburg’. The report begins with the looming threat of death on HIV-positive patients:

When an HIV patient enters one’s consulting room for the first time they are never alone. Always at their shoulder is the shadow of death. HIV equals death – this is not superstition but a reality for much of Africa. Everything one says to such a person is filtered through the veil of fear of impending death. And the condemned, much like someone facing a firing squad, understandable will clutch at straws, will consult any practitioner who can promise life.

This looming threat of death with ‘HIV patients’ is an explicit link between HIV and AIDS and real death and not the risk of death in *thanatos*. But as is illustrated later in the article, this very sombre link between HIV and AIDS and death can be delayed through treatment. The twist in the nuanced message from death to life is the shift found in expressing the repressed and breaking the stigma around HIV and AIDS by showing that PLWHA can live healthy and pleasurable lives so that the life drive of *eros* is affirmed. This is a crucial point in the trope for reinforcing the notion of mutual recognition and breaking the stigma around HIV and AIDS:

Amazingly, sometimes they choose us. When they do, and when they take their anti-retrovirals (ARVs) perfectly, the results are nothing short of miraculous. After four months of treatment it is not unusual for patients to have put on 10kg. Their skin is clear, their opportunistic infections have melted away, their blood results have returned to normal, their energy and libido have rocketed once again. They say things like: I never realised that HIV had sapped my energy to such an extent.

The change in condition of HIV-positive people once they adhere to treatment is remarkable. Reports that catalogue progress and good health of HIV-positive people instil confidence in treatment and in *eros* as opposed to the confusion and doubt created by mixed messages from government about treatment. Therefore articles such as this one go a long way in promoting the phrase by Edwin Cameron of ‘living with Aids’. This is important for separating HIV and AIDS from the real risk of death in *thanatos*. However, for this study, the aim is not to promote treatment but rather to find better ways of messaging prevention campaigns through shifting discourse on HIV and AIDS away from risk-taking behaviour, sex and *thanatos*, towards messages that affirm responsible sexual behaviour, sex and *eros*. To this extent, this article is appropriate because it affirms the life drive of *eros* and highlights the importance of enhancing quality of life through treatment and care for oneself, which extends to care for others through the frame of mutual recognition. Therefore mutual recognition is about affirming life, which could be read within the larger frame of *eros* to be an endorsement for the treatment approach:

If most patients are well after four months of treatment, how long can this last? There is still no cure for HIV – will resistance and death follow in the future? In fact, data for the United States suggests that if patients can continue to take their medication perfectly every day, the first, line regime should last at least 10 years. Within a decade there is likely to be a plethora of new medications with new modes of anti-retroviral operation on the market.

In this scenario we feel justified in telling our patients that they can live as long as their grandparents did or do.

And if patients can live as long as every one else and their risk of transmitting the virus to their unborn children is minute, then they can also fall pregnant if they wish (if age and other social factors are in their favour). For some patients who have lost children to HIV, this is a true miracle.

This is a message of hope. As compared to the initial looming threat of death, the article progresses to support life and the pleasure in living. This pleasure in life or *eros* is consistent with the theoretical frame in that it shifts the focus away from *thanatos* towards *eros* by giving meaning to an existence filled with pleasure and *jouissance*. This emphasis on pleasure is crucial for shifting the constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos* towards *jouissance*. Shifting the focus towards pleasure in living removes the threat of death. Death is always a reality of life therefore the doctor says ‘they can live as long as their grandparents did or do’. Thus the doctor is not escaping the reality of death but he is shifting the focus towards pleasure in living or *eros* and hence breaking the stigma around HIV and AIDS.

Observation 4:

1. Shifting focus away from death to life is a crucial point in the trajectory for taking responsibility for self and other and taking pleasure in living and, thus breaking the stigma around HIV and AIDS.

### Case five:

This report appears in an Independent newspaper. It is a brief news report with a large picture dominating the article. The report is a third of the page. The picture captures the reader's attention because it is of a naked white man in a white bed with a crab. The picture is provocative. The contrast of the man and the crab on a white bed in a sexual – missionary – position in a room with wooden floors and a pair of jeans scattered on the floor is a striking image. The article appeared on the 18<sup>th</sup> of June 2005. The headline reads: *SHOCK TACTICS*. The caption beneath the picture reads: *Fear of infection ... French advertisers use disturbing imagery to drive home their point about the dangers of Aids.*

The article quite clearly is about 'awareness campaigns in France'. The reason for this very provocative and sensational image is to have 'revived shock tactics to boost the efficacy of public-health messages through vivid imagery designed to spread the fear of infection'. This instilling of 'fear' for 'awareness campaigns' is problematic because operating from a position of fear only builds into the constant tension of *eros* and *thanatos*. The link between sex and the real risk of death in *thanatos* plays into risk-taking behaviour by seeking transient harmony from the constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos*. However the article claims that 'This represents a marked move away from awareness campaigns that focused on the educational aspects of HIV/Aids prevention, which which(error) South Africans are more familiar'.

The article represents the aim of this study, which is about effective ways of messaging prevention campaigns on HIV and AIDS. The article is critical of 'complacency' that has led to new incidence rates and the idea of HIV and AIDS as a 'treatable condition with a potential cure on the horizon'. The chief issue for people working in the field of HIV prevention is to decrease the number of new infections. However with a rise in infection rates and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) 'shock tactics' was seen as an effective solution to instil fear. Since decreasing new infections is important, the nuance in messaging is crucial because of intrapsychic games that messages play in terms of

subjectivity and responsibility to self and other. Shifting the representation away from fear towards responsibility to self and other is the critical moment for this study. Therefore this article is inappropriate because it plays into sex and *thanatos* and does not nuance *eros* and *jouissance*. Moreover it does not foster mutual recognition that aims to promote safer sexual relations.

In South Africa fear of infection is claimed, in the article, as the strategy for messaging but it falls short of educating the public on matters of STIs, 'Hefer said South African awareness campaigns had been reasonably effective at instilling a fear of infection but there was a lack of education and understanding of HIV/Aids and STIs here'. It is suggested by Hefer that 'personalities like Patricia de Lille and Pieter Dirk Uys, who have worked tirelessly on educating our people ... become more involved and for politicians to get their hands dirty as opposed to using it (HIV/Aids) as an election issue'. This strategy is not consistent with the theoretical frame because 'fear of infection' plays into the constant tension of *eros* and *thanatos* or the risk of death with real consequences of HIV and AIDS transmission and does not nuance or promote transient harmony from this tension through *jouissance*. As was shown early, this tension can be shifted away from fear and risk-taking behaviour towards responsible sexual behaviour in the pleasure of loss of self and other through *jouissance* or 'little death', which is a nuanced and healthier way of messaging sex and *eros*. Thus focussing on *jouissance* resolves the constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos* in a healthier and more responsible way.

Observation 5:

1. Nuance is crucial in messaging prevention campaigns with a focus on transient harmony from the constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos* through shifting focus towards *jouissance* so that sexual behaviour can extend into the practice of mutual recognition. This will ensure more responsible sexual behaviour instead of resolving the constant tension through *thanatos* with the risk of death through dangerous sexual encounters.



### Case six:

This is a feature article that appears in the *Mail & Guardian* on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2005. It is an obituary. The spread ranges over two pages, pages 26 and 27. It is a comment piece by **Zackie Achmat**. The headline reads: *Ronald, why didn't you get tested?* The minor nucleus is located above the headline and reads: *The head of the TAC pays tribute to a fallen comrade and highlights a life that proves no one is exempt from HIV infection or denial.* Below the headline is a profile picture of Zackie Achmat bearing his name and the word **comment**. Alongside this box is a large photograph of a white man smiling with a backdrop of a garden. The photograph is approximately a third of the article. The caption on the photograph reads: *Ronald Louw was exemplary in almost all aspects of his life, except the fact that he did not get tested for HIV.* From the picture the reader can assume that Ronald Louw – the man in the photograph – is white and middle-class.

This is an article that is explicitly critical of people not getting tested and not knowing their status. Like the article on Edwin Cameron, intersectionality is used as a tool to show that everyone irrespective of gender, race, class or sexuality is vulnerable to HIV and AIDS. Death is a reality for all people but more so for people living with HIV and AIDS 'denial'. This is what Zackie Achmat attempts to convey in this obituary. Getting tested and knowing one's sero-status is part of the argument for *eros* and taking responsibility for oneself. Thus Zackie Achmat is encouraging the reader to take responsibility and be 'exemplary' through knowing one's status.

The obituary begins with the announcement of Ronald Louw's death. It continues to map the sequences that lead up to Ronald Louw being hospitalised and finally to his demise. The piece is nostalgic of a friendship and a comradeship. It speaks of an intelligent, high-achieving man with outstanding values championing the cause of the working classes:

Louw was a law lecturer and became associate professor of law at the University of KwaZulu-Natal ... Louw joined the Factreton Youth Movement, the nemesis of Minister of Finance Trevor Manuel and Lionel October, and was actively involved in struggles to lower rents, food prices and

debates on the nature of a post-apartheid South Africa. He was a “workerist” and I was an African National Congress hack. ... Over the years, Louw has also been active as an anti-militarist. He refused to serve in the apartheid military. ... In December 1994, when the National Coalition for Gay and Lesbian Equality was formed, Louw represented the Sexual Orientation Forum at the University of Natal, Durban. ... He was also pedantic and pessimistic. But these were important qualities to ensure that neither people nor institutions were given false expectations.

This testimony of Louw’s character shows a humble and just human being who championed the cause of the poor, disadvantaged and marginalised. The question begs – why is it that a man who was so well adjusted and self-actualised did not get tested? Why did such a man have to die? Zackie Achmat claims:

Louw had been exemplary in almost all aspects of his life, except the fact that he did not get tested for HIV. We all hoped that when he got better, Louw would himself explain this to all of us. His life shows that none of us are exempt from HIV infection and denial.

Achmat further ruminates by stating:

I wrote this article (with Louw’s permission) to ask him to fight to live longer. He is now dead. He died because he did not get tested early. And, when he discovered his HIV status, his lungs and immune system were destroyed. I also write to ask every person to get tested. If you are HIV-negative, practise safer sex and stay negative. If you have HIV, live positively and openly – eat well, reduce stress, exercise, practise safer sex and get treated immediately for any infections. When you need it, start anti-retroviral treatment.

In this article it becomes very evident how important it is to practice mutual recognition because as Achmat claims, ‘If you are HIV-negative, practise safer sex’ meaning engaging in respectful and trusting relations with self and other that leads to ‘safer sex’ and *jouissance*. Death in this article is real. It is not *thanatos* or the risk of death that plays out in the constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos* through irresponsible sexual behaviour. Instead Achmat’s plea is that, ‘none of us are exempt from HIV infection and denial’. The article stresses what previous articles noted that we are all vulnerable to HIV infection irrespective of gender, race, class or sexuality.

For Achmat it is clear that Ronald's denial is what led to his AIDS-related death, 'Two major Aids-related factors caused his death: HIV denial and undiagnosed tuberculosis (TB)'. 'Denial' is pointed-out as the ultimate cause for his death because if Ronald had been tested he would have been able to treat any opportunistic infections in time to improve his condition. 'Denial' blocked him from knowing his status and getting treatment and affirming his life. This for Achmat is what is so disappointing when he says, 'Louw had been exemplary in almost all aspects of his life, except the fact that he did not get tested for HIV'. The article reiterates the salience of knowing one's status in order to respond in an appropriate and responsible manner to HIV and AIDS.

Death and denial are the two sub-themes that run continuously and parallel throughout the course of this article. Death is final, 'Ronald Louw, has died'. In the last throes of death Achmat speaks of the ugliness of dying, 'Although surrounded by countless friends, family and well-wishers, Aids removes dignity and autonomy'. There is nothing romantic or nostalgic about dying, 'He vomited, soiled his linen and his health did not improve'. Death is not pretty. There is no greatness found in death. Seeking transient harmony in the constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos* means not flirting with death and valuing life. But when death is so final and so brutal then denial of death becomes an obsession so that it manifests as a way of coping with the looming threat and fear of death. Therefore it is dangerous to represent and associate fear with HIV and AIDS. But as Achmat explains, death does not need to be feared because there are ways of keeping death at bay, by knowing one's status and having access to treatment. Thus for this study access to treatment has become associated with *eros*. But treatment is not a means to finding transient harmony from the constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos*. Instead treatment is way of breaking stigma around HIV and AIDS. Representing the 'little death' or *jouissance* is a way of finding transient harmony from the constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos*. Nonetheless treatment has been found to shift the discourse on death away from HIV and AIDS because it is life affirming and links HIV and AIDS with *eros* whereas denial links sex with *thanatos*, which is the fear and risk of death. Therefore the two sub-themes, death and denial operate in the absence of life affirming

treatment. That is what Achmat's message attempts to reinforce that through treatment it is not necessary to be an AIDS denialist or to fear death. The article resonates with the article *With ARV drugs, life is a choice* (IOL, 12 June 2005). This article is consistent with the theoretical frame because it shifts the association of sex and *thanatos* towards sex and *eros* through nuancing responsibility towards the self by knowing one's sero-status and by 'liv[e]ing positively and openly – eat well, reduce stress, exercise, practise safer sex and get treated immediately for any infections'. Therefore treatment is a way of affirming life and *eros* and thus breaking the stigma around HIV and AIDS. Hence *eros* in this context is highlighted as knowing one's status and having access to treatment.

Observation 6:

1. Shifting the dominant discourse away from the risk of death in *thanatos* and HIV and AIDS attempts to promote the choice in living through *eros*. This is crucial for dealing with AIDS denialism because it provides hope through treatment for PLWHA, which promotes 'safer sex', *eros* and mutual recognition by breaking the stigma around HIV and AIDS.



**Case seven:**

This is the second of two articles that features in this study by **Jonny Steinberg**. It appears in *Business Day* on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2005. The headline reads: *Why do people allow themselves to die from stigma and fear?* It is a feature article that carries with it the by-line and endnote that reads, 'Steinberg is a freelance writer'. This article specifically deals with the fear of death. It is also a book review of Judge Edwin Cameron's book *Witness to AIDS*.

The article takes an interesting angle into the book. It focuses on an anecdote, Edwin Cameron's relationship with his gardener – Gladwell. Gladwell's 'health keeps declining' but his standard response to the question of being tested for HIV was 'I have' and 'It was clear'. Gladwell subsequently died. Cameron's case for attacking denial and stigma is to

propose an alternate ‘human solidarity’ to ‘lend our own capacity to live to those dying of stigma, that the capacity to live is, in a sense, a resource to be shared’. For Steinberg this ‘capacity to live’ needs to be extended ‘at the global level of public health policy, we do what Cameron, at the micro level, imagined he ought to have done for Gladwell; to lead him, quite assertively, to the conditions of his own survival’.

This is a powerful book review because it calls on the need to affirm life and *eros* by lending ‘our own capacity to live’ to others. It fosters the practice of mutual recognition by recognizing that the need for survival of the self is reliant on the survival of others. It affirms the position of object relations theory and intersubjectivity that claims that a subject comes into being through other subjects (Benjamin, 1988). Representation on HIV and AIDS with the frame of mutual recognition encourages self-love and respect for self and others, which extends into responsible behaviour both at the personal and ‘at the global level of public policy ... to lead ... quite assertively, to the conditions of ... survival’. Therefore removing fear, denial and stigma through this ‘capacity to live’ shifts the link away from sex and *thanatos* or the risk of death towards sex and *eros* and the pleasure in living.



Jonny uses Botswana as an example when he highlights the fact that people are not accessing free antiretroviral treatment because of stigma, ‘by late 2003, only 15 000 people had appeared at public health facilities for free medication. Why?’ According to Jonny, stigma for Cameron takes away the choice to seek treatment and thereby affirm life. Thus for Cameron the choice is to advocate beyond stigma to a point whereby ‘the capacity to live is, in a sense, a resource to be shared’. This is significant for the premise of mutual recognition and intersubjectivity because it affirms the point that the self comes into being through others. Recognition then is of self in relation to others. Recognizing the other as subject is about recognizing the self as subject. It is as Benjamin (1995) argues with ‘sameness and difference’ that we are the same because we are subjects but different because we are autonomous beings. This autonomy must extend to a shared ‘capacity to live’ or *eros* by breaking the stigma and fear around HIV and AIDS. For Cameron, failure to get Gladwell on treatment meant that he did not break the stigma

around HIV and AIDS and was unable to share his ‘capacity to live’ or ‘lead him, quite assertively, to the conditions of his own survival’.

Steinberg propagates that Cameron’s actions can be seen as:

It is a strongly communitarian and, indeed, a moderately illiberal, position. And it is striking for being made in SA, in which the bonds of social solidarity, measured by such indicators as out rates of murder and incarceration, are alarmingly thin. Indeed, our national response to AIDS – ambivalent, anxious, wounded and aggressive – is another symptom of the frailty of the bonds that bind us.

This critique ‘of the frailty of the bonds that bind us’ is very much about ‘bonds’ between people. Even though it criticises those ‘thin bonds’ it also endorses the standpoint of mutual recognition because it encourages us in those ‘bonds that bind us’ to extend ourselves in our ‘capacity to live’ to the other. Moreover it supports the idea of autonomy through interaction with other autonomous beings, ‘a resource to be shared’. It is in these ‘bonds’ and through recognition that we can return to the establishing trajectory of responsibility towards the self and the other whereby we all have a right to dignity and life. In this frame stigma is not an option because the focus is on sameness and difference and mutual recognition and respect. This article goes further in that it proposes a sense of community that is bonded beyond stigma, which implies a community based on shared qualities such as caring and nurturance. This can be achieved through ‘a strongly communitarian ... position’ that encourages mutual recognition as ‘our national response’.

Observation 7:

1. Stigmatisation due to fear is an obstacle in accessing treatment and in the practice of mutual recognition. Mutual recognition is a crucial national response for breaking stigma and encouraging communities to be more caring and nurturing thus bridging the public and private spheres.

### Case eight:

This is an article that appears in the *Mail & Guardian* in the week July 29 to August 4, 2005. It is part of the *Comment & Analysis* section of the paper. It is a report written by **David Le Page** with an endnote that reads: *David Le Page is a former Mail & Guardian journalist, now freelance writer, specialising in HIV.* The headline reads: *Mindful of mania.* The minor nucleus reads: *Like HIV, bipolar disorder remains a target of stigma and ignorance even among the 'educated' and 'enlightened'.* A blurb in the article states, 'You can't 'snap out of it any more than you can snap out of having a broken leg'. A third of the article consists of a photograph of David Le Page. He is looking straight at the lens and thus at the reader. He has a slight smile and is bespectacled. His head is tilted slightly and he looks relaxed as if in a conversational stance pondering a thought. This picture does not represent an unhappy man but rather it represents a man at peace who is content.

This article was chosen as part of the argument on *eros and thanatos* because it deals with factors that lead to the risk of death such as stigma and fear. It is mainly an article about a journey of a man who is bipolar. HIV and AIDS is simply referred to by virtue of the case of stigma. Yet the article is important because it highlights issues that can shift the focus on representation away from stigma and fear, and that this is not exclusive to HIV and AIDS, towards understanding the constant tension that exists in *eros* and *thanatos* that can help in messaging the life drive.

David Le Page illustrates how illness affects the will to survive:

Actually, bipolar depression and HIV have some things in common. Both can be deadly: a terrifyingly large proportion of bipolar disordered persons commit suicide, sometimes even after years of successful treatment.

Both HIV and bipolar depression require commitment to life-long, costly medication. Both are most successfully managed when one adopts a healthy lifestyle: minimal alcohol, good diet, regular exercise and skilled management of stress. Both can put a damper on one's sex life, both

remain the targets of much stigma and ignorance ... this is as much of an equation as I am qualified to draw.

Le Page is making a crucial point here; irrespective of which illness one suffers from, illness is associated with *thanatos* and the risk of death. In cases such as bipolar depression and HIV and AIDS where ‘treatment’ is ‘life-long’, Le Page argues that a drug does not simply cure the body but respect for self through healthy practices, which he explains as ‘minimal alcohol, good diet, regular exercise and skilled management of stress’ are part of the effective functioning of the drugs to heal. Thus treatment and *eros*, which in this case is referred to as self-respect or self-care are important for healing. Le Page continues to explain his understanding of illness:

If you think bipolar disorder is a mental disorder, think again. Actually, please rethink your entire categories for “mental” and “physical” illness. It is past time we abandoned our simultaneous notions that overtly physical illnesses are unrelated to the workings of the mind, while illnesses such as depression are unrelated to the malfunctions of the body.

Le Page’s understanding of illness is that it impacts both the ‘physical’ and ‘mental’ self. Thus it affects the way identity is formulated so that illness is part of an understanding of subjectivity and caring for the self. This means that illness is not one or the other, either ‘physical’ or ‘mental’ but rather illness is about both so that the one impacts the other. This also impacts intrapsychic processes that affect the way we access treatment and engage with the world. In mutual recognition, intrapsychic process of recognition of self and other affirms respect and responsible behaviour towards the self and other that then extends into ‘a healthy lifestyle’. Illness is not a one-dimensional issue instead it is about the relationship between individuals and communities. Mutual recognition is then about fostering a caring and nurturing environment that bridges the public and private spheres, going beyond stigma.

In the case of HIV and AIDS and bipolar depression where symptoms are both ‘mental’ and ‘physical’ the real risk of death in *thanatos* plays into the constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos*. Risky behaviour plays out when ‘persons commit suicide’ as a way of



finding transient harmony from this constant tension. However emphasizing *eros* through ‘a healthy lifestyle’ shifts the focus away from the constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos* towards *jouissance* with access to treatment as a way of affirming the pleasure in living. Therefore this article is consistent with the theoretical frame because it shows a way to resolve the tension between *eros* and *thanatos* by emphasizing ‘a healthy lifestyle’. Shifting the emphasis on *eros* and *jouissance* in stories like Le Page’s seeks to highlight transient harmony in the constant tension between the two opposing drives by focusing on successful ways of living with illness. Even though death is an aspect of life and cannot be avoided nonetheless taking pleasure in living or *eros* can be disassociated from danger and *thanatos*. In the case of a ‘long-term’ illness, Le Page highlights how he applies *eros* to his life by taking responsibility for himself when he stresses the importance of ‘a healthy lifestyle’ by not abusing ‘alcohol’ and managing ‘stress’. This responsibility towards self is fostered in the practice of mutual recognition, which can then be extended to others.

Le Page attempts to find ‘peace’ from the ‘frailties of mind-body’ as a result of his illness by showing a realistic account of how treatment has helped him:

Two weeks after first writing this, I have had an extraordinary experience. My depression has finally begun to lift, I think. For the first time in many months, I find myself making up nonsensical ditties and singing them on the way to work. Never before has the lifting felt so tangible.

Yes, for the past three weeks, I’ve been in a new job (one that came to me, thank heavens) and superficially functional. But it has been very hard. What changed things is simply an increased dose of carbamazepine. It has lifted the formless guilt and the grinding effort of motion. The inner vacuum has eased.

Without a chemical additive, everything might again grind to a shuddering, traumatic halt. But now that the switches have been thrown in my brain, the creaking machinery of that organ has a chance to reawaken.

Some may think that I am ill-equipped to argue that we may have it in us to overcome even great frailties of mind-body, even when such frailties still so clearly dominate my own life. I can only

answer that so long as I am alive, and reasonably at peace with my own humanity, the argument remains mine to win, at least for myself.

Le Page is aware of his dependency on 'treatment'. But his commitment towards treatment is hopeful because he shows how medication provides him with a sense of 'peace' and control over his life. Thus this article is considered a useful illustration of finding transient harmony from the constant tension in *eros* and *thanatos* because it affirms life and the need to seek pleasure in living through a long-term commitment to treatment irrespective of whether one is HIV-positive or suffers from bipolar depression. Le Page's narrative shows how to practically shift messaging linking illness with stigma and death to living with illness in a 'reasonable peace'. This is an empowering and constructive way of representing illnesses and HIV and AIDS by breaking stigma and affirming life or *eros*. The words of Edwin Cameron continuously reverberate in this study, 'I am not dying of Aids. I am living with Aids'.

#### Observation 8:

1. Life affirming messages on how to cope with illnesses and HIV and AIDS must reflect that healing occurs both in the 'mental' and 'physical' self through self-respect and by ensuring a 'healthy lifestyle'.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter deals with *eros* and *thanatos*, the life and death drives. Most of the articles in this chapter attempted to highlight inappropriate representations of HIV and AIDS and sex by disassociating sex with *thanatos* and representating sex with *eros*. *Thanatos* is the risk of death and not real death. *Eros* refers to the pleasure in living. These two opposing drives create a constant tension, which seeks to be resolved through a fleeting harmony. However that transient harmony from the constant tension can play out in either responsible or risky behaviour. For representations of sex and HIV and AIDS, I propose

that transient harmony from the constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos* can be achieved through *jouissance* or the 'little death' (Zoonen, 1994: 24), referring to orgasm.

*Jouissance* is understood as pleasure through the loss of control of self (Zizek, 2006), which can be understood as the 'little death' or it could also be understood as 'the pleasure in sharing, the communion with another subject' (Benjamin, 1988: 53) through mutual recognition. Thus *jouissance* is a way of resolving the constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos* through mutual recognition, which can be seen as the pleasure in sharing with the other during the 'little death'. This nuance in *eros* and *thanatos* can be understood as shifting the link between sex and *thanatos* towards sex and *eros* by emphasizing life and pleasure in sharing with the other as opposed to messaging the risk of death, which plays out in risky sexual behaviour. Thus the shift in focus is to displace *thanatos* (risk of death) with *eros* (pleasure in living and sharing with other) during *jouissance* (little death) through the loss of control of self with other. This link towards sex and *eros* affirms life and encourages taking pleasure in living and sharing through mutual recognition and 'a healthy lifestyle'. The words of Judge Edwin Cameron becomes the motto for this shift, 'I am not dying of Aids. I am living with Aids'. To this extent, the chapter attempts to highlight the shift away from sex and *thanatos* by focusing on ways of affirming life through treatment and respect for self and other that leads towards responsible sexual behaviour.

Mutual recognition through *jouissance* is argued as the transient harmony in the constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos*. However *jouissance* is also about loss of control of self with other, which relies on mutual recognition implying trust and respect for self and other. Mutual recognition places pleasure outside the opposing drives and locates pleasure in the moment of unity, wholeness and recognition of self and other. Therefore mutual recognition and respect for self and other has implications for the notion of responsibility because once pleasure is taken in the recognition of self and other it extends into responsible sexual behaviour for self that extends to the other. Therefore this chapter attempted to ultimately foster a sense of responsibility for self and other in messaging on HIV and AIDS by focusing on pleasure through the nuance of mutual

recognition and *jouissance* by emphasizing *eros* or the life drive. The following chapter is the conclusion of the study that discusses the observations under various themes by attempting to highlight appropriate and inappropriate ways of representing HIV and AIDS in relation to gender and sex.



## Chapter five: conclusion

### Introduction

This is a consolidating chapter that presents all the observations that emanated from the case studies in chapters three and four as guidelines for practitioners in the field of HIV and AIDS. These guidelines are part of the empirical research of this study and are based on interpretative analysis. They begin with the section ‘resisting normalizing practices of sexual identity’ that deals with alternate understandings for resisting the hierarchical gender binary and critically evaluating representations of masculine and feminine constructions. This argument then shifts from uncoupling sex and *thanatos* towards linking sex and *eros*. The guidelines in this chapter are only a suggestion for messaging on HIV and AIDS. They are practical ways of making the study accessible to journalists and practitioners by showing the alternate understandings for resisting normalizing practices of sexual identity and for shifting the link away from sex and *thanatos* towards sex and *eros*.

New theories and methods of analysis will differ from these guidelines and so they must. The case studies themselves are open for critique due to the method of analysis – interpretative analysis – which is defined by the alternative intersubjective tradition that follows the logic that the subject (researcher) is affected by the object (research question), a relationship between ‘a controlling subject and an objectified world’ (Benjamin, 1988: 193). Therefore affectation between the subject (researcher) and the object (research question) changes both the subject (researcher) and the object (research question) by virtue of this process. Thus the guidelines are very much influenced by my personal and or political interpretation of the case studies, which is open for critique by the reader. Therefore this study is not closed but is rather an open study and is contextual within a timeframe, beginning May 2005 until 4 August 2005.

The first chapter of this study contextualised the theories on sexual difference locating gender differentiation in social construction theory and thereby within the patriarchal frame showing how the oedipal complex promoted male dominance. It then went on to

discuss the fixed binary of the soul/body convenience in the theory of language and how the fixed binary of the soul/body convenience in language plays out in phallogocentric representation. Mutual recognition was suggested as an alternate understanding to resist the hierarchical gender binary by finding nuanced ways of rethinking gender. Mutual recognition was also suggested as the nuance in rethinking the constant tension in *eros* and *thanatos* and *jouissance* in representations of sex. Expressing the repressed, consciousness-raising and critical evaluation were also discussed as ways in which to bridge the public and private divides thus ensuring conditions for the basis of mutual recognition.

These alternate understandings and approaches from the theoretical frame are made practical through the guidelines for example, expressing the repressed, which is a nuanced way of shifting the dichotomy of *eros* and *thanatos* by rethinking *jouissance* within the frame of mutual recognition through the loss of self in the unity with the other. This understanding can be applied to representations of sex and HIV and AIDS by emphasizing pleasure in living and safer relationships. Expressing the repressed is also an important factor that is brought into focus through the work of the Marquis de Sade when he stressed that sex should occupy a 'semi-public' (Hekma, 2001: 3) space so that it is not hidden and dangerous. Allocating sex to a semi-public space alleviates the tension around sex as taboo and disassociates sex with the risk of death in *thanatos*. Therefore as a strategy, expressing the repressed operates on two levels by shifting the discourse on sex into a semi-public space and by nuance in the transient harmony from the constant tension in *eros* and *thanatos* through *jouissance* or the 'little death'. Consciousness-raising and critical evaluation are the other two strategies that work in the domain of representation and are practical ways of shifting the discourse on sex for example, by bringing sex into a semi-public space and opening up the discourse for critique.

Challenging and critiquing classical Freudian theory of the oedipal complex of male dominance and female submission requires shifting the structure of the fixed binary of the hidden reason of the soul/body convenience in the Foucaultian theory of language. This is a more challenging project. Much of the responsibility lies in consciousness-raising and critical evaluation of representation, meaning reframing gender within the

context of mutual recognition. Therefore the theoretical chapters of this study map out how the oedipal complex plays into identity formation. When mutual recognition is applied practically as an analytical tool in the critical evaluation of representations of gender and sex in newspaper reports on HIV and AIDS it shifts the discourse away from male dominance and female submission towards a more nuanced gender differentiation. This practical shift in the application of the strategies presented allows for a shift in the symbolic and imaginary realm by creating possibilities for rethinking the self outside discursive practices of gender, race, class and sexuality. This possibility is the hope for a more equitable and nuanced organisation of gender, race, class and sexuality.

### **Resisting normalizing practices of sexual identity**

This rubric deals with three sections: (i) An alternate understanding for resisting the hierarchical gender binary, (ii) critical evaluation of representations of masculine constructions and, (iii) critical evaluation of representations of feminine constructions. The first sub-heading deals with resistance to the hierarchical gender binary that can lead to a better understanding for representing sexual identity and HIV and AIDS. The second sub-heading shows that through shifting the classical Freudian construction of masculine identity, which is based on the repudiation of femininity, the hierarchical gender binary can be displaced leading to a better gender arrangement. The final sub-heading shows how the classical Freudian construction of femininity is shifting away from sexual passivity towards sexual agency, which resists normalizing practices of sexual identity.

### **An alternate understanding for resisting the hierarchical gender binary**

The hierarchical gender binary is based on masculine dominance and feminine submission. Moreover masculine dominance is based on the repudiation of femininity. Thus the hierarchical gender binary is about subjugating the feminine other in order to maintain male dominance. However mutual recognition is about rethinking the oedipal complex and viewing the feminine *m/other* as a subject so that the baby can learn her own subjectivity through other subjects. This is also a social process that allows the baby to see others as the same in that they too like the baby are subjects but different in that they are autonomous. This premise for sameness and difference (Benjamin, 1995) is the basis

for a society that is caring and nurturing. Therefore in looking for nuance in representation it is crucial to show fractures in the hierarchical gender binary because these fractures mean possibilities for shifting the workings of male hegemony. Intersectionality is used as a way of nuancing the fractures and moments of resistance to systems of domination (Haraway, 2004). Intersectionality of gender, race, class and sexuality shows that HIV and AIDS spreads indiscriminately amongst people. Therefore applying the lens of mutual recognition and respect for self and other extends beyond these categories of gender, race, class or sexuality. It is important to understand and address sexual patterns because they can highlight the context for pernicious sexual practices and can therefore better inform prevention campaigns on HIV and AIDS that shift irresponsible and risky sexual practices towards healthier and more responsible sexual behaviour through the strategy of mutual recognition. Thus mutual recognition is a way forward in nuancing messaging on gender and sex that resists the hierarchical gender binary.

Social responsibility programmes need to be critically evaluated looking at shifts that foster mutual recognition in order to eradicate sexual violence and ensure healthier and safer sex so that communities can flourish. The hierarchical gender binary puts women at a higher risk of HIV infection due to biology and socio-economic factors, and in areas where HIV and AIDS denial exists together with a lack of educational campaigns, increasingly high HIV prevalence rates are recorded. Therefore reports on HIV and AIDS and gender issues should highlight how these factors contribute towards women's vulnerability by providing information on how to resist women's vulnerability to HIV infection. Thus it is crucial to represent safer sex through safer relationships by nuancing mutual recognition. To this end, it is important to have political will to end poverty and curb the spread of HIV and AIDS whilst resisting the hierarchical gender binary.

### **Critical evaluation of representations of masculine constructions**

Mutual recognition is an alternate understanding for resisting normalizing practices of sexual identity by shifting masculine constructions away from the classical Freudian notion of masculinity as the repudiation of femininity as well as challenging the



normative practice of heterosexuality. This means that the subject/object position presented in the classical Freudian construction of masculinity is displaced so that subject/subject positions of mutual recognition can take place leading to healthier and safer relationships.

In communities where patriarchal values are strongly endorsed it is important to seek creative strategies for resisting normalizing practices of sexual identity when presenting prevention campaigns on HIV and AIDS. Therefore it is important to show examples of good programmes, which resist the hierarchical gender binary and normalizing practices of sexual identity.

### **Critical evaluation of representations of feminine constructions**

The classical Freudian construction of femininity is relegated to the object status of sexual passivity. It is important to challenge stereotypes of feminine constructions of sexual passivity as a strategy for resisting the hierarchical gender binary and normalizing practices of sexual identity by showing alternate femininities that are based on sexual agency. This can be successfully done through self-representation and by quoting personal narratives. Moreover personal accounts of courage and bravery over adversity are appropriate representations for promoting self-respect and responsibility to self and others, which encourages mutual recognition. But more importantly, these narratives shift the classical Freudian construction of femininity as object position to subject position in the moment of mutual recognition.

### **Shifting the link away from sex and *thanatos* towards sex and *eros***

The study focused on four alternate understandings for resisting normalizing practices of sexual identity. These are: mutual recognition, expressing the repressed, consciousness-raising and critical evaluation of representation. In this section these alternate understandings are used to rethink and shift the constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos* to a more nuanced understanding of *eros* and *thanatos* as transient harmony during the moment of *jouissance* or 'little death'. This loss of control of self in the unity with the other in the moment of *jouissance* fosters the notion of mutual recognition.

Mutual recognition is the recognition of self and other in the moment of sameness and difference; sameness of recognition with the other as subject and difference in that the self is different from the other because both the self and other are autonomous beings. Therefore in the moment of loss of control of self in the unity with the other during *jouissance*, *thanatos* or 'the little death' is experienced whilst still feeling alive in the act of giving and receiving pleasure without having to engage in risky sexual behaviour that leads to real death. Thus *jouissance* is the transient harmony from the constant tension between the *eros* and *thanatos*. The guidelines presented here seek to affirm the shift away from real death and risky sexual behaviour towards a more responsible sexual behaviour that leads to rethinking sexual pleasure in the fulfilment of giving and receiving pleasure.

### ***Eros and thanatos***

It is useful to disassociate reports on HIV and AIDS with religious morality that views sex as taboo and punishable. Religious views that impose strict codes on sexual behaviour often create tensions around sex that make sexual behaviour hidden and dangerous. Especially if those codes are narrowly framed within the confines of heteronormative sanctioned marriages because anything outside this frame risks the association of sex and *thanatos*. Therefore it is better to separate sex from taboo and sin and, emphasize sex as a healthy and pleasurable practice so that it can occur in a responsible manner. However sex should also occupy a semi-public space and therefore religious codes on sexual behaviour should be opened for critique and challenge in order to resist hidden sexual practices

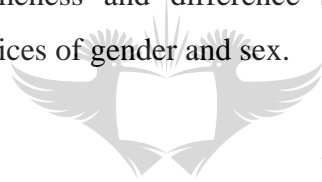
Shifting focus away from death to life is the crucial shift in the trajectory for taking responsibility for self and other and associating sex with *eros*. In the constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos*, nuance is crucial for shifting this tension towards *jouissance* so that sex is associated with pleasure. This pleasure is emphasized in the pleasure of loss of self in the unity with other in the moment of *jouissance*. However this loss of control of self, which can be seen as *thanatos*, can only occur in a responsible way if mutual recognition exist during the pleasure in sharing union with

the other (Benjamin, 1988: 53). Thus responsible sexual behaviour can extend into the practice of mutual recognition. Furthermore shifting the dominant discourse of death and HIV and AIDS attempts to shift the link away from sex and *thanatos* towards sex and *eros*. This is a significant shift for dealing with AIDS denial because it provides hope for PLWHA when life and pleasure in living is emphasized. Nonetheless stigmatisation due to fear (*thanatos*) is an obstacle in the practice of mutual recognition. Mutual recognition is thus crucial for breaking the stigma around HIV and AIDS by ensuring 'communitarian' values towards PLWHA because it brings together communities that are bonded through shared experiences of caring and nurturance.

It is also important to distinguish between real death and *thanatos* (which is the risk of death) when representing HIV and AIDS. This distinction in messaging on HIV and AIDS does not build into the fantasy of death in the constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos* that plays out in risky sexual behaviour. Instead it shows how real death is final and that the consequences of real death are felt by others such as orphans and vulnerable children. Therefore consciousness-raising is a good strategy for creating awareness of HIV transmission though highlighting personal experiences that show the real consequences of risky sexual behaviour. As alternate understandings for resisting normalizing practices of gender, race, class or sexuality it is important to show that HIV and AIDS is indiscriminate irrespective of privilege. The need to find transient harmony from the constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos* requires better ways to respond to the tension that exists in these two opposing drives. The constant tension between *eros* and *thanatos* can never be totally displaced but it can be sought out in more healthier and responsible ways such as through mutual recognition in the moment of *jouissance* or the 'little death'. Also crucial for resisting the link between sex and *thanatos* should be life affirming messages on how to cope with illnesses. HIV and AIDS must reflect that healing occurs both in the 'mental' and 'physical' aspects of the body and that through mutual recognition and respect for self and other healing occurs in communities as well.

## Conclusion

The guidelines presented here are hopefully a way in which to think about representations of gender and sex and HIV and AIDS. They are by no means the only standard for messaging on HIV and AIDS. The hope that these guidelines carry is the main message of mutual recognition, which is respect and recognition of self and others irrespective of gender, race, class or sexuality thereby removing hierarchical binaries that contribute towards systems of domination. This is crucial for removing stigma and challenging misconceptions around PLWHA. Furthermore the hope of encouraging mutual recognition focuses on the self so that individuals foster a sense of self-respect and through this process a sense of respect for others, which then extends into communities that are bonded through caring and nurturing for others. Mutual recognition is also crucial for resisting normalizing practices of sexual identity and for shifting the link away from sex and *thanatos* towards sex and *eros*. To this extent, mutual recognition is the lens for critically evaluating media representation on HIV and AIDS and sexual identity with the emphasis on sameness and difference so that it can extend into a resistance of normalizing practices of gender and sex.



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Comment&Analysis



Wes-gaap

It seems the coffers of the Western Cape government haven't been entirely flattened by the publicly funded *drog-spoening* contest between Premier Ebrahim Rasool and pretender to his throne, Mcebisi Skosotsha. No, there's just enough in the kitty to launch an ad campaign intended to make the world think differently about the province that launched the Great Trek, educated Hendrik Verwoerd, imprisoned Nelson Mandela and hasn't quite worked out that the Cape Flats flood every winter. That's where David comes in. "My father wanted me to be a doctor," he says from his print ad. "My mother wanted me to be married. I wanted to be myself. My name is David. And I am the Western Cape." Lemmer can't work out the correlation between David and the province, other than that they're both huge disappointments to their parents.

Velly solly

Piet Hui, Dombasi's Sino-Boer, importer of plastic cocktail glasses and Barbi knockoffs, says the Japanese are genetically incapable of apologising. The *mannen* thought he was just getting caught up in the current acrimony between China and Japan, until they heard Honda's apology for running the San Marino Grand Prix underweight and with a secret, highly illegal spare part tank. Responding to the team handed to the BAR Honda team, spokesperson Tatsuya Iida said: "We felt the punishment was too harsh but any appeal now would only be bad for the sport." And God forbid Honda should do anything bad for the sport.

U-Chaos eKhayalisha

Lemmer is the first to admit that this group of indignant languages isn't what it should be, but at least he'd ask for help if he ran into trouble. Not quite so hesitant are local purveyors of culture: this week sees the release of *U-Carmen eKhayalisha*, but as far as Star Kisekoer was concerned, it's called *Carmen eKhayalisha*. At least it was until Tuesday morning, when a press release went out about a film called *u-Carmen eKhaselasha*, without a hyphen or a capital U in sight. Lemmer wonders if George Lucas ever had this kind of trouble with *Star Wars: eKhasel 3/III reVenge of the Sith*.

Fishy

Last week Dr Marto Tshabalala-Msimang said she didn't remember endorsing AIDS denier Matthias Rath and his foundation, and now Dok Rabie is worried. He says Dr No is obviously not sane, and probably doesn't have Alzheimer's, but the only likely explanation for her memory lapse – extreme stress – just doesn't mesh with her department's policy of "Don't worry be happy". Still, he says he'll send her a telegram recommending she supplement her diet with lots of oily omega-3-rich fish, which does wonders for the brain and memory functions. (Lemmer might attach his recipe for red herring fried in olive oil.)

Readers wishing to alert Donn Krizan to matters of national or lesser importance can do so at [krizan@mng.co.za](mailto:krizan@mng.co.za)

# Shepherd to a dying flock

The Catholic Church's intentions are good, but the results of its HIV policy are devastating, argues Stefan Hippler

It is noteworthy that at a time when many people have given up on the church and some aspects of its moral teaching, the death of John Paul II and the election of the new pope should have reignited the debate on the question of the Catholic Church and condoms.

Journalists and people far removed from the church's teaching are suddenly interested in the church, its teaching and the possible changes of the teaching in these times of transition.

As a Catholic priest I can reflect on it in many ways. The 1968 encyclical *Humanae vitae* – which prescribed methods surrounding procreation – and its consequences still seem to curtail open debate within the church. In *Humanae vitae* Pope Paul VI gave his own experts, who counselled a measure of acceptance for artificial contraception. He didn't, and many Catholics simply ignore it. Another fact is that our people are dying. The millions of deaths worldwide, especially in Africa, as a consequence of HIV and AIDS also include millions of Catholics.

We might wish it was otherwise, and we can insist on behaviour changes according to papal teaching – but it is not happening. If we are honest, we must admit that the church's teaching could be considered a death sentence for people who cannot or will not follow the Church's sexual moral theology. This applies even to those who live faithfully within a marriage, but whose partner does not. This is a situation that the bishops of Southern Africa recognised when they tacitly legitimised condom use where a partner is HIV-positive.

So it happens that we as a church, who want to protect life in all circumstances, fail the people. Our intentions are good, but the results are devastating for the people of God. How do we get out of this vicious cycle? Most bishops and moral theologians have learned to be silent and wait for an answer from Rome. I am sure that among them there is a lot of anguish as they see our people dying, and still feel obliged to wait.

Many Catholics actively involved in the fields of HIV and AIDS are keeping silent, but pastorally may con-

duct the church's teaching. Pseudo-scientific explanations from church representatives claiming that condoms are unsafe and that the virus can pass through them are not correct and do not help the situation. Counting on abstinence alone also has no merit in practise – only the combination of all approaches might bring an end to the spread of the virus.

Accepting the teaching of the church for the moment and just praying that development will take place is also not enough. Which direction shall we take that is both acceptable to the church's teaching and supports the people who are on the brink of being infected? First we must realise that we are not dealing with saints, but with humans. In the long term, trying to enforce ideas that do not reach people does not work. The church is a communion of saints and sinners – we have to serve them all.

Next we might look to other churches and their richness of traditions, valued by our church according to the Vatican II council.

I noted with excitement that our new Pope, Benedict XVI, has stated his willingness to further develop the ecclesiological results of this council. Perhaps we

**Chance for change: Pope Benedict XVI**

have a first test case here, because time is running out for millions. The Orthodox Church, our sister institution, offers us the principle of "oikonomia". We can describe oikonomia as a consequence of God's unconditional love for every human being. This principle accepts that there are rules, but these can be set aside for a specific reason or group of people for the sake of their well-being. This does not mean the end of a rule, but an exception, determined and reasoned by the unconditional love of God and Christ, symbolised and carried forward by the church.

Oikonomia is the constant realisation of the mystery of God's love, revealed by Jesus Christ. Vatican II called on us to read the signs of the time. At a time of HIV/Aids, the sign may be not to enforce greater burden and moral prescriptions on people, but to give them more unconditional love. Maybe the answer for our church is not to fight the disease with moral arguments, but embrace the syndrome and the people infected and affected with love – a love that doesn't stop with the provision of care for the sick and dying, but one that abandons judgement and is open to the realities of human interactions in our time. I want to

challenge our theologians to study and discuss this route. And quickly. If we fail to act we are in danger of getting close to what constitutes a sin. I invite our theologians to visit a shack and hold hands with someone dying of the consequences of Aids. I invite our theologians to visit shacks and speak to women who do not have primacy over their sexuality, for whom the church's teaching on sexual morality are not options. I invite our theologians to visit a woman living with an HIV-positive man and advise her, face-to-face, that she is not allowed to use a condom. I invite our theologians to talk to youngsters who are sexually active (in South Africa as early as 12 or 13 years) and advise them not to protect themselves because of moral reasons. I am a simple priest. I am torn by what is preached and what I should preach. I can't stop hearing the voices of desperation. And I wish that we would contribute, without any doubt, to stopping the spreading of the virus so that we do not have to make an official confession of guilt 50 years later – too late for millions of people.

We need a theology of Aids, we need to incorporate this strong and life-threatening sign of the time into our existing theology. And we have to do this not from the safety of universities or a curial ivory tower, but coming from the people who suffer. It is there where we find God and our brother Jesus, the source of our theology.

**Stefan Hippler is a Catholic priest who has been involved in HIV/Aids counselling for many years**

## Stop getting so hot under the collar

The media have debated whether Pope Benedict XVI is good for the world. Really, asks Philip Moselele Moko, if you are not Catholic, should you be bothered?

Suddenly atheists, other Christians and sinners feel hard done by. The pope is chosen ahead of someone else to head the Catholic Church. The debates about the merits of a new pope cannot be equated with who will become the next African National Congress president. Whereas someone the ANC chooses will lord it over us whether we like it or not, those who don't think the pope's teachings are relevant don't have to follow them. Some say interest in the pope is justified because his is a powerful political office. But as P. Power has pointed out, if it cannot do anything, basically, it is those who hate the

church most who confer on it this omnipotence. They think it represents the devil's kingdom. New evangelists, Spanish lawmakers demonstrated this with their decision to legislate gay marriage in that Catholic country.

These show up the prophet as a genuine prophet. In Latin America and Africa, but again, they merely show the growing numbers as proof of this. The only conclusion is that some people are suffering hangovers from days when Catholicism was the official doctrine of the Roman Empire – they suffer from withdrawal symptoms as a result of the freedom they never thought they could have. It is for that reason that liberals are now off to rescue Catholics from the ravages of the faith they chose freely. They really shouldn't be so hot under their own collars. They have

after all managed to keep their wits about them in matters affecting who leads the 1.2 billion Muslims who constitute 22% of the world's population. In South Africa they merely passed over the election of Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein, even though he is head of one of South Africa's most influential churches.

Every Easter they see political leaders embark on the Zion pilgrimage to Shiva, but know that this will not have any bearing on their lives. That is proof they can do it. They can ignore the Holy Father without this affecting their lives. God isn't provoked if a church does or says, they should. But feel betrayed because of one or other appointment is another matter. If they do this, they will demonstrate what it means to have the separation of church and state.

## M&G consistently fails our young constitutional



**Right to Reply**  
Lindiwe Sisulu

Reasons that are fundamental to the building of our South African nation and democracy compel me to respond to the *M&G* & *Guardian's* report and editorial concerning the scandal involving

Sisulu, April 29). To question my appointment of Satha Moodley as a special adviser, the *M&G* highlighted his role in 1997 as chairperson of the Mpumalanga housing board, which approved a contract to Mosho.

First, I support the important principle that people in positions of leadership – whether in the public or the private sector – are expected to take responsibility for any wrongdoing in the institutions they lead. This is a key principle of good governance and corporate responsibility that the govern-

ment upholds. To the extent, then, that there was any finding by the auditor general and the Dreyer commission of irregularity for which Moodley was blamed in his position as chairperson of the Mpumalanga housing board, I could have no bone to pick if it is accurately pointed out that he should have exercised more care and scrutiny during his tenure. Unfortunately, the *M&G* went beyond this and directed accusations that go well beyond reminding us of this principle. Secondly, the *M&G* took the auditor

general and the Dreyer commission's criticisms of Moodley and turned it into a finding of guilt for some unratified crime. All of us have the right to the presumption of innocence. This provides an important safeguard against arbitrary justice based on suspicion and allegations. I can, therefore, never consider it fair that criticism should be elevated to the level of a breach of law. Thirdly, the public prosecutor and the auditor general are constitutional officers whose work might be enjoyed by respect from all of us to help

# Monitor

A barometer of governance and development

## Going with the flow

Buyelwa Sonjica has to accelerate service delivery, set standards and chivy people along — across five departments. **Nic Dawes** talks to her about this mammoth task



Buyelwa Sonjica must ensure the delivery of sanitation services. Photos: Paul Botes and Nadine Hutton



**M**inister of Water Affairs and Forestry Buyelwa Sonjica has a tricky job. She needs to manage the implementation of the 1998 water Act, and try to ensure that black farmers gain access to water resources without cutting into the productivity of commercial farms; she must accelerate the delivery of sanitation services, currently embarrassingly behind schedule; and she must oversee the empowerment process in a forest industry dominated by large multinationals.

All of this work overlaps the responsibilities of other Cabinet portfolios, but Sonjica manages almost no implementation budget.

**Why is sanitation delivery still so far behind target, and what are you doing about it?**

We are no longer directly responsible for delivery; we set norms and standards. But we have to assist local government to mobilise the funding based on where we see backlogs. In the last budget, local government got R1.2-billion for sanitation. We have to ensure that the money is utilised and achieves its intended purpose. But there are concerns, because the president has set targets for us to do away with backlogs by 2010, and there is some panic — if that's not too strong a term. In the process we are beginning to pick up that the standards are not necessarily adhered to.

**How can you get more control of performance in other spheres of government?**

The intergovernmental relations Bill will create some mechanisms. At the moment there is nothing formalised. We are in a situation where we can't hold municipalities accountable; they have been given powers by the Constitution and yet we have to develop a policy for them. They are accountable to the Department of Provincial and Local Government and we don't really know where we fit in.

**Given its areas of overlap with departments like agriculture and environment affairs and tourism,**

**what is the rationale for the continued existence of your department?**

We have the national water resource strategy that we have to roll out and it is a very comprehensive programme for water resources management and water resources development. It is a very technical process that needs specialised people. We also have a monitoring and regulatory role — you can't have departments implementing and monitoring themselves.

**Should you be charging more for water, and should there be differential pricing that favours emerging black farmers?**

We are among the cheapest in the world. We will be reviewing the pricing strategy, and everything else will flow from there. But while we are redressing we don't want to kill commercial farmers. They constitute the first economy, and they must continue growing while we bring up emerging farmers. There's no intention to target white farmers. We have nationalised water, but there are various usages that are of benefit to the economy. The operative word is equitable. We won't just take water for the sake of it.

**Some commercial farmers say they lost an existing right when water was nationalised in 1998, and that they are due compensation?**

The Constitution says that if there is a good reason to compensate, then we should go that route. We'll respect that. But the infrastructure that these farmers have that gives them a monopoly was heavily subsidised by the previous government. So the method of acquisition will determine how we compensate.

**She shops, she scores**  
For footballers' wives, there is only one place to shop  
**Page 50**



**Invitation to Tender**  
Tender No.2005/05 Dem. Terms of Reference

**Consultancy on the Demographic Impact of HIV/AIDS**

The National AIDS Coordinating Agency (NACA) in collaboration with The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Botswana wishes to engage a consultant, or a team of consultants, to undertake a rigorous study on the demographic impacts of HIV/AIDS. The study is a sequel to a similar exercise, undertaken in 2000, that was part of a broader effort at quantifying the impact of HIV/AIDS on development and providing a basis for incorporating HIV/AIDS into development planning and programming. The main objective of this study is to help the Government sustain this effort by updating the 2000 study.

**Specific Tasks**

1. Review and update as appropriate, the 2000 study on the Demographic Impacts of HIV/AIDS, with particular emphasis on:
  - 1.1. The methodological aspects the study, including the assumptions that form the basis of current model predictions, and the choice of models
  - 1.2. The findings of the study vis-à-vis trends since the study was published and to ascertain the predictive capabilities of the models chosen
2. Analyse, on the basis of appropriate quantitative models and available sources of data, the impact of HIV/AIDS on key demographic variables such as population size, growth and age structure; life expectancy; migration, mortality (infant, child and adult), fertility, dependency ratios and sex ratios.
3. Assess the adequacy of available data for purposes of policy oriented demographic modelling and make recommendations for improvement as appropriate
4. Recommend, on the basis of an evaluation of alternative demographic models, a demographic model for Botswana.

**Deliverables:** The key output is a report addressing the objectives of the assignment as set out in the Terms of Reference

**Qualifications and Experience**

*The ideal consulting team would deliver:* a) Solid expertise and experience in the following areas: demography, epidemiology, public health, sociology, quantitative modelling, and research. b) Key personnel holding at least a Masters Degree in one or more of the relevant disciplines and demonstrable research and experience in providing policy advice. c) Strong analytical and management skills. d) Full proficiency in English, both written and oral

Interested parties are advised to submit proposals and curriculum vitae of relevant people to the **NACA Public Health Consultant** not later than **30<sup>th</sup> June 2005** at 1600 hrs. Detailed Terms of Reference may be obtained on request from NACA office 108 or by e-mail from [enmat@naca.gov.bw](mailto:enmat@naca.gov.bw). **Postal Address:** To The National Coordinator, National AIDS Coordinating Agency (NACA), Private Bag 00643, Gaborone, Botswana. **Physical Address:** Westgate Shopping Mall Unit 5, Gaborone. **Attention:** BHRIMS Division/PHC. **Tel:** (267) 3710314

**HIV/AIDS barometer**

**Estimated worldwide HIV infections:** 62 709 942 at noon on Wednesday, May 25

**On the rise:** The latest survey of antenatal HIV prevalence in Swaziland has found an unexpected rise in infections, despite massive efforts to stop the spread of the disease. The statistics are drawn from a survey of Aids tests conducted at antenatal clinics last year. The research, released by the Swazi government and contained in a forthcoming Unicef report, found the infection rate has risen from 38.6% in 2002 to 42.6%.

Despite a massive investment by the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria, which contributed \$16-million to HIV/AIDS programmes in the country, the rate continues to rise. The *Toronto Globe and Mail* says Swazi Aids activists are not surprised by the findings. It quotes Siphive Hope, co-founder of Swazis for Positive Living, as saying: "I knew because I'm working in the communities, and there are so many terminally ill people... I knew the numbers were going up... I talk to doctors who do 100 HIV tests and only five are negative." — M&G reporter

# Monitor

A barometer of governance and development



'Murky' football transfers  
Former English captain says  
comments from player's agent  
irked him  
Page 36



Zethu Sibiya beside new tractor-tyre gardens at Mangolongolo east of Johannesburg (left) and members of Mangolongolo reflect groups. Photographs: Matthew Wilhelm-Solomon

## Moving on up

A programme called Mpilohle-Mpilonde is upgrading the quality of life in hostels and informal settlements around Johannesburg through group-based learning, writes **Matthew Wilhelm-Solomon**

In the industrial landscape around the Johannesburg inner city, about 24 000 migrant men, mostly from KwaZulu-Natal, live in single-sex hostels. A further 15 000 men and women live in informal settlements. With 68% of the men and 80% of the women unemployed, life is a daily struggle for most.

The Reproductive Health and HIV Research Unit (RHRU), a research centre based at Baragwanath hospital, has recently conducted a behavioural and prevalence study of 2 500 residents in these communities.

Among the most disturbing results from the survey are HIV prevalence rates of 55.5% among women and 24% among men. This was determined using an anonymous antibody saliva test obtained with informed consent.

Living conditions in the hostels are terrible — 22% of the men sleep under beds, 44% share single beds and 41% don't have access to working toilets.

Reported rates of sexual violence were also high, with 6% of the men reporting having used physical force to have sex with women and 12% of women reporting being victims of this abuse.

The results have been used by the

unit in partnership with the Institute for a Democratic South Africa (Idasa) and the Greenhouse Project to pilot a programme called Mpilohle-Mpilonde — meaning quality life, long life in Zulu — at three hostels and five informal settlements.

The European Commission-funded project is based on a sustainable livelihood approach revolving around "quality life" clubs. Specialist facilitators lead two-hour learning sessions with the clubs each week around community priorities such as food and nutrition, family health, water and sanitation and community relations. The clubs then meet in smaller "reflect groups" to discuss their problems.

The groups aim to create a communal environment in which residents can make informed choices about their lives. In the latter stages of the six-month process, once trust has been built, the sensitive issues of HIV and sexual violence dealt with.

The men and women of the Mangolongolo Informal Settlement, near Jeppe in Johannesburg, quality life club meet beneath a sparsely leaved tree beside a barbed wire fence. The members argue boisterously and often burst into resonant laughter.

The group has been discussing plans to mobilise the community to

clean up the area and to stop the dumping of waste by surrounding businesses on their doorstep.

"We want to remove this mountain of rubbish, move the toilets and increase the taps," says Mxolisi Mthembu, a club member.

The members of Mangolongolo have also started their own gardens in tractor tyres, growing beans, spinach and peas, though they struggle from lack of water, having only one tap in the community.

These initiatives by the club represent the seeds of social change that the project is hoping to achieve with the clubs.

After six months, members of the club graduate and chosen members will be trained by Idasa to become club facilitators themselves. In this way, the project partners hope the reflect groups will become sustainable and continue to grow and disseminate information. Eighty new facilitators from the communities

The groups aim to create a communal environment in which residents can make informed choices about their lives

will be trained by the year's end.

"Sometimes I feel like I'm out of my mind," says Thandi Nkosi, a member of the Mangolongolo club, "because there's a lot of problems. But knowledge has helped me persevere."

Establishing groups at the hostels, particularly among older men, has proved difficult. Many of the men are only interested in programmes where there is a direct possibility of employment. The hostel groups largely comprise women from surrounding informal settlements.

Sandile Mkhlasibe, a 28-year-old man, is a member of the Jeppe Hostel club. He is unemployed and hopes to be a facilitator himself, believing in the positive impact of the groups.

"If you don't have somebody who you can trust, who you can share your problems with ... you're holding everything inside, it is killing you and it can affect everyone who's living with you," he says.

Mkhlasibe believes tradition and social hierarchies are blocking open discussion in the hostels. He is bleak about the prospects of those with HIV in the hostels.

"People inside there are aware of HIV but they don't want to talk about it ... If you are HIV positive

around here, you are a joke, everybody's talking about you ... they don't give help or assist you with something ... you can't survive here with the virus," he says.

Myths and misconceptions around HIV continue to flourish. There is widespread mistrust of condoms. The survey showed that while almost all of those surveyed had been sexually active, only 52% of men and 48% of women had ever used a condom. Twenty-two percent of men and 21% of women had used a condom the last time they had sex. Sixty percent of men and 53% of women did not know where HIV-testing sites were in their community.

Mpilohle-Mpilonde is a sustained attempt to try and facilitate education and discussion around sexual health.

About 80 members of the clubs now prepare for graduation at Metro Centre on July 4 with enthusiasm and hope. In an environment where short-term interventions around social issues and HIV have been largely unsuccessful or non-existent, Mpilohle-Mpilonde may show a holistic way towards meaningful change. Yet, the test of this project will be whether this hope is transformed into concrete change and whether the groups continue to prosper under difficult circumstances.

mass movement of the year. The city of Edinburgh has been placed in a state of fear and alarm by Bob Geldof's summons to a million people to march on it.

Margo MacDonald, a member of the Scottish Parliament, cut to the heart of the global poverty debate by demanding to know where they are all going to find a toilet, which spectacularly missed the point of a demonstration in support of decent drainage for the people of Africa, many of whom have none all year round.

It should be a comfort to anyone on the left that collective protest is alive and well, and that many of the public are so moved by poverty that they want to march and be counted. But it is perplexing that there is not a similar uprising to demand action

*Kuimanyaro*, there will be no show left on its summit.

Political leaders mostly handle this awesome problem by accepting it exists and then failing to follow through the implications for public policy. This week, the leader of the United Kingdom's Conservative opposition, Michael Howard, wrote in *The Guardian* that climate change is one of mankind's greatest challenges. But barely a month ago during the British election campaign, he presented a Conservative manifesto that did not once mention climate change or propose a single measure to halt it.

If we want to halt global warming, we cannot leave the volume of carbon emissions to be the plaything of the free market. Climate change is a classic case where leaving every decision

The harsh reality is that we do not have long to get climate change under control

carbon sinks. The increased acidity of the oceans may reduce their capacity to absorb half the carbon in the atmosphere. Once past these tipping points, the world will be confronted with runaway global warming.

All of which should give added urgency to the debate on climate change at the G8 summit. But you would search in vain for any hint of urgency over climate change in United States President George W. Bush's responses at his press conference with British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

It is a tragedy that at this moment in history the world has to negotiate with a US administration that is saturated in US oil interests. Dick Cheney, the Vice-President, came

The test of success of the G8 summit on climate change is whether Bush is compelled to sign up to conclusions that accept there is a long problem and that the US is part of the solution to it.

It is a tribute to Blair's confidence that against the resistance of 'ington he persisted in making change one of the two top priorities for his G8 presidency. He needs to be able to show the peoples of the G8 countries de action if he is to get Bush to open eyes to the urgency of the problem.

Any retired pop star out there ing to launch a march to save planet before it is converted to a pressure cooker? — © Guardian Newspapers 2005

## HIV/Aids barometer

**Estimated worldwide HIV infections:** 63 012 339 at noon on Wednesday June 15

**Growing concern:** The HIV/Aids epidemic in Burma is "being fuelled by a mixture of ignorance, denial and lack of government action", which is a "dangerous cocktail" that could result in an HIV/Aids prevalence consistent with some African nations, according to the *Bangkok Post*.

According to aid workers, about two-thirds of commercial sex workers in the capital city of Rangoon are HIV-positive and an estimated one-fifth of pregnant women in the commercial town of Lashio are infected with the



virus. If current trends continue, as much as one-quarter of the population of Burma could be affected by HIV/Aids within the next 10 years, according to the *Post*.

Although the military government recently has supported HIV/Aids educational campaigns, it remains in a "state of denial", saying Burma's "culture and religion" limit the spread of the virus. The government says more than 300 000 of the country's 54-million people are HIV-positive, but UNAids estimates that twice as many people between 15 and 49 are living with the disease.

Source: *Kaisernetwork.org*

## Sheep urine to cut exhaust fume pollution

David Adam in London

A British bus company is testing a new secret weapon that it hopes will help forward its push to cut its polluting emissions — sheep urine.

The company, Stagecoach, has fitted a bus in the southern English city of Winchester with a tank containing the animal waste, which is sprayed into exhaust fumes to reduce emissions of harmful nitrous oxides.

Andrew Dyer, MD of Stagecoach South, said: "It is a novel way of reducing pollution but we believe it will work. There is nothing to worry about — we won't be asking passengers to leave a sample and we won't

be carrying a resident sheep at the back of the bus."

The scheme is backed by the local Hampshire County Council as part of an effort to reduce pollution. The bus carried its first passengers last month.

The urine is collected by the fertilizer industry from farmyard waste and refined into pure urea, which is then sold on to be used in the green-engine technology. Ammonia from the urea reacts with nitrous oxides in the exhaust fumes and converts them to nitrogen gas and water, which is released as steam.


Dyer said the idea was no laughing matter. "I got some laughs when I told a transport conference in Bir-

mingham that sheep urine could be the key to cleaner vehicles becoming a reality. This is the in green technology and we'll it will help make our cities places to be for the public."


New European Union regulations to be introduced in October will bring tighter restrictions on emissions, he said.

The urea-injection system developed by United Kingdom engine manufacturer Cummins

Andy Wren of Hampshire County Council said: "We are running anti-pollution initiatives, the sheep urine idea gets the attention." — © Guardian Newspapers 2005



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# SA needs sex survey to wage war on Aids

12 JUNE 2007

Conference calls for creation of database on nation's sexual habits

CLAIRE KEETON

TO HELP in the fight against Aids in South Africa, the country needs a sex survey to provide information about what goes on between the sheets as well as a statistical database.

This is the view of the head of the Anglo American Chairman's Fund, Clem Sunter, who told the country's second Aids conference this week that the war on HIV/Aids needed a study on sexual patterns.

This is the best way to formulate a viable Aids prevention strategy, Sunter told the delegates in Durban.

The Kinsey studies on the sexual behaviour of Americans in the '40s and '50s revolutionised what the nation knew about sex. It explored everything from extramarital sex to masturbation and other topics that were taboo at the time.

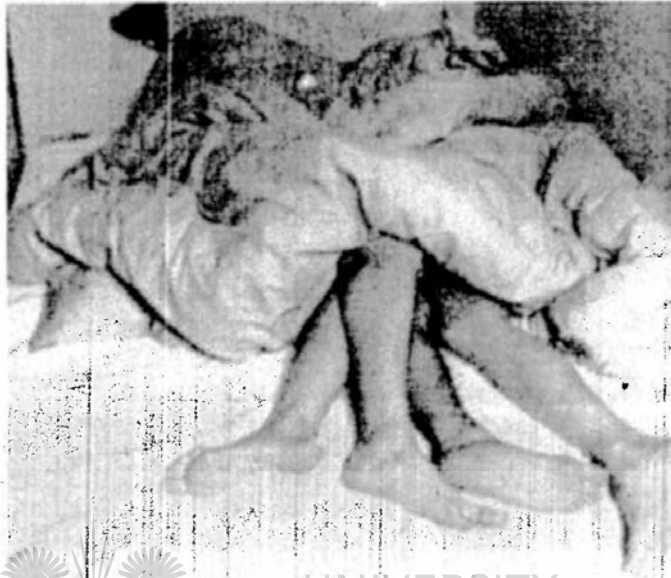
Although South Africa has the highest number of people in the world living with HIV — an estimated 5.3 million — it still lacks research into the sexual habits of the nation.

So far two major surveys have been conducted into youth risk and sexual behaviour but to date, little research has been conducted on adult sexual patterns.

Health Director-General Thami Mseleku said: "We need an in-depth, qualitative understanding of what currently influences attitudes [on sex] and there has been little research. We would not dismiss any ideas on the table but would have to have a conversation about what a sex survey means."

Professor Anthony Mbewu, the interim president of the Medical Research Council, said the youth studies were valuable but further research was still needed. "Not much is known about what goes on between the sheets or behind the school sheds," he said.

At a conference session on adolescents and the risk of contracting Aids, one of the presenters, Lisa Langhaug, reported how young people in rural



NO TIME TO BE COY:

Information on the sexual patterns of adults and the youth in South Africa is needed in order to implement successful Aids prevention strategies

Picture: TONY STONE IMAGES

Zimbabwe identified places or occasions of sexual risk by drawing "risk maps" of their communities.

The maps showed schools, long grass and dry river beds but also all-night prayer meetings with no supervision. Such venues were identified as places where consensual and forced sex occurred.

Researchers at the Aids conference highlighted common sexual patterns across communities that increased the risk of HIV infection including:

- Youth bravado — a "tata ma chance" attitude to HIV;
- Young women exchanging sex for commodities; and
- Young women having sex with older partners.

Other patterns include having multiple partners and sex without condoms.

One study in a Cape Town township, with 310 participants between the ages of 11 and 19, found that many of them had unprotected sex.

Jessica Berwick, lead researcher from the Desmond Tutu HIV Centre, reported that not all the participants answered sexually sensitive questions, such as how many had had sex with a stranger.

Of the 91 who responded to this question, 11% had paired up with a stranger the last time they had sex.

Another study titled "Young Lions to Young Lovers" revealed that a culture of extreme risk-

taking had developed among youth alongside the rise of a culture of consumerism. It was found that young women increasingly exchanged sex for commodities.

A survey in the Vulindlela rural community, in the Kwa-Zulu-Natal Midlands, demonstrated a clear connection between HIV infection and the age of a woman's partner.

Roughly 25% of women under the age of 20 were HIV-positive when their partners were between 20 and 24 years old. But their risk of being infected more than doubled to 58% when their partners were older than 25.

Another risky sexual activity is the pattern of having more than one partner at the same time.

"We should be talking about safe relationships instead of safe sex," said Dr Kgosi Letlape, head of the South African Medical Association.

**'Not much is known about what goes on between the sheets or behind the school sheds'**

# Cameron confronts a nation's spectres

19 MAY 2005

Tim Trengove Jones

**B**Y WORD count, Edwin Cameron's aptly titled *Witness to AIDS* is a relatively small book. Not in every significant respect, it is a big book indeed. It has been justly praised by two Nobel laureates, Nadine Gordimer and Nelson Mandela. Reviewers have lauded the judge's intelligence, courage, and humanity.

Editors and scholars say SA has "AIDS fatigue", and that HIV/AIDS stories don't sell. The burgeoning infection rates have presented us with figures that are truly unspeakable. Added to this, stigma has promoted evasion and repression, silence and shame. But here is a book that tackles these daunting details head-on, yet with great popular success.

The project of the new SA is one of re-examining identities and, where necessary, forging new ones. Nation-building is fuelled by a process of diligently re-examining selfhoods. Cameron's text is a representative anecdote of just this.

He repeatedly stresses his own privilege. But the issue is more complex. As a gifted intellect, a white male in former apartheid SA, now a high judicial officer, he is indeed privileged. But his identity is not unambiguous. As a gay male with AIDS, he is potentially a target of opprobrium.

You cannot simply say that Cameron is "an AIDS activist" or a "gay white male living with AIDS", or an "internationally renowned jurist". He is all of these, and more. His narrative shows the varied colours of our self-hoods.

The text, too, is varied. Like a great deal of contemporary writing, it is a hybrid: part memoir, part apology, pro via sui, part jurisprudence, part polemic. This variety mirrors the complexity of the issues it addresses, indicating that no one form can claim to adequately represent the many-faceted reality the text addresses. It is democratic in bias and shows that the rainbow nation requires a "rainbow" book.

But while the book shows a diligent commitment to the "examined life", it is not locked in solipsism. It continually looks outward to larger issues and cultural patterns. This moving out to other lives is deeply ethical and political, a demonstration of the values our new social order requires.

Cameron's text goes a long way to redeem that unpopular species: the public intellectual. Desperately needed, the species has been ignored or reviled. But this text shows that principled intelligence is needed, and need be neither malign nor impotent.

While I'm sure the judge would be properly sceptical of the cult of personality, this book suggests how much the fate of a nation might hang on the interventions of principled, thoughtful individuals.

Cameron has coined phrases that have the trenchancy of aphorism, and the political clout of slogans: "I am not dying of AIDS, I am living with AIDS", "a crisis of truth-telling". These coinages have neatly encapsulated whole debates, and focused attention.

The book is a classic rags-to-riches tale. But in its stress on principled citizenship, it counters the tendency to link liberation with mere upward mobility. What Cameron calls "second chances" should also be seen as a myth of recovery. Deeply embedded in our psyches, crucial to our understanding of SA's miracle, this pattern talks to our contemporary aspirations in profound ways. The book shows a myth made real.

This slim book shows one man taking the lead in facing many of the spectres of the national mind, and trouncing them. It is an exemplary tale of our new nation, and Cameron, for all his distinctiveness, has a mind perfectly in keeping with the time and place in which he lives.



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## Swazi Aids fight an uphill battle

25 MAY 2005

Kaphunga, Swaziland – When Chief Mfanyana Lukhele mentions Aids at community meetings in this Swazi hamlet, the men usually get up and leave.

“There are so many people who are dying and sick, but no one will say what they are dying of,” he said.

In a country whose absolute monarch chooses a new bare-breasted maiden to wed each year, persuading men to stick to one sexual partner is difficult.

Lukhele decided that education by stealth was the only answer for the men in his 1 800-strong chieftom and invited them to a play. He didn't tell them it was commissioned by the United Nations Children's Fund.

He managed to round up about 400 people – around half of them men. When asked why just 400 had attended the play, *The Tale of Two Futures*, he said educating men about HIV was an uphill struggle. He added: “They are watching football.” – Reuters



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# Men behaving positively

The AIDS virus is forcing infected men to rethink their behaviour and look to one another for help in living with the disease. Philippa Garson sat in on a male support group

A GROUP of men stands in the middle of the room, holding hands randomly across each other's bodies. They are a messy human knot. They slip over each other's arms, constricting themselves, trying to transform the knot into a circle. They run out and the knot is still a knot. Everyone laughs and returns to their seats. The tension dissipates and the support group for HIV-positive men, at Soweto's Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital, is about to begin.

Neo Makhona, the young facilitator of the group — run by HIVSA under the auspices of the hospital's Perinatal HIV research Unit — explains: "We're trying to tell them these are the problems we're facing. They have to come up with a solution of how to untie the knot without letting go of their hands. Normally people see each other's problems from a distance. But if we can communicate them to each other we can come up with solutions."

For those men, most of whom live in Soweto, problems often seem insurmountable. HIV acquires on top of their daily struggles with poverty and unemployment, adding new risks like broken relationships, ill health and rejection by family or friends.

In addition, HIV is forcing men to rethink the way they get through life before, such as betting up their feet. "When you're drunk you have this positive mentality. You feel so confident, but in the morning when you wake up, you start wondering what you did."

Many of these guys got this idea, having girlfriends on the side, intimidating their partners or shagging off their health problems. Before, they felt they didn't have to worry too much about how they had sex or their emotional well-being. But to ignore those things now could be an express train to death. If they don't support their partners, they will re-orient themselves with new strategies of the virus.

If they live in denial, their health will deteriorate. If they don't support their partners, they in turn won't get the care and support they need. "Today's group kicks off with the practice of making alcohol and sex. A young man in a red cap blurted out: 'Sex is very important. I'll say it straight. Let's not take it as a joke. Your parents made you when they were sober. Why did you come to drink before sex? I want to drink a lot. I see that what I was doing was not wrong. We don't condone when we're drunk.'"

A smart-looking man in a black shirt took an agreement: "When you're drunk you have this positive mentality. You feel so confident, but in the morning when you wake up, you start wondering what you did."

"Most of these guys got this idea. I think I made a mistake in the pub one night. If I was drunk I would do it without a condom."

After plenty of animated talk about how "nasty girls look fantastic" after a few drinks, a middle-aged man in a beige, zip-up jersey chirped irritably: "Are you trying to tell me we all got HIV because we were drunk?"

"All we're saying," says Mandisa Mithethwa, the other young facilitator, "is that when you are drunk you do things without knowing it."

Mithethwa and Makhona have a tough job. Every Wednesday morning these two youngsters must traverse a prickly terrain with a diverse group of men who are there because of one thing — HIV. Many are twice their age; some would rather be elsewhere. While most are enthusiastic regulars, a few — plucked from the queue of the

Perinatal HIV Research Unit's Wellness Clinic and assured they will not lose their place while they attend the group — look dazed or disgruntled.

A young Casanova, his eyes hidden by a kwaito-style hat pulled low, is particularly hostile today: "Do I have to be here? I want to know my rights," he simmers before retreating into sullen silence.

These are not easy times. Whether these men are trendy and aspirant, factory workers or self-employed, young, middle-aged or elderly, HIV has shaken their lives, forcing them to rethink so much that they once

look for granted. Some have been HIV-positive for many years and do battle daily with ailments and illnesses; others are still fit and new to the challenges of living with the disease.

Many speak of how reluctant to accept or disclose their HIV status almost killed them or those they know.

"Don't delay in disclosing," says an elderly man in denim. My friend knew he was positive but didn't tell anyone. The strain of keeping it inside is what killed him. If you don't disclose you will bring problems to your family and everyone around you."

But many men fear that if they tell their wives or girlfriends, their story will be "all over Soweto". Others agonise over how to break the news to potential girlfriends or whether to start a new relationship at all.

"How do you take a wife and marry her if you are sick?" asks a burly man in baggy cotton pants. "Is your manhood affected if you are positive? All guys don't want to live as bachelors for the rest of their lives."

Despite the pain and sadness in those men's lives, they are clearly charged by the togetherness of the group and perhaps by the realization that they are



MAN TO MAN: Neo Makhona and Mandisa Mithethwa, facilitators of a support group for men with the AIDS virus. PHOTO: ANDREW BANNISTER



... heritage site  
dated to be 2-billion years  
old is considered to be  
the largest meteorite  
in the world.  
Found in Vredefort, Free  
State, the impact scar measures  
250 km in diameter. The  
Vredefort crater is one of 50  
in the world.



# Don't forget girls like to have sex, sometimes skin to skin

There is more behind the high incidence of Aids in young women in South Africa than the well-worn theories about inequality and vulnerability

By Philippe Garçon

The high-level vulnerability of girls and women to HIV Aids, especially in developing countries, has often, but incorrectly, been attributed to their economic vulnerability.

Research on how women's marginal place in society puts them at greater risk of HIV infection has women and girls are the most likely to get in prostitution and sexual abuse, and how transactional sex is often a return for money or goods, some of which is used for their own economic vulnerability.

One is constantly reminded that women forestall sex for one reason or another, and that even women in relationships are at risk because there is a likelihood that their partners are having sex elsewhere.

Of course, there are the individual-level factors that the female is often biologically more vulnerable than the male, and that she is often more likely to be sexually abused.

While all these factors are undoubtedly true, and may in part explain why HIV rates of infection are higher in young women than they are in young men, they simply don't tell the whole story.

From the social perspective, it is not the women's vulnerability to HIV Aids that is the problem, but the fact that all women are not equally vulnerable, and that the most vulnerable are often the most marginalized.

From the social perspective, it is not the women's vulnerability to HIV Aids that is the problem, but the fact that all women are not equally vulnerable, and that the most vulnerable are often the most marginalized.

What about all the women, say the African Union, who are not in prostitution and who are not sexually abused, but who are still getting HIV Aids? Is it because they are not taking enough precautions?

But the high incidence of HIV Aids in young women is not just a result of their economic vulnerability, but also a result of their social vulnerability.

And the social vulnerability of young women is not just a result of their economic vulnerability, but also a result of their social vulnerability.

"Males are the 'with' that women are either the pure and innocent victims of men's lasciviousness or the types who serve around, even if they are only doing so to survive."

The landscape of female sexual behaviour is starkly more nuanced and complex than this.

I started with relief recently when I came across Jonathan Berger's article entitled "Re-examining the Epidemic" in the latest *Development Update*. Berger raises many of the questions that have been posing me, involving in-depth interviews with several HIV-positive women in Soweto.

He argues that HIV Aids must also be seen as an "epidemic of desire" and that we need to "move away from stereotypical assumptions of vulnerability that remain."

## Young women are having more sex than their male counterparts

... and the fact that they are not taking enough precautions, but also a result of their social vulnerability.

As Berger points out, many levels of the landscape of female sexual behaviour are not captured by the traditional model of the epidemic of desire.

What's behind the high incidence of HIV Aids in young women is not just a result of their economic vulnerability, but also a result of their social vulnerability.

And the social vulnerability of young women is not just a result of their economic vulnerability, but also a result of their social vulnerability.

... of all sexual encounters are the women. Conflicting findings like these show that much more explanation is required.

Similarly, the Reproductive Health Research Unit's study on HIV and adolescent sexual behaviour shows that while 90 per cent of young men always use condoms, only 60 per cent of young women do so consistently.

As Berger says: "Knowing how, and why, women are unable to protect themselves from HIV infection in abusive or exploitative relationships does not help us understand why many 'empowered' women fail to protect themselves and engage in unsafe sex."

One woman I interviewed told me she thought she was HIV-positive because when she was younger "she liked love too much". She said that although she had known about HIV, she just didn't think it "would happen" to her.

How different is she from the many other women who, for a variety of reasons, may have lots of "risky sex"? With so many different determinants involved in sexual behaviour, many of them occurring at a subconscious level, epidemiological research may both miss and mislead sexual behaviour prevention. Without it, prevention campaigns will continue to fail.

Such a research is not only to do it, but also to do it in a way that is not just about the epidemic, but also about the women who are living with it.

... and the fact that they are not taking enough precautions, but also a result of their social vulnerability.

And the social vulnerability of young women is not just a result of their economic vulnerability, but also a result of their social vulnerability.

### Winter Reading

In this extract from *Balancing Act*, a book about gay and lesbian

# 'I am a beautiful

**W**hen I was 15, there was this woman at school and I wanted to spend all my time with her. I thought we were best friends, and she had no problem. I felt happy to touch her, just to give her hugs, you know. I was it when I decided I was a lesbian. It was when I was starting to play ladies' soccer. I came out to myself and I told one of my friends, because she was a lesbian. But when I spoke to my mum, she sent me out of the house. After about six months my mum told me, "Come home. If it's what you want, then carry on. When you're tired of it, you will come and tell me." She was like, "I'm going to quit being a lesbian when I grow up. I never enjoyed my childhood that much. I was raped at the age of six. And it happened again when I was 11. I was sexually abused by my cousin. It took me years to talk about it. I couldn't go anywhere, everything was holding me back. I couldn't find the pieces of my life. The year everything happened I was 19. I was writing music, but I didn't make it. I couldn't make it because everything happened in the same year. I was a volunteer worker at the

hospital, and the counsellor who had raped me came to find me there. I told him, "I'm old enough now to decide what I want and to fight for myself." And that's when he said he was HIV-positive, and that whatever he had done to me, he had done on purpose. I had an option but to go for the test. The feeling I had when I found out I was positive was like, "Oh my God! I'm facing a life sentence, I'm going to die. But I'm still young. I want to become something. Now I don't have a future." I was thinking, all the time, "Why is this thing happening to me? Why? Why?" At the hospital, one of the other nurses saw that I wasn't coping. She told me about an HIV counsellor there. I took a note under her door. My name is Nunu, I'm here, I need to speak to you, it's an emergency." She gave me a call and we made an appointment, and we talked. I spoke about everything, she helped me, and I also joined a support group. I started using drugs that same year - marijuana and dagga. It's popular in my community. You find that your neighbour is selling. The first time I took it, I said, "I just want to forget," but it caused more problems. I stole my mum's mugs, clothes, spoons from the house. I

said them, just to smoke. I told my HIV counsellor and she found a rehab place for me, but first I was supposed to tell my mother. She called my mum in. It was me, her, my mum. I was looking at my mother. I had to say something, and when I told her that I'm on drugs, she said she already realised, but she never knew how to confront me. I told my mum that I'm a lesbian and that I'm HIV positive and that my cousin raped me, all at the same time. And about the rape when I was six. I just felt everything at the same time. Our parents, as black people, it's difficult for them to talk about sex, about drugs. They feel very embarrassed. My mum asked me, "Why didn't you tell me all along?" But it was too difficult for me. I couldn't talk about sex, because my mum didn't tell me about sex. Me and my mum, we used to fight for no reason. Like if she says something, I become angry. I used to blame her. "Why didn't you see that I was raped?" I didn't understand why she didn't notice. She also had to go to counselling. She also kept on blaming herself until she accepted everything that happened in the past. We have to move on. Now she is happy. She supports me.

South African youth, one young woman tells her story: Nunu, a 25-year-old HIV/AIDS activist, faces her fears

# young woman'

It's all about support, it's all about communication. I went to rehab in Roburg. If I have time, I still go for aftercare on Wednesdays. I was very aggressive. I don't know if I was angry or what. I was like, "You say something to me? I don't take shit!" I used to hit people. But in rehab I found I'm not the only one with problems. Other people have a lot of problems, and I never thought about that. In rehab you find yourself, you create yourself again. And my behaviour started to change. Because if you are aggressive with life, there's nowhere you can go. One day I told myself, "I want to be quiet. I'm going to be quiet for just one day." People said, "Are you OK? Are you sick?" And they thought, "There's a bad mood again." But I said, "I want to change who I was, and be what I am today." I've started speaking in public. I always tell them, during my talk, that I am a lesbian with HIV. I want people to understand me, not only that I'm living with HIV. But people don't want to understand. I don't want to be a man. I don't like to be a man at all. I am a woman for women, and I'm proud to be a woman. People are raping lesbians because they want to fix us.

But that won't change the fact that I'm a lesbian. The solution is to talk about it. And know your rights. We have started a campaign now to empower people to fight for their rights. We want to teach people that if the police fail, they must take the thing further, not just leave it. You fight back! We are sick and tired now. We want to be recognised as lesbians and get the help we need. I don't want to be like, "Oh my God, it's night now. What about those men? Are they going to rape me?" I want to walk free! I look at myself in the mirror and say, "I'm a beautiful young woman. I can't give up at this stage." I make sure I'm always happy, each and every day. If something brings me down, I challenge it. And I thank my community. I thank people who are around me for supporting me. I know I'll survive with their help. And also with my own help. I've done so much for myself to accept myself and forgive myself!



Nunu speaks out against the stigma surrounding black lesbian women with HIV. Photo: JOHANN BOCH



ways of talking about the disease, Aids. The Daily Uys, for instance, has a humour that abrades, but a truth in that. Local politicians, wrenching out their deadly love. Politicians in Africa barely mention the disease. Their silence speaks a message nothing or anything. Edwin Cameron, Justice of the Supreme Court of Appeal, his voice, and it is clear and certain and reliable. I carefully calculated my says Cameron. "In this so many millions, there voices. In affluent North Western Europe, you loud, expressive voices. In is different. Poverty, stigma inhibition of discrimination, and the response. But I set out to speak at a very level, to find the hearts of a ge of people." A relief in this. Cameron's dicky negotiates the unerrain between the silence panic. It's a compassionate it brings some balance to advocacy and insensate degrading around Aids. is a voice that is authentic-one simple fact. Cameron trus in his body. It's this one act that immediately links the judge, to Gladwell, the that connects him to count- is - unspeakably poor and marginalised - who are liv- HIV/Aids in South Africa, unnecessarily from it. ght, at this point, question tion as tenuous and pre- is. You might ask how a nted, highly educated, gay, white man can arrogate to re right of speaking for the and the dying. But there's a wist in Cameron's story: he m a background of poverty ation. He grew up in a chil- ine in the Eastern Cape. ni was poor, yes, but he was His white skin, so brutish by the apartheid govern- vered him into the rarefied a top boys' school in Pre- fact has never left him. "It tral part of my social and onsciousness. I certainly s, but I was able to express on those talents because I : A poor white kid could on his gifts in the 1960s and use of the privileges ex- whites." and "privilege" has lodged ameron's psyche. It is a ged, sharp-bladed thing, ough the axis of having aving, scoring both the in- d the excluded. back from a Rhodes schol- yford, Cameron delivered ory address to his former t. 20, he was the youngest er at a Pretoria Boys High diciary service.) Privi- id, meant "learning some- ut compassion and toler- humility." n spoke about the difficul- ing these things on an emp- x, with inadequate facilities ualified teachers, or with- hood to study in at all, spoke from both sides of the margins and the centre, t this liminal position that of social justice is rooted. while in matric, Cameron ter to anti-apartheid ac- r Hain, inviting him to pen the sports boycott for the agazine Cameron edited. shed the story on the front -calls, "but I must also say, ic, when I went to Stellen- versity, I dropped a lot of y commitment to justice, te much more compliant." npliance was short lived. luation, Cameron quickly a private legal practice, se he helped argue an ap-

# Force of the True

In his published memoir, Judge Edwin Cameron's clear authoritative voice cuts a path between the silence and panic of the Aids pandemic, writes Loren Anthony

(Lifestyle section) - 1 MAY 2005

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PERSONAL SPACE: To date Cameron is the only person in public office in Africa who has disclosed his HIV status

peal against the death sentences imposed on the Sharpeville Six. Although the legal challenge failed, the international outcry, partly fuelled by Cameron's out-of-court advocacy, saved the six.

Cameron is inordinately modest about his role as a human-rights lawyer, as a judge, as a patron of children's homes and Aids shelters,



"I emphasised that I had been able to choose to make my statement because "I am not dying of Aids. I am living with Aids." The phrase caught on"

and as an activist. (Nelson Mandela forewords the book and calls Cameron a hero.) "I don't deserve any glory. There is no straight line, no long-standing, honourable tradition of activism. Anyone who tries to look back and see a morally unblotted life, a morally unambiguous life, is attempting the impossible."

And yet it's hard not to create such a smooth linear narrative for Cameron. From his early Oxford days, Cameron's political awareness was acute. "Living in England in the mid-1970s under a Labour government, I realised how governmental power worked and that the way in which it was wielded made a huge difference in ordinary lives. That's where my commitment began."

From there, Cameron's CV reads like a spin-doctor's dream. But subtending the dream, subtending the politically cogent, ethically engaged activities of his professional life were the more tortuous peripeteta of his private life. In 1985, after a single unguarded sexual encounter, Cameron contracted the virus. As Cameron's expertise and advocacy on Aids policy grew, his own inner silence thickened.

By 1987 Cameron realised he was dying of Aids and needed treatment. His salary enabled him to purchase life-saving anti-retrovirals for a staggering R4 000 a month, almost half his salary at the time. Cameron knew that while he popped his pills twice daily, thousands of others couldn't afford them. Here was the double-edge of privilege again, this time cutting along the differential of death and life. Cameron knew then that access to treatment lay at the dark heart of the Aids debate.

In the South African landscape, there were two rigid barriers to treatment: official government denialism around Aids, and the patent (intellectual property) laws and

over-pricing of the pharmaceutical industry. Faced with this intransigence, Cameron decided that, as an individual and as a judge, it was no longer morally tenable to keep quiet. "Surely," he writes, "if I started speaking as someone living with Aids, I would do so with greater moral force, more unchecked energy, better clarity about what had to be done."

In 1999, at his public statement to the Judicial Service Commission of the Constitutional Court, Cameron announced his HIV status. He was unprepared for the response: "They seemed to embrace me, respectfully, supportively, even ardently. I emphasised that I had been able to choose to make my statement because 'I am not dying of Aids. I am living with Aids'. The phrase caught on."

What did not catch on, sadly, tragically, was disclosure from other African leaders. To date, Cameron is the only person in public office in Africa who has disclosed his HIV status. The silence, Cameron knows, is due to the suasive seal of stigma.

To de-mythologise and normalise the illness, to unfreeze the static thrall of stigma, Cameron began to write. And he writes in two ways: firstly, he makes the story personal, very personal - so personal that there are painfully candid pictures of himself and his loved ones at the centre of the book.

It is a small and precious album, but it is entrusted to the reader because Cameron wants to offer proof of a life lived and a disease survived. That is what witnesses do - they offer up themselves as evidence.

Cameron makes it personal by not only telling his own story, but by respectfully telling the stories of others. He rightly intuits the importance of individual narratives. It is through personal testimony that the debate takes on its flesh, its soul.

Hazel Tau, Christopher and Nontsikelelo Moraka, Gugu Dlamini and Gladwell, through lack of access to treatment, have died or almost died of this disease. By telling their stories, Cameron connects the voices, hooking the reader into the real, culling empathy and helping to challenge indifference. What Cameron does is evoke compassion where none had existed before.

Secondly, in writing, Cameron makes it simple. He takes incredibly complex issues like epidemiology, patent laws and Aids denialism, and makes them accessible. "I didn't want to write for the Aids cognoscenti, for academics and highbrow preoccupations," says Cameron. "Since the launch of the book, I'm amazed at how many responses have been about how readable and understandable the book is, how complex issues have been explained." With immense clarity and honesty, he has written the book that needed to be written, that did not yet exist in the sluggish canon of healing, helpful, empowering Aids literature.

In the face of denialism and silence and absence, Cameron's openness and transparency, his modulated, truthful evocations are joyous. In another context, Umberto Eco has spoken of the Force of the False - those clear moments in history when groups of people tend to believe in false knowledge.

Sometimes this may be serendipitous, leading to good fortune but, most often, this is dangerous and self-limiting. In many ways, the government's obdurate denialism is an example of this. In contrast, I like to think Cameron represents the Force of the True - and this force is shiny and tolerant, bright and compassionate, and hopeful.

● *Edwin Cameron: Witness to AIDS* is published by Tafelberg, R125

# Father's big concern is who will look after his kids when he's gone

BY SHAWN SWILLIE

"For me it was a time to reflect on my wife, Simphiwe, who was my friend, partner, my everything. Now she is gone."

Simphiwe was Thanduxolo Doro's wife. She died in 2003 of HIV/Aids, leaving two children behind.

Doro was one of 20 people living with Aids who took part in a 60-hour sit-in at the National Economic Development and Labour Council buildings in Rosebank, Joburg, at the weekend.

Members of the National Association of People Living

with HIV and Aids (Napwa) were protesting at what they believe is the corporate sector's lack of commitment to HIV/Aids sufferers.

Besides the protest, it was a time of solemn reflection, of remembering friends and family who had fallen to HIV/Aids. For many it became a weekend of tears and consolation.

"We lit candles. We believe that the light brings hope," said Doro, Napwa's national spokesperson.

He is one of the "oldies" of the group, diagnosed with HIV/Aids in 1991. In the 14

years he has lived with the disease, he has seen more and more people succumb to it.

He has seen a world turned upside down, where increasing numbers of parents are having to bury their children instead of the other way around.

"Back when I found out that I had HIV, it was a lot easier. There was not that much information about.

"Now it is harder, as there is so much information. People know what it's about," said Doro.

"My worry is who will look after my children when I'm gone." [ssm@star.co.za](mailto:ssm@star.co.za)



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# A party guy's journey to Aids hell and back<sup>ST</sup>

CLAIRE KEETON

TYRONE Arthur, an award-winning photographer at a daily newspaper in Johannesburg, was married for four years and is heterosexual. He has never injected drugs. But he has Aids.

"I just slept with too many women," he says. "I don't know who I got HIV from."

An occasional model, he was attractive to women and he lived it up. He found out he was HIV-positive when he was a fit 27-year-old — and even his doctor refused to believe the HIV test at first.

He is one of an estimated 6% of white South Africans with HIV.

Arthur first found out he had HIV in October 1983 when he was seeing Donna (not her real name), the woman he subsequently married. Within days of discovering his HIV status, Arthur called his devout family to a meeting, his mother, father, two sisters and two stepbrothers.

"First I took my mother aside. She thought I was going to tell her Donna was pregnant. I told her, 'It's not so simple. I am HIV-positive.' There were lots of tears but I knew I had her backing."

His mother said she was devastated when Arthur told her.

"I was distraught. It was in the early days of the disease and I just knew people were dying. But 11 years later he is healthy and looks great."

She remembers: "At one stage it



RETURN FROM THE DEAD: Tyrone Arthur, HIV-positive for 11 years

was touch-and-go when he was on the verge of death. If it weren't for prayer and for the Lord he would not have made it."

Arthur says he was lucky that when denial kicked in — believing that he couldn't be infected — it didn't last more than a month.

"I have spoken to lots of people and it can last a year, or last the whole of their life."

He became angry, however, and would go to nightclubs wanting to pick fights and find escape through alcohol.

The same year Arthur got married to Donna and a few years later opened his own company as a plumber.

"I was struggling with the cash flow and went into gambling, which became a sickness in itself."

"I gambled everything away —

my car, my house, everything, until I was declared insolvent."

His marriage fell apart and he got divorced. He worked for a newspaper as a photographer and later moved to Cape Town.

That time was really rocky, he recalls. "My life turned back to its old ways: nightclubs, bars, alcohol, the normal boy-girl thing, and I started to do cocaine."

Despite spiralling into wild living, he always told sexual partners that he was HIV positive. He didn't have unsafe sex, though he points out that condoms fail to offer 100% protection from the virus.

A car accident one night forced him to confront where his life was heading.

He had become seriously ill and his CD4 blood count had dropped to nine. (CD4 counts indicate the strength of the body's immunity and range from 500 to 1 500 in healthy people.)

He was booked into hospital with pneumonia, dementia and hepatitis, and in 2001 he started to take antiretroviral drugs. He is disciplined about taking his pills every day and now, four years later, his CD4 count is up to 401.

Arthur has written his story in a book called *Destroy and Deliver*. "HIV played a big part in me finding myself at the end of my own resources," he says. "Through this experience I discovered a living relationship with my Creator that I believe will give me everlasting life beyond the grave."

In my favourite part of the film *Terminator*, Sarah Connor has just found out that two other women with the same name have been murdered. She is pursued by two men - one very good looking who has been following her, and the other we know to be Arnold Schwarzenegger, usually the good guy.

A gunshot breaks out and she is almost killed. As Schwarzenegger recovers from a shotgun blast to the chest, the handsome boy speaks for the first time. He holds out his hand to Sarah and says "Come with me if you want to live".

We see doubt and confusion flicker across her face. Then she takes the pretty boy's hand and the two of them run into the night, pursued by Schwarzenegger, the Terminator.

I've always loved that section, and since I became an HIV clinician a year ago, I run that scenario figuratively past my patients every day. Faced with a lunatic health minister and competing with nutritionists, faith healers, sangomas, homeopaths - you name it - patients have in effect to trust someone in the midst of a shoot-out.

When an HIV patient enters my consulting room for the first time they are never alone. Always at their shoulder is the shadow of death. HIV equals death - this is not superstition but a reality for much of Africa. Everything one says to such a person is filtered through the veil of fear of impending death. And the conundrum, much like someone being a firing squad, understandably will clutch at straws, will consult any practitioner who can promise life...

Amazingly, sometimes they choose us. When they do, and when they take their anti-retrovirals

# With ARV drugs, life is a choice

Experience has shown that anti-retrovirals give HIV-positive patients a second chance at life, writes Dr Elvis Jack

(ARV) perfectly, the results are nothing short of miraculous. After four months of treatment it is not unusual for patients to have put on 10kg. Their skin is clear, their opportunistic infections have melted away, their blood results have returned to normal, their energy and libido have rocketed once again. They say things like I never realised that HIV had sapped my energy to such an extent.

For these patients the firing squad have at the last possible moment lowered their guns and walked off. The survivor has not simply had a narrow escape but has, not to overdramatise things too much, been reborn.

And toxicity?

The much-wanted toxicity of ARV simply does not exist. Which is not to say that sometimes the drugs don't make patients sick - they do. The same as anti-hypertensive and anti-diabetic drugs sometimes make patients sick. Every chronic medication that works carries the risk of illness caused by the drug itself. ARV's have no side-effects for more than 80 percent of people who take them - a lower incidence overall than a population of anti-hypertensive drugs.

If most patients are well after four months of treatment, how long can this last? There is still no cure for HIV - will resistance and death follow in the future? In fact, data

from the United States suggests that if patients can continue to take their medication perfectly every day, the first, line regime should last at least 10 years. Within a decade there is likely to be a plethora of new medications with new modes of anti-retroviral operation on the market. In this scenario we feel justified in telling our patients that they can live as long as their grandparents did or do.

And if patients can live as long as every one else and their risk of transmitting the virus to their unborn children is minute, then they can also fall pregnant if they wish (if age and other social factors are in their favour). For some patients who have lost children to HIV, this is a true miracle.

The stigma associated with HIV infection has always rested on two pillars: the largely sexual nature of transmission and the fact that it has inevitably led to death. Most theorists have placed the burden of stigma on the sexual part; our experience seems to be the reverse. Once death has no dominion, the implications of being HIV-positive seem trivial.

One of my patients tells a story which illustrates the transient nature of social stigma. She had been on ARV's for about six months and had turned herself, if not into a beauty at least into an attractive

woman in her early forties.

For the Easter holidays this year she journeyed sparsely alone to visit relatives in some far-flung village. The day was long and hot, the bus slow and packed to capacity. Some youths at the back of the bus, fuelled by some brandy half-jerks, became increasingly rowdy. The topic of their rowdiness was Aids. They joked with each other about who had Aids among them ("Look at his pimples, Tesko's got the virus man"). When they had exhausted their own signs they began to identify individuals not in their group who had HIV.

Probably their own rowdiness had an element of bravado - statistically roughly one-third of them are likely to be HIV-positive already - but for my patient this was too much.

She stood up and shouted at them that they didn't have a clue about HIV; that she was HIV-positive and had been at death's door six months before but was now healthier than she had been in years.

She confessed to me that as she started speaking, she thought she might have made a terrible mistake and she had a vision of herself being thrown from the moving bus by a bunch of outraged citizens.

At first the youths were disbelieving rather than repulsed - you can't have Aids, sister, you look too

well. My patient launched into a little tutorial about ARV's, CD4 counts and the future - all things she had been counselled on half a dozen times. The more she spoke, the more calmed the youths became; and when she stopped speaking, they lapsed into an ashamed silence.

My patient resumed her seat and the journey went on. Half an hour later a middle-aged man appeared at her elbow. He told her how much he admired her courage for standing up to the kids; he too was HIV-positive and now well on ARV's but feared that they would have killed him if he had dismissed their ignorance. The man sat next to her and they continued the journey together, talking about skin rashes and other common HIV conversation topics.

They both had lost a partner to HIV and gradually confidences were exchanged. They have been dating ever since and plan to marry at the end of the year.

For my patient it illustrated that life is not predictable - you can never know what lies around the next corner. For me the lesson seemed more prosaic - no one on the bus judged my patient for having contracted a disease sexually; once they knew she was not at death's door, they were happy to accept her.

Why on earth would anyone become a doctor these days, my son once asked me about five years ago.

I told him that the feeling of a patient grasping your hand, looking in your eyes and saying "Doctor, you saved my life" was a trip like no other. Yeah, he said sceptically, how often has that happened? Never, I admitted.

That was then. Now patients tell me every day that I've saved their lives. The message I am not, unfortunately so what they really are saying is that the drugs have transformed them physically. But is physically enough?

Many of my patients have spent the past couple of years preparing to die. As they became weaker they gave up their jobs - although many never had a job. Their world had shrunk down to their homes and families.

Their social networks had reduced often to zero. They seldom went out, never read a newspaper or kept abreast of what was happening in the world.

To be truly rehabilitated they need to resume sexual relations, they need to embark on an ongoing exercise programme, and they need jobs. Many patients, particularly women, say they will never have sex again. Either their partners have died or, more often, Aids has acted like a hand grenade in their love life - amid all the recriminations of the early months of knowledge of

status, relationships often do not survive. To be a normal member of society, everyone probably needs a sexual relationship. Our patients with a low or undetectable viral load, using a condom, are in no danger of transmitting the disease. But in the case of women, how does one meet understanding men and how does one explain to them all the ins and outs of treatment and how to circumvent the dangers in sexual congress? For many patients this is simply insurmountable.

Many patients join a gym as soon as they are well and have some disposable income. Clearly there is a need for township gyms or non-governmental organisation-sponsored exercise classes to satisfy this need.

With newfound health, energy and commitment to work, HIV patients on ARV's make the ideal work-ers. Whether the traditional employment opportunities for young unskilled Third World workers - such as in the service industry as manifested by grill hands and cashiers - is appropriate for employers remains to be seen. Certainly if recent hype about Gauteng becoming the call centre of the western world turns out to be true, this should be an area where the HIV-positive can flourish.

The film *Terminator* ends with Sarah Connor beautiful and pregnant with the future leader of the resistance in her belly, driving her 604 into the desert.

It's an image that is both hopeful and looking forward into a better tomorrow. That's another reason why I love that film.

Dr Elvis Jack is a pseudonym for a doctor who works in public and private HIV medicine in Johannesburg.





**Fear of infection ...** French advertisers use disturbing imagery to drive home their point about the dangers of Aids.

HIV/Aids awareness campaigns in France have revived shock tactics to boost the efficacy of public-health messages through vivid imagery designed to spread the fear of infection.

This represents a marked move away from awareness campaigns that focused on the educational aspects of HIV/Aids prevention, which which South Africans are more familiar.

Calibre Clinical Consultants chief medical officer Dr Erich Hefer said: "The reason for this drastic and visually disturbing imagery is directly related to an increase in HIV and sexually transmitted infections (STI) in Europe. The campaign became necessary to shock the public back into reality after a wave of complacency about infection, a result of over-

## SHOCK TACTICS

education of the public on treatment options, which in turn instilled a mindset of HIV/Aids being a treatable condition with a potential cure on the horizon.

"Fear of infection had all but disappeared. Of course, this prompted a marked increase in STI and HIV infections which necessitated a return to an aggressive awareness approach."

Hefer said South African awareness campaigns had been reasonably effective at instill-

ing a fear of infection but there was a lack of education and understanding of HIV/Aids and STIs here.

"South Africa needs more champions of the cause, personalities like Patricia de Lille and Pieter Dirk Uys, who have worked tirelessly on educating our people. We need community leaders to become more involved and for politicians to get their hands dirty as opposed to using it (HIV/Aids) as an election issue."

Hefer said training educators who could get through to South Africans "on the ground" would be an effective tool quite apart from advertising and giant billboard campaigns. "I think that at this time Arrive Alive has achieved a far higher profile than the HIV/Aids campaign," he said. - Staff Reporter

The head of the TAC pays tribute to a fallen comrade and highlights a life that proves no one is exempt

# Ronald, why didn't you

9 JUL 2005

M + E

Comment

Zackie Achmat

**O**ne of my closest friends and a long-time comrade, Ronald Louw, has died. Two major Aids-related factors caused his death: HIV denial and undiagnosed tuberculosis (TB). Denial meant that he did not test for HIV until almost too late. And unreliable TB diagnostics developed more than 100 years ago meant that as his immune system was destroyed by HIV, TB could not be detected until it was too late. He vomited, soiled his linen and his health did not improve. Sadly, he was not treated presumptively for TB until four weeks after his admission to hospital. His TB diagnosis was confirmed by a lung biopsy only three days before his death.

Early this year, as his sabbatical started, Louw learnt that his mother Doreen had cancer. Together with his siblings they took turns to travel from Durban, Cape Town and Johannesburg to look after their mother in Port Elizabeth. The experience was traumatic for all of them. As she lay in a coma on May 16, Louw collapsed and was admitted to hospital with Aids. Until then, he did not know that he had HIV. His mother died on that day, but she had had a full life. He could not attend her funeral a few days later because at nearly half her age Louw was fighting for his own life.

Without any hesitation, Louw immediately told friends, family,



Ronald Louw was exemplary in almost all aspects of his life, except the fact that he did not get tested for HIV

colleagues and strangers that he had Aids and sought medical care. He was privileged. He had never gone hungry. He occasionally drank a glass of wine but had never done drugs. He was a workaholic. Smart, educated and surrounded by friends who understand HIV/Aids, yet even Louw failed to get tested early.

In early May, with advanced Aids and a CD4 count under a hundred, all of us hoped that he would recover. Maybe his anti-retroviral medicines would work. But they did not because his TB was treated much too late. Although surrounded by countless friends, family and well-wishers, Aids removes dignity and autonomy.

Louw had been exemplary in almost all aspects of his life, except the fact that he did not get tested for HIV. We all hoped that when he got better, Louw would himself explain this to all of us. His life shows that none of us are exempt from HIV infection and denial.

I remember the Saturday afternoon drizzle in Mowbray, Cape Town, that day in June 1981 when I met Louw. We attended an African Studies seminar run by Neville Alexander. Anne Mayne, Farid Essack and Shamil Jeppe were also class mates but it is only with Louw that I established the firmest bond of friendship that endured — endurance on his part, fullest enjoyment on mine.

Friendship has been the most remarkable part of my life. I have great friends and Louw's illness and death allows me to reflect on what friendship means. Friendship means laughter, conscience, engagement with life — politics, philosophy, activism, romantic dreams and disasters, family issues, generosity and personal pain: Without friends, I would not have survived childhood, a different sexual orientation, political activism and HIV/Aids. I would not have been educated but for my friends. Louw was a friend in every one of the senses mentioned above. I can only hope my friendship meant as much to him.

Louw was a law lecturer and became

# Why do people allow themselves to die from stigma and fear?

80

IN HIS book *Witness to AIDS*, Edwin Cameron tells a ghastly story about Botswana. Knowing that up to a third of its population had HIV or AIDS, and that about 100 000 people were in urgent need of drugs, in 2001 Botswana's government began to offer free antiretroviral treatment to every citizen with AIDS. Yet, by late 2003, only 15 000 people had appeared at public health facilities for free medication. Why?



**JONNY STEINBERG**

"Stigma," is Cameron's answer. "People are too scared — too ashamed — to come forward and claim what their government is now affording them: the right to stay alive."

Indeed, he says, "in some horribly constrained sense, they are 'choosing' to die, rather than face the stigma of AIDS and find treatment"

Later in the book, Cameron tells of his gardener, to whom he gives the pseudonym Gladwell. Gladwell is chronically ill. He says he has tuberculosis, and is on prescribed medication, but his condition deteriorates.

Cameron asks him if he has had an HIV test. "I have," Gladwell replies. "It was clear." His health keeps declining, and Cameron keeps urging him to have a test: he still says he is "clear".

Gladwell knows that Cameron himself is HIV positive, knows that antiretrovirals have saved Cameron's life. He returns to his family in Zimbabwe. Five weeks later he is dead.

In retrospect, Cameron chastises himself. "Although I thought that I was offering him help, and thereby the choice of living, in Gladwell's mind he

had no choice. The stigma associated with AIDS left him no choice.

"I should have made him an appointment — with Dr. Johnson," Cameron writes. "I should have told him I was leaving for Dr Johnson in 10 minutes. I should have told him he was free not to come. But I was going and I wanted him to come — I wanted him in the passenger seat of my car."

"I should have told him that my doctor would diagnose, and if necessary treat him, if it was AIDS. And that I would help him deal with his fears and loneliness if it was."

Cameron's identification with Gladwell, and the debt he feels he owes him, is striking. For Cameron tells us that he too might have died of stigma and fear, he too lived for a long time with secret shame.

There but for the grace of God, Cameron was Gladwell; his identification with his former employee is thick, complicated, and deeply personal.

Why do people die, not from a somatic disease, but from their relation to it? Why do people die of stigma and

fear? It is a huge, perhaps impossible question, and Cameron can be forgiven for taking only a gentle stab at it.

But *Witness to AIDS* is a book of advocacy, and Cameron does have a good deal to say about what this spectacle means for human agency and solidarity.

People dying of stigma, he suggests, are no longer autonomous agents invested with the freedom to choose (except "in some horribly constrained sense"), for they have lost their connection to their most vital self-interest, that of staying alive.

But that self-interest still exists, even if its bearer has lost sight of it, and it is thus incumbent upon us to substitute for it, to steer the sufferer to the choices he would have made had he been free to choose.

Cameron is not suggesting that we force-feed drugs to the ill. He is suggesting that at the global level of public health policy, we do what Cameron, at the micro level, imagined he ought to have done for Gladwell: to lead him, quite assertively, to the con-

ditions of his own survival.

Cameron's imagined relationship with Gladwell also seems to serve as a model for the sort of human solidarity he is talking about. He is suggesting that we lend our own capacity to live to those dying of stigma, that the capacity to live is, in a sense, a resource to be shared.

It is a strongly communitarian and, indeed, a moderately liberal, position. And it is striking for being made in SA, in which the bonds of social solidarity, measured by such indicators as our rates of murder and incarceration, are alarmingly thin. Indeed, our national response to AIDS — ambivalent, anxious, wounded and aggressive — is another symptom of the frailty of the bonds that bind us.

Dealing as it does with life and death, Cameron's book is among the most substantial contributions to the concepts of national identity, community and solidarity we have had in 11 years.

■ Steinberg is a freelance writer.



UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

# Comment & Analysis

Like HIV, bipolar disorder remains a target of stigma and ignorance even among the 'educated' and 'enlightened'

## Mindful of mania

### Comment

**T**o have the levels of carbamazepine in my body tested, I caught the train from Muizenberg to Fish Hoek at 5pm and walked a kilometre to have blood taken. It's not a walk that would usually tire me, but today it's exhausting. The lab office should be open till 5.30pm, but it's closed and dark. I experience a surge of rage, imagine smashing the windows. It would be a relief to give in to my ungovernable emotions, to finally "prove" that my appearance of coping is practised acting.

Dragging myself back to where I am house-sitting in Muizenberg (having no home of my own), I feel consumed with self-loathing and despair so intense I want to crawl out of my own skin. Were it not now so familiar (hence better understood and resisted), the urge to suicide might be overwhelming.

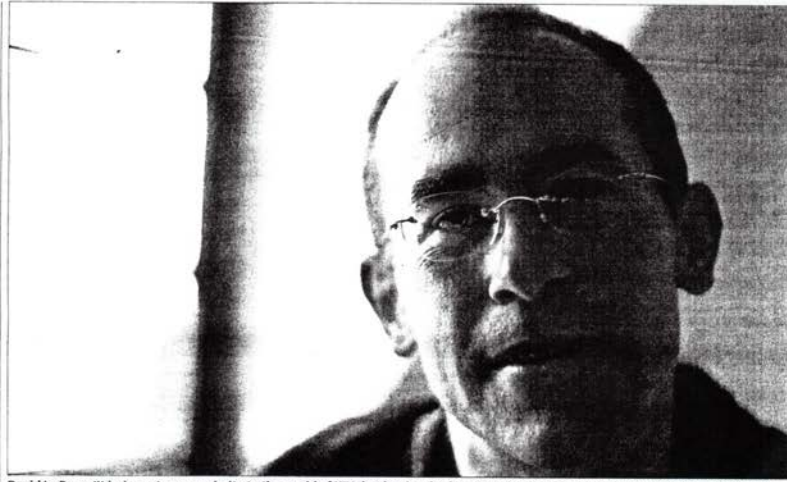
I am bipolar. "Manic depressive" is the phrase the world is more familiar with. Carbamazepine is a "mood stabiliser".

In the past six months, I have been almost entirely unable to work, have lost a treasured relationship, a home, several work opportunities, my self-esteem, 99% of my usually abundant supply of hope and optimism, and thousands of rands on, so far, useless pharmaceuticals and a psychiatrist of intermittent competence. I have been forced to ask my parents to bail me out of debt. I am months overdue in completing a sizeable report for an HIV NGO.

If you think bipolar disorder is a mental disorder, think again. Actually, please rethink your entire categories for "mental" and "physical" illness. It is past time we abandoned our simultaneous notions that overtly physical illnesses are unrelated to the workings of the mind, while illnesses such as depression are unrelated to the malfunctions of the body.

These contradictory notions are expressed in conventional medicine's treatment of so many ills as purely physical and in the abiding popular notion that succumbing to depression is malingering. In fact, bipolar depression is a physical illness, which happens to have predominantly mental symptoms. You can't "snap out of it" any more than you can snap out of having a broken leg.

How do I know that depression is a physical illness? Well, the painful sensitivity, poor concentration, suicidal thoughts and emotional abyss of depression comes with these physical symptoms: fatigue, disrupted sleep, reduced stamina, unpredictable and random bodily pains, and a greatly diminished sex drive. It can be treated most directly, physically, by the skilled use of mood stabilisers and antidepressants, electro-convulsive therapy (shock treatment) and some new forms of direct magnetic stimulation of the brain.



David Le Page: 'It is, in part, my proximity to the world of HIV that has inspired me to write this, for HIV has led me to think a great deal about the disclosure of chronic, stigmatised illness.' Photograph: Yasser Booley

Electro-convulsive therapy is drastic, but highly effective in most cases. The 15 treatments I underwent in 1996 propelled me in a couple of months from hospitalised basket case to high-earning freelance copywriter. They also destroyed my memory of much of that year, and of places and routes I'd known since childhood. Sometimes I dream that I am having a seizure and am wrenched awake by a blinding light sensation in my head. My feelings towards the therapy range from dread to yearning.

Antidepressants? Well, I've spent more than R16 000 on them in the last year, and have seen little effect. That does not mean they don't work, but finding an effective combination can be a long and tortuous process.

New drugs are discovered only accidentally and released on to the market after minimal studies. Pharmaceutical company-funded studies alone cannot be trusted: a former editor of the *British Medical Journal* has recently concluded that the drug peddlers have become adept at manipulating both studies and so-called independent journals (*New Scientist*, May 21).

If at this point you feel somewhat ignorant about bipolar disorder, rest assured you are in company with a vast portion of the medical profession. Just a few days ago, I heard a reliable report of a doctor who declined to prescribe antidepressants to a distressed University of Cape Town student on

**You can't 'snap out of it' any more than you can snap out of having a broken leg**

the grounds that she was too young to be thus "indulged". The student in question has since gone missing. The doctor, no doubt, is comfortable in his ignorance.

It is in part my proximity to the world of HIV, that parallel universe that our country so comfortably neglects behind a fog of "awareness" that has inspired me to write this, for HIV has led me to think a great deal about the disclosure of chronic, stigmatised illness.

It is the hiding of HIV that makes it so unmanageable. If our government had the vision and courage to test, counsel and provide condoms to the entire population, the epidemic could be stalled in months. But so long as the bulk of the huge HIV-positive population covers behind ignorance, secrecy and fear, such obvious but expensive actions can be indefinitely postponed by our elites (white and black, business and those in the government).

It would be hypocritical, though, for me to continue advocating openness about HIV, as I routinely do in the course of my work, but conceal my own stigmatised illness. Writing it is cathartic; hopefully, it will help others. Actually, bipolar depression and HIV have some things in common. Both can be deadly; a terrifyingly large proportion of bipolar disordered persons commit suicide, sometimes even after years of successful treatment.

Both HIV and bipolar depression require commitment to life-long, costly medication. Both are most successfully managed when one adopts a healthy lifestyle: minimal alcohol, good diet, regular exercise and skilled management of stress. Both can put a damper on one's sex life, both remain the targets of much stigma and igno-

rance... this is as much of an equation as I am qualified to draw.

Fears and incomprehension of bipolar disorder abound, even among the "educated" and "enlightened".

The more notorious form of bipolar depression is called Bipolar II (affecting 1% of the population).

where acute depression alternates with acute highs of sleeplessness, euphoria, rushing thoughts and much diminished responsibility. I seem to have the more common bipolar II (3% to 4% of the population); my mania is infrequent and mild.

Contrary to popular belief, depression is not the unstable fuel behind the soaring creativity of many a tortured prominent soul (Vincent van Gogh, Sylvia Plath and so on). Talent and depression may often coexist, but bipolar depression, as with most forms of unhappiness, only stifles and frustrates thought and productivity.

That does not mean depression does not come with certain potential gifts. In my case, it has awakened compassion and understanding for the suffering of others. Indeed, feeding one's life in the grip of irresistible internal forces has awakened unsought but undeniable empathy with serial killers, paedophiles and other less notorious classes of criminal. (Those who resist thinking that some forms of criminality might be strongly related to mental-physical illness should consider a recent study in a British prison that showed that merely feeding especially violent prisoners a healthier diet reduced violent incidents by 40%.)

Beside deepening my sympathy for others, my depression has spurred my practice of an accessible form of Budd-

hism, which has helped overcome disempowering modes of thought, and helps cultivate those parts of myself deserving cultivation. Buddhism may not actually diminish depression, but my depression has become smaller in relation to those parts of myself I like. Despite all the pain, I doubt I would exchange what depression has helped me learn for an easier life.

Two weeks after first writing this, I have had an extraordinary experience. My depression has finally begun to lift, I think. For the first time in many months, I find myself making up nonsensical ditties and singing them on the way to work. Never before has the lifting felt so tangible.

Yes, for the past three weeks, I've been in a new job (one that came to me, thank heavens) and superficially functional. But it has been very hard. What changed things is simply an increased dose of carbamazepine. It has lifted the formless gulf and the grinding effort of motion. The inner vacuum has eased.

Without a chemical additive, everything might again grind to a shuddering, traumatic halt. But now that the switches have been thrown in my brain, the creaking machinery of that organ has a chance to reawaken.

Some may think I am ill-equipped to argue that we may have it in us to overcome even great frailties of mind-body, when such frailties still so clearly dominate my own life. I can only answer that so long as I am alive, and reasonably at peace with my own humanity, the argument remains mine to win, at least for myself.

David Le Page is a former *Mail & Guardian* journalist, now freelance writer, specialising in HIV

Not sure  
4000 - 10 NOTEN TO

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