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SCHOOLING MASCULINITIES AND FEMININITIES IN THE FACE OF THE 'HOMOSEXUAL OTHER': EXPERIENCES OF GAY AND LESBIAN LEARNERS WITHIN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN GAUTENG, SOUTH AFRICA.

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"A dissertation submitted to the School of Education, Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Masters in Education".

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ABSTRACT

This study provides a qualitative analysis of the experiences of selected gay and lesbian learners. Identities are viewed in terms of various de-centrings of the Cartesian subject and also as constructed in binary oppositional categories. The focus is on how South African society and schools re/construct such identities, around sexuality, gender, level of resources in schools, and 'race'. Using theory on six levels of schooling, research data showed that Gauteng schools construct masculinities and femininities that are heterosexist, misogynist, homophobic and focussed on economic status. Learner masculinities and femininities also construct 'race', are violent, and define themselves in the face of 'the other'. Data showed that selected gay and lesbian learners negotiate these constructions in ways that leave them empowered. In this, they have common struggles, which they experience in unique ways. They also have different micro experiences, including those stemming from their own gender, 'race' and school's level of resources.

DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Masters in Education in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.



David Norton Francis Nel

____ day of _____ 2003

PREFACE

The aim of this study is to contribute to research in gay and lesbian studies in education in South Africa. There is very little research on this topic and my study aims to systematically record such experiences. My study also aims to contribute to interventions regarding the situation of South African gay and lesbian learners. I believe that such possibilities exist given the non-discrimination, on the basis of sexual orientation, promised by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (*1996*) and the Department of Education Gender Equity Task Team's (GETT) recommendations. These recommendations link - inter alia- gender and sexual orientation and a Directorate of Gender Equity within the National Department of Education is tasked with its execution.

A systematic description of gay and lesbian learners' experiences within South African schools does not exist. The Index to South African Studies- a database of all published South African theses and articles from 1987 to date - holds no title which includes combinations of the keywords of gay/lesbian and homosexual with pupil, youth or schools. This study aims to fill some of this gap through describing commonalities and differences of a small group of gay and lesbian learners within selected schools in the Gauteng province. Even though, the present South African Constitution prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, such discrimination still happens within South African schools. An example being a group of homosexual pupils at a school in Northern Kwa Zulu Natal who claim that they were put in a separate class because they were seen as

'spirits from the devil' (*Mpofu, 1997*). Another example is that of a Port Elizabeth gay school boy- who participated in 'drag shows' and was expelled because he was seen to be an embarrassment to his school (*Coetzee, 1997*).

I am a gay and lesbian activist and employed by OUT-Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender (LGBT) Well-being (previously the Gay and Lesbian Organisation- Pretoria). OUT is a gay and lesbian community organisation which provides health and mental health services to gay and lesbian people. My involvement in OUT stems from my own experiences as a gay man, raised in a white, conservative Afrikaner South African community. I remember a strong sense of being an outsider, not fitting in and not being 'where life is supposed to be'. I trace these feelings of 'otherness' to my sexual orientation. Through my work, I am also aware of the day-to-day injustices and discrimination that South African gay and lesbian people face and their consequences. Based on my own experiences and involvement in the South African gay and lesbian movement, I view it as a necessity to release, highlight and validate gay and lesbian learners' voices. My involvement in this movement also places me in the situation of being aware of developments regarding gay and lesbian learners and enables me to more easily make contact with respondents needed for the study.

This study focuses on commonalties and differences in the experiences of the selected respondents and was conducted with six respondents where I have gathered qualitative data taking into account the variables of 'race', level of resources in the school community and gender. The data generated from this

study are analysed in terms of the theoretical framework I have adopted.

Lastly, I want to thank my supervisor, Nazir Carrim, for his immense and rigorous guidance of my work. I also want to acknowledge the University of Witwatersrand in providing me with a bursary to attend the International Association for the Study of Sexuality and Culture in Society Conference in Manchester in 1999.

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1. THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

1.1. Introduction

What constitutes identities or more specifically gay and lesbian identities? The first section covers different notions of identity, within the modernist era in the West. In this discussion the tension between viewing identity as something innate versus being constructed is shown. The discussion also illustrates the multi-layers in post/modernist Western identities. A discussion of identity as discursively constructed then follows. It is then concluded that identity has a socially constructed nature but within this, one can either have a macro or a more micro emphasis of identity, as well as that identities have multi layers and that it is not 'one thing'. It is also emphasised that within discourses of identity, people can adopt various identity positions.

In the discussion of how identities are discursively constructed, the specific rules/regularities for these constructions are identified. Identities are constructed as mutually exclusive objects and the discussion proceeds to discuss how certain religious, biological and psychological discourses construct 'the homosexual' and 'the heterosexual'. It firstly deals with 'the heterosexual', how it is based on gendered patterns, and how the agent can internalise and oppose these constructions. A discussion of 'the homosexual' follows. The same outline, as in the discussion of 'the heterosexual', is followed. What is added are examples of micro understandings of identity which further illustrate the multiplicity of agent positionings.

The next section discusses how the micro level of the school re/constructs macro identities. There is a brief discussion on the sociology of education and an identification of six levels of interaction within schools. These six levels of interaction create the levels against which school based agents must negotiate their identity positionings. There is a focus on gay and lesbian learners' experiences within schools and some of the issues that they might face.

The discussion is then applied to South Africa. The last section of the theoretical orientation starts with discussing probably the most prominent feature of South African society, that of 'race', and some of the major effects it has. The discussion covers discourses of heterosexuality and homosexuality in South Africa and agents' responses to these. It sketches the general climate within which South African schools operate and how this plays out within the context of the province Gauteng before it illustrates how sexual identities may be constructed within schools. The discussion outlines the macro, structural realities of South African gay and lesbian learners. In the empirical section, and based on the adopted theory, selected individual experiences are probed and analysed within this framework.

1.2. Defining modernist Western identities

Modern Western societies gave rise to the conception of the sovereign individual. There were 'individuals' in pre-modern times but modernism gave a new and definitive view of the sovereign individual. The rise of this 'individual' represented a significant break with the past (*Hall, Held and Mc Crew, 1992*). In pre-modern times, 'the individual' was fixed. S/he had their status, rank and position in the 'divine order of things' and this was not open to fundamental change. One kept 'one's place' in this 'great chain of being' and this position overshadowed any sense of being a 'sovereign individual'.

Many major movements within Western thought and culture contributed to the 'sovereign individual'. Two of these movements are the Renaissance humanism which placed man (*sic*) at the centre of the universe, and the Enlightenment which centred on the image of rational scientific man (*sic*) (*Hall, Held and Mc Crew, 1992*). Of importance are the theories of Descartes and his Cartesian subject. He postulated two distinct substances, spatial substance (matter) and thinking substance (mind). At the centre of mind was the individual subject, constituted by the capacity to reason and think. The Cartesian subject refers to the conception of the rational, cogitative and conscious subject at the centre of knowledge (*Hall, Held and Mc Crew, 1992*).

The Enlightenment era, in the eighteenth century, can be said to represent the first view of modernist identities. In these theories, the individual is viewed as:

> *a fully centred, unified individual, endowed with the capacities of reason, consciousness and action, whose 'centre' consisted of an inner core which first emerged when the subject was born, and unfolded with it, while remaining essentially the same- continuous and identical with itself- through the individual's existence. The essential centre of the self was a person's identity* (Hall, Held and Mc Crew, 1992: 275).

In the above definition, there is an emphasis on being with reason and consciousness. Over and above being reasonable and conscious, identity is viewed as something inborn and unified. Williams (*in Hall, Held and Mc Crew, 1992*) expands on the notion of unity and states that identity is:

> *something indivisible- an entity which is unified within itself and can not be further divided- and as an entity which is singular, distinctive and unique* (Williams in, Hall, Held and Mc Crew, 1992: 282).

As modern societies grew more complex, they acquired a more collective and social form. In the nineteenth century, and with continued industrialisation, theorists like Saint-Simon and Comte focused on the nature of the social and described macro structures like combinations of people, institutions, social groups and manufacturing processes (*Hamilton in, Hall, Held and Mc Crew, 1992*). For them, society was a separate entity from the individual where society constrains or coerces this individual. Hall (*Hall, Held and Mc Crew, 1992*) calls this school of thought, sociological theories of identity. It provided a critique of the 'rational

individualism' of the Cartesian subject in its view of the individual being subjectively formed through his/her membership of, and participation in, wider social processes. At the same time, processes and structures are sustained by the roles of individuals within them. A more social conception of identity thus emerged whereby identity was viewed as being formed through participation in wider social processes. Identity was seen as an internalising of the outside and an externalising of the inside through social action. Identity, however, was still viewed as consisting of an inner core and as being rational.

In the late twentieth century, there was a further change in conceptions of identities and societal structures. Turning to the level of society structure, Hall (*in. Hall and Gieben, 1992*) argues for an acknowledgement of the interaction of a number of processes and within these, changes taking place over long periods of time. He identifies four such structured processes i.e. the political and its secular form of political power and authority; the economic with a monetarised exchange economy; the social where there was a decline in the traditional social order with its fixed social hierarchies; and the cultural marked by a decline in a religious world view and rise of secular materialist culture exhibiting individualist and rationalist responses.

Modernity is not as a result of any one of the four identified features, rather it is an interaction between these features. Each of these formation processes had different starting points, if such points can be clearly identified at all, and their formation process took place in slow, uneven ways over several centuries. In this view, there

are various paths of development, diverse outcomes, fragmentation, de-centring, and the idea of difference. Many social theorists see this type of unevenness and difference as an even more powerful logic than evenness, similarity and uniformity (*Hall and Gieben, 1992*). Within late-modernity, on a structural level, there is thus the view that things do not unfold according to a single cause or law but that it is constantly being de-centred or dislocated.

Applying this view to notions of identity, it is no longer viewed as 'one thing' present from birth and which unfolds along the lines of being reasoned and conscious. Post- modern notions of identity-or a post-modern emphasis within modernism- abandon notions of unity and innatism in favour of fragmentation, dislocation, de-centring and difference (*Hall, Held and Mc Crew, 1992*).

Hall (*Hall, Held and Mc Crew, 1992*) argues for five great advances in social theory whose main effect is the de-centring of the Cartesian subject. I will briefly highlight these.

The first is the theories of Michel Foucault which isolates a 'new type' of power: disciplinary power. According to Foucault (*1977*), disciplinary power works through hierarchical observation and normalising judgement combining in the ritual of the examination. Hierarchical observation is continual surveillance ('the gaze') of each other. It is a network of relations and no one escapes it or has exclusive rights to it. Everyone 'gazes' or is being 'gazed at'. Normalising judgement refers to measurements aimed to bring people back to the norm. There

could be micro-penalties for time like being late, of activity like inattention, of behaviour like being disobedient and so on, of speech for example insolence, of the body like lack of cleanliness, and of sexuality like indecency. There is a whole range of punishments from light physical punishment to petty humiliations. Normalising judgement aims to be corrective and has a double system; on the one half there is punishment but on the other, reward. Hierarchical observation and normalising judgement combine in the examination. Here there is a normalising 'gaze' making it possible to qualify, classify and to punish. According to disciplinary power, different identities thus make it possible for all people to classify each other, to punish or reward, and thus be part of the ritual of the examination. Thus, the notion of disciplinary power enables one to view individuals in non-homogenised ways, occupying distinctive 'disciplinary spaces' and defining themselves specifically and differently.

The second major theory impacting on the de-centring of the Cartesian subject, is that of Karl Marx. Marx illustrated how individuals do not make their own history but that they could only act on the basis of historical conditions made by others into which they were born. Althusser (*in Hall, Held and Mc Crew, 1992*) argued that Marx places social relations (modes of production, exploitation of labour power, the circuits of power) rather than the abstract notion of man (*sic*) at the centre of his theoretical framework. In this, Marx displaces the notions that there is universal essence of man (*sic*) which can be attributed to each individual.

Thirdly, is the 'discovery' of the unconscious by Sigmund Freud (*Hall, Held and*

Mc Crew, 1992). Freud illustrated how the psychic and symbolic processes of the unconscious, and which have a very different logic to that of reason, plays havoc with the notions of the knowing and rational subject with a fixed and unified identity. Based on Freud's notion of the unconscious, Lacan (*in Hall, Held and Mc Crew, 1992*) argues that identity is imagined as being unified but it is always in process of becoming. As an example, the 'feminine' parts of the 'male self', which are disavowed and split, find unconscious expressions. The 'male identity' is then closed, it is the rational identity but within this, the unconscious 'feminine elements' keep challenging this closure.

The fourth de-centering examined is the work of Ferdinand de Saussure (*Hall, Held and Mc Crew, 1992*). He argued that we use language to produce meanings by positioning ourselves within the rules of language and the systems of meaning within culture. Language is social, and not individual, and we can not in any simple sense be its authors. Furthermore, meanings of words arise from their relation with other words. Thus, we only know that it is night because it is not day. Here, there is an analogy with identities. I will discuss later on how discursive practises give rise to the binary oppositional identity categories of 'the homosexual'/'the heterosexual' as well as 'the white'/'the black'. Language and identities thus represent closure but in this, they carry echoes of other meanings which they trigger. Identity, and language, aim for closure but is constantly disrupted by difference, there are always supplementary meanings over which one has no control (*Derrida in, Hall, Held and Mc Crew, 1992*).

A fifth influence on the de-centring of the Cartesian subject, according to Hall (*Hall, Held and Mc Crew, 1992*) is feminism. Feminism succeeded in politicising how we are formed as gendered subjects and took areas such as the family, sexuality, housework and so on, into the political arena. It made a distinction between men and women, that they do not have the same identities, and questioned how societies form 'male and female identities'. I will later on further illustrate how men and women identities are constructed.

In summary regarding modernist notions of identity in the West, it was illustrated that identities have a historical progress. It was shown how these identities were constructed against traditional, absolutist and religious values. A first development stage was in the Enlightenment era, in the eighteenth century, with its focus on rationality, being conscious of one's actions, identities being inborn and as something unified. A further development was the sociological notions in the nineteenth century outlining how identities are formed through interactions with the social. Within the late twentieth century, there were still further developments which lead to the de-centering of the rational Cartesian subject of the Enlightenment. Five major schools of thought were described. In the theories of Karl Marx, it is shown that identities are determined by belonging to an economic group in society. In a similar way, feminism shows how one's sex results in different 'male and female identities'. Once again, one's group within society is fundamental to one's identity. Furthermore, and based on the theories of Freud, theorists such as Lacan have argued that 'completed identities' do not represent the whole picture. Such identities are the rational part and an irrational part is split

into the unconscious. In addition, the theories of de Saussure illustrate how language expresses relational and oppositional categories, which can also be applied to identities. Lastly, the work of Foucault illustrates how binary categories enable the working of disciplinary power that affords stricter discipline and control of everyone.

In late modernism, identities are thus multi-layered and the Cartesian subject has been de-centered. But, unified identities are constructed. Foucault (*1972*) states that the unities in modernist identities are to be found within their construction techniques. The argument here is that modernity constructs unities in the face of social phenomena being fragmented and discontinuous. These constructions give rise to discourses which have certain regularities or discursive practices. Discursive practices include the formation of objects, groups of relations between statements, the interplay between a concept's appearance and dispersion, and the persistence of themes (*Foucault, 1972*). Discourses of identity thus give the 'rules' for construction of identities, at the same time implying that these identities are constructed.

How, then, are modern, unified identities constructed? Firstly, language must have a concept available in order for an identity to be constructed. As an example the concept of 'homosexual' must be available within language before one can start talking about 'homosexual identity'. Identity does not exist in itself but is situated within complex sets of relations enabling its' appearance through language. 'The homosexual' as a discursive object did not always exist but appeared at a certain

time and place. Identity is thus an object without a constant internal constitution and it reflects sets of relations. There is furthermore a need to differentiate between mutually exclusive identities/objects through diverse statements, also then allowing the earlier described notion of disciplinary power. Statements from various sectors, institutions and people are made about objects and it is important to define who is speaking and what their institutional base is. It provides insight into the existing sets of relationships. So for example, 'the homosexual' is maintained by statements made from different institutions, people and sectors. Medicine and religion- as examples- can make statements about 'the homosexual', calling it pathological and a sin respectively. Both religion and medicine thus have the power to construct 'the homosexual' and make statements about it. The concepts used further maintain differentiation between different identity objects. Lastly, certain themes also persist where there is either a reanimating of an existing theme or a search for irreconcilable interest. It is important to identify the dispersion of the points of choice or the field of strategic possibilities which exist in a given discourse. As an example, the theme of 'the homosexual' as something abnormal can either be confirmed or it can be opposed; in these positionings, 'the homosexual' is kept alive. Discourse thus allows for different agent positionings. All these points of agents' choices tend to be accommodated within the discourse and perpetuate it.

In conclusion, one is confronted by macro constructions of unified identities, knowing that these are constructed in certain ways, but at the same time also knowing that identities are multi-layered and fractured. I now turn attention to

discourses of hetero- and homosexuality and describe how certain macro biological, religious, and psychological discourses construct and maintain these sexual identities. I also describe how agents may internalise these constructions and also how they may oppose them. In the discourses of homosexuality, I also discuss micro/de-centred/fragmented notions of identity, which broaden the notion of the ready-made, pre-given and innate notions of identity. In the discussion of 'the homosexual', I include how differences are constructed on the basis of 'race', specifically their intersections with gender.

1.3. 'The heterosexual'

This section focuses on the discourse of heterosexism and argues that it is based on gendered patterns. It must be kept in mind that heterosexism does not equal heterosexuality, it defines heterosexuality as the only acceptable way to be and other sexual relations are subservient to and/or perversions of it (*Miller and Romanelli in, Nel and Joubert, 1996*). Heterosexism also assumes that everyone is heterosexual (*Epstein, 1994*). Heterosexism relies on the concepts of 'the masculine' and 'the feminine' which are constructed by various discourses. The present focus here is on some biological, psychological and religious discursive expressions of heterosexuality.

Biological discourses pose differences within the genetic composition of men and women (*Tiger and Fox in, Haralambos, 1996*). These discourses construct men to be genetically more aggressive and dominant and therefore are able to hold positions of power. Women, on the other hand, are genetically programmed to reproduce and care for children. Related to these biological discourses is what can be called practical, biological discourses. These discourses do not differentiate between genders on a genetic basis only but emphasise sheer practicality. The argument here is that because there are biological differences, a sexual division of labour makes practical sense; as women bear children, it is natural for them to become mothers (*Murdock in, Haralambos, 1996*). Women are the mothers, that is their part in the sexual division of labour, and this argument is elaborated by women being seen as bearing and nursing children, they are more expressive than men and provide warmth, security and emotional support naturally to children

(*Parsons in. Haralambos, 1996*). The male breadwinner spends his days competing in an achievement-orientated society, leading to stress stabilised by the warm, affectionate and domesticated female. Psychological reasons are also given for this warm, caring role of the women. If women do not provide warmth and intimacy for the child, it is argued that the child may grow up to be socially dysfunctional (*Bowlby in, Haralambos, 1996*).

The above set of arguments centres around the women as the warm, caring mother, giving various reasons for this construction. In all of these constructions there is also a strong construction of heterosexism. Patriarchy is constructed in that the man is assumed to be stronger, dominant and superior. Oakley, however, argues that these notions are social constructions, they are not based on undisputed facts but are produced to fix gender roles (*Haralambos, 1996*). In reply to Murdock's argument, Oakley pointed out that in the same study, women did lumbering in fourteen societies, in thirty six societies women were solely responsible for land clearing and in thirty eight societies cooking was a shared activity. It can thus be argued that a sexual division of labour is not based on biological characteristics of women or men; women are capable of doing strenuous 'mens work'. Oakley also pointed out that the construction of women as warm and caring is done for the convenience of men and that it is possible to socialise the young through other systems than that of the nuclear family in which the woman is the warm, affectionate mother. For example, the kibbutz system in Israel has communal child rearing without any detrimental effect on the children raised (*Haralambos, 1996*).

Psychological discourses also construct innate gender roles resulting in heterosexism. When one talks about psychological discourses and sexuality issues, it is difficult to ignore the theories of Sigmund Freud. His theories of psychoanalysis emphasises the psychological and the mental processes and sexuality. Human beings are viewed to have two basic instinctual drives- the libido and death instincts. The libido, or life instincts, refers to the forces which maintain life and ensure propagation of the species. Death instincts reflect the ultimate resolution of life's tensions in death (*Engler, 1979*). The development of personality, however, centres on the sexual drive or libido. Identity is developed in and around the structures of the id, ego and superego. Within psycho-sexual stages of development, there are tensions between the superego and the id which are negotiated by the ego. The id is uncontained. It is the 'animal energy' within all of us, and the superego represents societal norms. The ego strives to balance demands of the raw energy of the id and that which society expects from us. When the ego is not successful in this negotiation, certain defence mechanisms are employed such as repression, whereby something becomes repressed in the unconscious.

The construction of gender roles and heterosexism is explained especially well by the phallic psycho-sexual stage of development. In this stage there is a resolution of the Oedipus and Electra Complexes. The boy is argued to desire the mother but fears castration from the father, who is the boy's rival in the love of the mother. The Oedipus Complex is resolved when the boy gives up his rivalry with the father, associates with the cultural role of the father and in so doing becomes able

to have someone just like his mother. The girl, on the other hand, also loves the mother and this love is given up as soon as the girl comes into contact with the penis. The girl sees the mother as responsible for castrating her -the girl's- own penis and hates the mother for this. The Electra Complex is resolved when the girl identifies with the gender role of the mother in order to 'get a penis' through heterosexual relations.

The psycho-sexual development is heterosexist, in that normal development is seen as progressing through the psycho-sexual stages, with heterosexuality as the only option. Homosexuality is a form of 'arrested development'. Freud acknowledges primary bisexuality but sees homosexuality as the result of being stuck in the normal development towards heterosexuality (*Engler, 1979*). The question that can be asked is what is innate human sexuality and at what point does it get socially constructed?

It can be argued that innate human sexuality is bisexual and that from that point onwards it is a social construction. Sexuality gets constructed for the purposes of reproduction and maintenance of gendered power relations. Freud also seems to suggest that heterosexual sex, with the aim of reproduction, inter alia, is made to be normal. He states:

> *We actually describe the sexual activity as perverse if it has given up the aim of reproduction and pursue the attainment of pleasure as an aim independent of it. So, as you will see, the breach and turning point in the*

> *development of sexual life lies is in its becoming subordinate to the aim of reproduction. Everything that happens before this turn of events and everything that disregards it and that aims solely at obtaining pleasure is given the uncomplimentary name of perverse and as such is proscribed* (cited in Strachey and Richards, 1973: 358).

Another explanation of how Freud views gender roles, and which supports the innatism of primary bisexuality, is that of Butler (*1990*). She takes her lead from Freud's postulation of primary bisexuality as the basis for repudiation of the mother by the boy. When the boy chooses the masculine gender role and heterosexuality, he does so not to suppress his heterosexual desire and fear of castration by the father, but because he fears castration by homosexuality. Within culture there is an association of homosexuality with 'the feminine' and which holds the possibility of castrating and actually destroying 'the masculine'. Both 'the feminine' and 'the homosexual' thus hold the possibility to destroy 'the masculine'. The resolution of the Oedipus and Electra Complexes can thus be differently constructed further hinting to the socially constructed nature thereof.

What emerges from Butler's explanation of how gender roles are constructed is that 'the feminine' and 'the homosexual' are split from 'the masculine', or to be more specific- the construction of heterosexist, patriarchal masculinity (*Johnson in, Steinberg, Epstein and Johnson, 1997*). Heterosexist, patriarchal masculinity can not accommodate or integrate either femininity and/or homosexuality. 'The homosexual' and 'the feminine' become 'the other' that is expelled in constructing

'the masculine'. Not only are they expelled, 'the masculine' both desires and fears 'the other', as it is something within the self- seen in 'the other'- which cannot be acknowledged. It is therefore desired while at the same time it is feared because it's expulsion from the self is the premise on which it constructs itself. 'The other' becomes an object, it is monstrous, represented for example by the metaphor of the vampire whose threat is to turn oneself into 'a vampire' (*Nayak and Kehily in. Steinberg, Epstein and Johnson, 1997*). This argument goes further in stating that the construction of heterosexist, patriarchal masculinity is fragile and that its borders need to be constantly maintained and guarded (*Steinberg, Epstein and Johnson, 1997*). Acts of homophobia and misogyny then become understandable as they are examples of such 'border patrolling'. The heterosexist, patriarchal masculine thus fears, desires and expels his own femininity and homosexuality. He must also constantly prove to himself and others that he is not feminine or homosexual and does so through acts of misogyny, abject female subordination and homophobia. This is a useful example of how identities are constructed as the 'I-other', how the self is defined by that 'what it is not', and how the unconscious forms part of identity constitution.

Religious discourses also construct the women as mother and bipolarise 'the woman' as either the virginal mother or evil temptress. 'The woman' as mother and evil may be found in examples such as the Biblical Fall. Eve is the evil other and the seducer leading to her bearing children, whilst Adam toils in the sweat of his brow and rules over woman (*Millet, 1977*). The agenda of the New Right also manages to take religious discourses into the political arena, especially in the

United States of America (*Maitland in. Saghal and Yuval Davis. 1992*). Issues such as the woman as mother in the stable family as the basis of law and order, or anti-abortionist stances, are not only proclaimed by religion but supported by political demands (*Maitland in. Saghal and Yuval Davis. 1992*). Opposing these notions of womanhood holds the possibility of not only going against the 'holy order' but also disqualifying oneself from the 'correct, pure political struggle'. Fundamentalist Muslim communities also link traditional, innate notions of womanhood with both religious and political demands. To oppose traditional, religious notions of womanhood seems consistently to mean to oppose the interests of religious communities and their 'holy orders' (*Khanum in. Saghal and Yuval Davis. 1992*).

The above has described some biological, psychological and religious discursive constructions of macro and innatist meanings of what it means to be a man or a woman. People/agents can internalise these meanings, resulting in women internalising dis-esteem where they despise both themselves and others. Women's self-esteem may also become dependant solely on men and they view themselves as having an emotional nature. They may suffer self-hate and rejection and adopt accommodationist qualities such as an assumed air of helplessness (*Millet. 1977*). Not all women however internalise these notions of womanhood. The feminist movement is an example of resistance and opposition to male authority; for example, movements to obtain votes for women in various countries and to obtain equality in the workplace. As described earlier on, feminism also contributed to the post-modern de-centring of the subject in that it exposed, as a political and

social question, the issue of how one is formed as a gendered subject. It politicised the processes of identity formation.

People can thus position themselves in various and varying ways in relation to macro- unities of gender constructions. Not all men are misogynists or homophobes and some men have joined the feminist movement, while some heterosexual men do campaign for the rights of gay and lesbian people. Not all heterosexual men need to patrol stringently the borders of femininity and homosexuality in order to define their masculinity. They may integrate their feminine side, seen in the rise of the 'new age man', for example. It is also not only heterosexual men who are patriarchal. Some gay men are also known for their de-valuation of the feminine, seen in, for example, their aversion and derogation of woman. Furthermore, effeminate men tend also to be placed in the same category of women and suffer abuse for not 'being man enough'. My point of emphasis here is to show how hegemonic masculinity becomes constructed by various discourses and that this masculinity is heterosexist and patriarchal. I also do not want to suggest that all agents slip comfortably into these constructions.

Discourses of heterosexuality are rooted in the construction of gendered patterns. Hegemonic gender roles centre around heterosexism and patriarchy and people position themselves in terms of these. The next section deals more closely with how homosexuality is constructed- 'the homosexual' being the binary, excluded and opposed object to 'the heterosexual'.

1.4. "The homosexual"

The construction of `the homosexual`, in Western society, may be traced to 1870. Westphal's article on 'contrary sexual sensation' may stand as the date of its birth (*Foucault, 1990*). On this date the discursive object of `the homosexual` was born, so to speak, as was it's mutually exclusive other- `the heterosexual`. A sexual act was now used as the basis for constructing a type of person who could be scientifically and rationally studied. The creation of this identity category and the Enlightenment emphasis on rationality and science gave a way to classify, group and administer people, as described earlier in the ritual of the examination (*Foucault, 1977*). `The homosexual` could be studied for its etiology and it could be controlled/trained through classifications, normalising judgements and `treatments`. Various concepts, statements and theories maintained this discursive object and this section focuses on some biological/medical, religious and psychological discourses.

Biological arguments tend to construct homosexuality as being caused by hormonal and genetic factors. As an example, a study by Kallman on forty members of monozygotic pairs, found a hundred percent concordance in `overt homosexual behaviour`. These findings suggest a decisive genetic pre-disposition towards homosexuality (*Marmor, 1965*). Other studies could not confirm either hormonal or chromosomal differences between homo- and heterosexuals, suggesting that the Kallman study does not indicate definitively biological innatism for homosexuality. Another interesting example of biological constructions of homosexuality is that of Slater which found in a study of four

hundred and one male homosexuals, that homosexuals were born later in the siblingship than was theoretically expected, implying some sort of 'chromosomal abnormality' analogous to that in mongolism (*Marmor, 1965*). These two examples illustrate a search for reasons for homosexuality in biology and a strong inclination towards some sort of 'abnormal' pre-disposition.

Some medical discourses also negatively stigmatise homosexuality. As an example, a study on the non-physiological criteria used to select suitable candidates for in-vitro fertilisation (IVF) found that medical practitioners did not view women who were either married or in long term heterosexual relationships as suitable candidates (*Steinberg in, Steinberg, Epstein and Johnson, 1997*). Lesbian women are thus stigmatised, by medical practitioners, as being unsuitable mothers. Another example of how medical discourses construct homosexuals may be found in the venearological accounts on HIV/AIDS (*Redman in, Steinberg, Epstein and Johnson, 1997*). Venearology- using social life as an index to sexually transmitted diseases- initially traced the HI Virus to the 'lifestyle of gay people'. Homosexuals are constructed as sexually deviant and they hold the threat through their own decadence to infect and rot the general public. Some medical discourses, at times, concur with psychology in its construction of homosexuality as deviancy. An example of this is aversion therapy which attempts to 'cure and correct' homosexuality. By administering electric shocks to homosexual men while being shown pornographic images of males, it is believed that sexual orientation can be changed. This form of mind control was found in an American study done in 1973, to be widely applied; 43% of respondents employed aversion therapy to 're-

orientate' homosexual clients to a heterosexual orientation (*Diamant, 1993*). Also in 1973, homosexuality was dropped from the American Psychiatric Association's (APA) list of abnormalities, thereby making homosexuality no longer a psychological abnormality. Through this move, the APA illustrated that views on identity are changeable and that there is nothing essentially pathological about homosexuality.

Religious discourses construct homosexuality as a sin, as going against nature and as being evil. The Al- Qur'an, 26:165-166, states:

> *how can you lust for males, of all creatures in the world, and leave those whom God created for you as mates. You are really going beyond all limits* (Ali Mulana Muhammed, 1951).

Biblical verses also construct homosexuality as a sin seen in, for example, in Leviticus 18:22:

> *if man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them shall have committed an abomination; they shall be put to death, their blood is upon them* (Campus Life Magazine, 1977).

People can internalise these macro, social constructions of what it means to be 'a homosexual'. Some of these include living secret or semi-secret lives, lowered self-esteem, internalised homophobia and self-hatred. Homosexuals may also be

faced with the dilemma of 'coming out'- the process whereby one makes one's sexual orientation known to others. Internalised homophobia manifests in different ways. Individuals consciously think of themselves as evil, inferior and second-class. Such individuals may engage in substance abuse or other self-destructive and abusive behaviour. There are also more covert forms of internalised homophobia where there is an acceptance of one's own sexual orientation but a sabotaging of one's own life in a variety of ways. Individuals may, for example, abandon educational and career goals with the excuse that eternal bigotry will keep them from their objectives; or excessively tolerate discriminatory or abusive behaviour from others; or over-silence oneself in order to avoid the label of abnormality (*Cooper in, Diamant, 1993*). A victim-mentality may also develop among homosexuals. As with other structurally disadvantaged groups, the danger exists to snap at the 'enemy' from the safety of a homosexual ghetto (*Annets and Thompson in, Plummer, 1992*). Such patterns of internalised homophobia also reverberate with women's internalisation of their projected subordination.

As was said earlier, people have various positionings within homosexuality. People may position themselves in opposition to structurally abnormalised, pathologised, sinful constructions of homosexuality. The clearest example of this is the gay and lesbian movement. One such example is the work done by the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) who actively campaigns to promote the human rights of gay and lesbian people. Examples of the work done by IGLHRC include a strengthening of the grassroots gay and lesbian movement, to assist in gay and lesbian political asylum cases, and

making representations to bodies such as the United Nations General Assembly (*Kaplan, 2001*).

The various positions adopted by people imply that there are commonalties and differences among homosexuals themselves. On a macro level, homosexuals are constructed to be sinners, abnormal, etceteras. In relation to these, they have common experiences. Homosexuals however also belong to other macro identities such as 'race' and gender. There are thus also differences between homosexuals. Over and above differences stemming from belonging to a number of macro identity categories, homosexuals' lives, on micro levels, are marked by fragmented and dispersed realities. Homosexuals do not have the same experience or understanding of who and what they are and the particular, individual homosexual's experiences provide some insight into these specific realities.

As an example, a study done of eight Australian gay men's life histories (*Connell, 1992*), provides insight into how identity can be understood through specific realities and existing commonalities and differences. Connell (*1992*) argued for commonalties and differences among respondents' interactions with hegemonic masculinity, the role and placing of sexual experiences, and the interaction with the gay social identity. In terms of interaction with hegemonic masculinity, respondents had a strong interaction with it, both while they were growing up and after they adopted a 'gay social identity'. They grew up in families with traditional divisions of sexual labour and lived in a world where they were confronted with heterosexist men having social power. Differences, however, were found in terms

of this interaction. As an example one respondent became 'over-masculine' while another became the exact opposite. After the respondents adopted a 'gay identity', there was a strong sense of wanting to 'be masculine' and Connell uses the term 'a very straight gay' indicating the emphasis on a 'masculine social presence'.

A crucial moment in the interaction with hegemonic masculinity arose with respondents' sexual experiences. For the respondents, sexuality closure happened on the basis of relationships. One respondent had a period of severe adolescent unhappiness and a rejection of authority. It was resolved by falling in love with a classmate after he was sent to an all boys' boarding school. After that, his choice of men as objects of cathexis was never in doubt. Another respondent also consolidated his sexuality around relationships but his choice of object is defined by contradictory gender imagery. He looks for muscley men who can nurture him (a 'woman quality'). This respondent draws on the macro social structure on gender, in a contradictory way, in that he wants a partner that looks like 'a man' but who has 'qualities of a woman'. Closure of sexuality led to respondents dealing with the gay social label. Differences in how this happened vary from obtaining a sense of freedom to feelings of abuse. It is these three elements- an engagement with hegemonic masculinity, a closure of sexuality around relationships with men, and participation in the collective practices of the gay community- that are the logical moments in the respondents' narratives. Connell argues that it should not be seen as a new model for homosexual identity formation but rather a historically realised configuration of practice. In other words, it reflects the structure that these gay men draw upon resulting in common

positions; also keeping in mind the differences among them.

In answering the question, if gay men hold the possibility to affect change within the existing gender order, Connell concludes that the potential they hold is very limited. The respondents had a gendered eroticism and pre-dominantly 'masculine presence'. Their choice of men is not just the choice of a body with a penis but a choice for embodied masculinity. They also have a sense of privatised politics and for example, little awareness or commitment to gay history. There is however some potential based on the social validation provided by the gay sub-culture as a counterbalance to compulsory heterosexuality and introducing a very 'unmasculine' thing (the choice of another man as a sexual object) to a public masculinity. Based on their privatised politics, it is possible to argue that gay culture has already succeeded in winning enough social space as such an alternative. In addition, and based on the respondents' 'masculine presence', the gay culture does not comply to hegemonic masculinity's construction of gay men being effeminate. Furthermore, even though having a masculine presence the respondents also introduced 'feminine' elements such as career choice (for example nursing) or having long finger-nails. One can thus conclude that gay culture has thus already constructed a public alternative to heterosexist masculinity and this alternative does not need to be 'feminine', it places great value on 'the masculine', and is also able to combine 'masculine' and 'feminine' elements.

As a further example of micro experiences, Schuyf (*in Plummer, 1992*) focuses

on lesbians' experiences in the Netherlands. The article of Schuyf (*in Plummer, 1992*) drew on material that she gathered for a book in preparation. The gathered material was on lesbian lifestyles in the fifty years prior to 1970 and offers lesbians' understandings of whom and what they are and their interactions with society. Different lesbian communities and individual lesbian lifestyles are acknowledged and identity is viewed as the result of wider cultural meanings of being lesbian, the sub-cultures that develop around these meanings and how individuals internalise these meanings.

Five different lesbian lifestyles were identified and these are placed firmly in history. At the end of the nineteenth century, women-to-women sex was labelled as prostitution. Payment was made and individuals lived as heterosexuals. A second alternative was romantic friendship where two women- usually intellectuals- lived together and shared their lives and work. The focus was very much on being intellectual without claiming a lesbian identity. During the urbanisation process in the latter part of the nineteenth century, two 'bar lesbian lifestyles' made their appearance. The first of these was the 'butch-femme' scene where one partner assumes the 'man's role' and the other that of the female. Some of the 'butch' (masculine) respondents described how they felt different from an early age in that they hated females and how they rejected conventional social roles. The second 'bar lesbian lifestyle' was that of bar dancers. They led classic double lives where they were not 'out' except to members sharing their lifestyle. The last lifestyle identified was that of 'ordinary' homosexuals who did not see themselves as any different. One such respondent described homosexuality as:

> *It was not important. It was not something special, like 'now we are like that'. On the one hand it was very natural, but on the other hand it was of minor importance* (Schuyf in, Plummer, 1992: 60).

A further example of micro experiences is that of Akanke (*in Epstein, 1994*). She describes what it is being black and a lesbian within the United Kingdom and it provides a good example of the intersection of racialised and sexual orientation forms of identities. She chose to be quiet about her lesbian identity in order to gain acceptance from fellow black people as she experienced primarily racial discrimination. Her experience of racism also only came to the foreground when she moved from Jamaica to Britain, as this move foregrounded her 'black identity'.

'The homosexual', thus, is a historically traceable object of discursive construction. It is maintained through various discourses whereby it is constructed in relation to 'the heterosexual'. Various agent positionings however exist within these macro constructions making possible to claim that there are both commonalties and differences between homosexuals, or heterosexuals. It was further illustrated how the micro realities of some gay men and lesbians- as well as belonging to a number of macro identity categories- further point to the differences and commonalities between and among them.

At this point, before moving on to discussions on the more micro level of

schooling. I would like to elaborate on the issues of 'race' and the intersections of 'race' with gender and specifically masculinity. This discussion will contribute, again, to the illustration of some of the multiple macro positions that agents can belong to, in this case that of 'race' and gender. This discussion is also useful, as will be seen later, because of the importance of 'race' within South Africa. It will also illustrate the construction of Western identities around 'the black other' and the role of the unconscious in constructing identities.

Fanon (*1986*) provides an analysis of the confrontation between 'civilised' (white) and 'primitive' (black) men which creates the colonial situation and which he argues a psychological analysis can help place and define. His analysis is based primarily on the experiences of black people in the Antilles and he does not claim that these experiences hold for all black people. Another issue is the author's use of the concept of 'man'. One is not sure if it means humanness, including man and woman, and ignores the question of gender differences. Bhabha in the foreword to the book (*Fanon, 1986*), states Fanon places sexual differences within the realm of cultural differences and that the question of sexuality is simplified. Nonetheless, Fanon's discussion does provide valuable insights into the effects of colonialism for 'the black' and 'the white'. In my discussion, I will attempt to integrate gender differences and indicate some implications for 'the homosexual'. I will also indicate material consequences, as well as unconscious processes, on the levels of the political, the social and the economic.

Firstly, and of importance, is the inter-relations between historical conditions and

human attitudes to these conditions, being black and feeling inferior only becomes an issue when the white man (*sic*) arrives on the scene. What is described is nothing innate, it is relational and Fanon says:

> *the feelings of inferiority of the colonised is the correlative of the European's feelings of superiority* (Fanon, 1986: 93).

'The black' and 'the white' only exist in relation to each other, they need each other. In a section on the Negro (*sic*) and Hegel, Fanon describes this need. It is for the creation of an objective self consciousness aiming to obtain human reality, in-itself-and-for-itself. 'The self consciousness of 'the I' can only become more objective, or more human, when there is a reciprocal recognition by the self consciousness of 'the other'. In this case, historically, it is the reciprocal recognitions between 'the slave' ('the black) and 'the master' ('the white').

Fanon argues that 'the black' needs to resist 'the white', this resistance arises from being the 'oppositional slave'. When such resistance occurs, the self consciousness of 'the white' undergoes the experience of desire and I will describe later on some of this desire, especially seen in inter-racial sexual matters. 'The black' risks his/her own life, transforming his/her subjective certainty of own worth into a 'universally valid objective truth'. Thus, 'the black' must be 'the slave' and in this, resist 'the master'- negating own worth- in order to be recognised by the desire of 'the white'. In this, 'the slave' wants acknowledgement of his/her negation, of being something else and somewhere

else- a world of reciprocal recognitions. As was described earlier on by Derrida (*Hall, Held and Mc Crew, 1992*) the identities of 'the black' and 'the white' thus are never closed, they carry echoes of other meanings which are triggered off and are constantly disrupted by difference.

Both 'the black' and 'the white' are thus recognisable representations to each other, as 'slave' and as 'master'. More specifically, there are a range of such representations that 'the white' and 'the black' must negotiate. These constructions are not always rational, and stem also from the unconscious. I want to focus on three sets of meanings of 'the black' in construction of identities for and by 'the white'. Firstly, 'the black' is evil and ugly and secondly, s/he is unworried, gregarious, voluble, muscularly relaxed, never bored, are exhibitionist, devoid of self-pity and exuberant. They have rhythm, are free, loud, spontaneous and not angst-ridden. In both instances, it is a matter of these qualities not integrated into 'the white' ego, something in the self that is projected onto 'the other', 'the black'. In this, 'the slave/the black' affords 'the white' to seemingly 'get rid' of certain qualities. As was described earlier on in the construction of heterosexist masculinities and 'the homosexual', this 'other' is then feared and desired.

The first set of meanings relates to a projection of repressed darkness in egos, the second to projecting 'rhythmic' qualities onto 'the black'. Regarding the second set of meanings, Weber (*Bocock in, Hall and Gieben, 1992*) argues that modernism's emphasis on rationality and science made 'pleasure and

gratification' taboo. Such Calvinist type values fitted those of capitalism like saving, accumulating and adopting a frugal rather than spendthrift style of life. It has to do with a projection of 'freer' qualities, those qualities that were brought into 'control' by emphasising rationality and science.

Related to this is the third set of meanings of 'the black' in the psyche of 'the white'. Once again, on the level of the body, and struggling to bring it under control, 'the black' is assigned with tremendous sexual prowess. As an example, when one looks at stories such as 'the black man' wanting to rape 'the white woman', and this frightening object actually being an imaginary attacker, one can conclude that there is a terror mixed with sexual revulsion. This fear of being raped may also be a cry to be raped, through inversion. In such accounts, 'the black man' has tremendous sexual powers and everything takes place on the genital level.

> *as for the Negroes, they have tremendous sexual powers. What do you expect, with all the freedom that they have in their jungles! They copulate at all times and in all places. They are really genital. They have so many children that* they *can not even count them. Be careful or they will flood us*
> (Fanon, 1986: 157)

and Fanon states:

> *projecting his own desires onto the Negro, the white man behaves as if the*

> *Negro really had them ..... the Negro is fixated at the genital: or at any rate he has been fixated there* (Fanon, 1986: 165).

and,

> *a white woman who has had a Negro lover finds it difficult to return to white men. Or so at least it is believed, particularly by white men. Who knows what they can give a woman? Who indeed does know?* (Fanon, 1986: 171).

'The black' thus has tremendous sexual powers. From a heterosexist reading, the 'white women' fears 'this power' from 'the black man' and by implication constructs 'the white man' as being sexually inferior. She desires 'the black man' and it is presented as fear. 'The white man' enters into competition with 'the black man', for 'the white woman', but will probably lose. Patriarchy is then a feasible option, 'protecting' 'the white woman' from 'the black man'. At the same time, 'the white man' desires 'the sexual prowess' of 'the black man' and in this 'the white man' is a repressed homosexual. Similar to the earlier described fear of desire of 'the homosexual' by 'the heterosexual', the 'black man' also represents repressed homosexuality, this time with immense sexual abundance, to 'the white man'. Turning to 'the black woman', she is viewed as sexually available. As an example, in the Antilles, it counted for nothing if you are black and have a white father, it is accepted that black woman 'are available'. On the other hand if you are black and you have a white mother, it means that there is a romantic aspect,

there is more value, and that one has accessed 'whiteness' and was not 'made in the bushes'.

Rattansi (*in Rattansi and Westwood, 1994*) argues that constructing 'the black man' in these ways also allowed for a class divided construction of white British masculinities. Upper class masculinities emphasised sexual restraint and lack of emotional display, while the lower classes were constructed as prone to sexual excess and demonstrating their masculinity through sexual prowess, just like 'the black'. Furthermore, middle class English women were constructed as frail, chaste needing protection of 'the white man' from the 'threat' of 'the black man'. The supposed 'threat' to white women in the colonies, and patriarchal discourses, enabled some of the most repressive measures against 'the black'. Such colonial discourses are still prevalent in contemporary societies. As an example, regarding the presence of black people within British inner cities, an extreme right wing publication carried the following headline in the 1990's:

> *white man! You have the duty to protect your race, homeland and family!.....think of the safety of your white womenfolk.....think of your mother, your sister, your girlfriend (Rattansi in, Rattansi and Westwood, 1994: 63).*

A consequence of such constructions for 'the black', is that s/he is positioned as nothing and therefore may have a tendency to aspire to 'be white' and in this, there is a dislocation, a displacement, a separation. 'The black' must assimilate 'the white world' that has been prescribed and alienate him/herself from family

and friends and he/she enters a situational neurosis where there is a constant running away from 'own individuality' and annihilation of 'own presence'. As described earlier on, 'the black' must sacrifice his/her own life, to be 'the slave' and to resist, in order to create a reciprocal recognition of him/herself by 'the master'/'the white'. As an example: a group of white and black work colleagues go on a workshop. Over supper a group of the black work colleagues started socialising in 'a black language'. A white colleague wanted to join this event, and asked the black colleagues if they could speak English, a 'white language' and which everyone could speak. The black colleagues did not. In this, 'the black' resisted 'the white'. Speaking English would have placed 'the black' on a social level where they would have been 'measured for being white'. As Fanon says with regards to the Antilles:

> *yes I must take great pains with my speech, because I shall more or less be judged by it. With great contempt they will say of me, he does not even know how to speak French* (Fanon, 1986: 20).

The black colleagues suspended their ability to talk English, the language that everyone was expected to speak 'like the white'. Rather, they became 'the other', who through their resistance were recognised as 'the slave' by 'the white'. There is no equality, it was not merely a question of all speaking the same language and thereby participating in the same social event. As Fanon says:

> *The white man tells the Negro (sic), brother (sic) there is no difference*

> *between us. And yet the Negro (sic) knows that there is a difference. He (sic) wants it. He (sic) wants the white man (sic) to turn to him (sic) and shout: damn nigger (sic). Then he would have that unique chance to show them*.....(Fanon, 1986: 221).

Later on that same evening, some of the same black colleagues took, without asking, cigarettes from the same white colleague. Once again, the black colleagues acted from the position of 'the slave'. This time it was not on the level of the social, and its questions about being socially dominant/competent or subordinate/incompetent, but on the economic level where 'the white' is economically privileged and 'the black' economically disadvantaged. It suggests historically constructed and reciprocally recognisable representations.

Of importance in the constructions of 'the master' and 'the slave' are also different positions on the levels of the political, the social, and the economic. I have noted some of these positions in the above example and will further illustrate these points in the discussion on South Africa. For now, on the level of the political, 'the slave' is politically disenfranchised while 'the master' is enfranchised. On the level of the social, 'the slave' is subordinate and incompetent while 'the master' is dominant and competent; and on the economic level, 'the master' is privileged and 'the slave' is disadvantaged.

In summary regarding the work of Fanon, 'the white' and 'the black' need each other, as 'master' and as 'slave'. It is to establish reciprocal recognitions in

creating the constructed objective, human truth of colonialism. But in order to do so, there are many negations. Colonialism gave 'the white' many psychological escape routes while 'the black' has to negate own self worth. 'The white', or more specifically upper class white men and women, construct themselves as rational, good, restrained, and sexually responsible. 'The black' represents that what was split from 'white egos' i.e. being 'irrational', 'bad', 'rhythmic' and 'sexually loose'. More specifically on the intersections of 'race' and gender, 'the black man' is sexually feared and desired by 'the white woman' and 'the white man'; she as a supposed/putative sexual partner and he as a repressed homosexual. 'The black woman', and constructing heterosexism and patriarchy, is constructed as being sexually available. There are further constructions of patriarchy and heterosexism in that 'the white man' needs to protect 'the white woman' from the sexual threat posed by 'the black man' in order to keep her pure for 'the white man's' sexual wishes and for civilisation. Lastly, these unconscious processes are in the context of material consequences for the different 'race' identities on the levels of the political, the social, and the economic.

Another implication of the heterosexist assumptions underlying constructions of 'the black man', is for 'the black homosexual'. Because of heterosexism, 'the black man' is constructed as focusing his sexual powers on women, and because 'the black homosexual' doesn't, he could place himself outside of meanings of 'the black man'. It is then possible that 'the black homosexual' views himself as 'a woman'. Furthermore and because of heterosexism, 'the black homosexual' will be attracted to 'real men', the indicator thereof being heterosexual. Such

constructions tie in with notions of real men being heterosexual and could be especially true in societies where gay masculinities have not won ground in being a viable alternative to heterosexist masculinities, such as the one described earlier on by Connell.

A further question is what can be said about the relation between 'the white homosexual' and 'the black homosexual'. When one look at statements made by 'the black homosexual' such as wanting a white lover (*Steyn, 2003*), a few questions arise. Why not a lover, why white? One can expect 'the black homosexual' making statements like this, wanting to be controlled and to be dominated. In described colonial discourses thusfar, 'the white' is active, s/he is the one making choices. The position of 'the black' is reactionary (*Fanon, 1986*). The described 'black homosexual' would thus want to have no responsibility (versus making choices) and to be passive (versus being active). Such a 'black homosexual' also stand to 'gain' an economic privileged position and social competency, through his relationship with 'the white'. On the other hand, the 'white homosexual' wanting 'the black homosexual' would be 'the master', controlling, dominating, choosing and being the active partner.

Staples (*1982*) also focuses on the intersection between 'race' and masculinity. The focus is on 'the black man' in America in the 1970's and changes brought about by feminism. In the main, 'the black man' is confronted by institutional discrimination, and stereotypes resulting in a low self-esteem. Black boys grow up in female-lead households because black men are not able to economically

provide for their families. The majority of black children are also born out of wedlock, reflecting 'the black man' as a sexual stallion. With the absence of a father, black boys are not socialised with notions of men being the breadwinner, sexually responsible (monogamous) and installing authority and discipline. Rather, they are confronted by mass media representations of 'the black man' as irresponsible, hyper-sexualised, hustlers and as being violent.

Within schools, black males tend to under-perform, also in comparison to black females. Contributing factors are male peer pressures on 'proving' masculine prowess in terms of sexual conquests, athletic success or fighting. If there is a lack of discipline in the school there is also a greater chance of black men engaging in violence, drug-use and absenteeism. When they leave school, black men tend to have few skills, poor work habits and they have poorer networks than whites. In addition, there are 'typical' jobs available to them (in the United States of America, there are within athletics and in the military) and the end result is that they have a greater chance of being unemployed. With greater unemployment, there is little left than crime, and its violence is a further reflection of 'the black macho'. Unemployment can also lead to damage of the fragile male ego resulting in suicide, homicide, psychological breakdown and family violence. Regarding family violence, the unemployed black male often resorts to abusive behaviour towards family members and engages in extra-marital affairs, all to bolster his deflated ego or re-assert 'his masculinity'. If he does enter the general work arena, 'the black man' also faces unique issues. There are perceptions that he is arrogant, impatient and unwilling to conform to business standards. Once again, because of

'the black man' with incredible sexual prowess' construction, black men can engage more in cases of sexual harassment, making them more of a 'threat'. Women -black or white- are seen as less of a 'threat'.

Since the 1970's, there has been an increase in black woman not allowing black men to define them (*Staples, 1982*). These developments further place pressure on 'the black man' not to be sensitive because it opens him up to 'female domination'. Such a resistance stems from an internalisation of patriarchal patterns. In summary, 'the black man' is constrained in 'achieving' Western cultural norms of masculinities, falling back on Western cultural identity notions of 'the black man'. Changes since 1970, specifically feminism, have not led to significant changes and is in fact more of a threat to 'the black man' within patriarchy. This work of Staples illustrates how constructions of 'the black man' results in institutional discrimination further feeding constructions of 'the black man'. All along, 'the white man' is constructed as being responsible, rational, sexually monogamous and able to install authority and discipline.

I have now described how 'the homosexual' and 'the heterosexual', as well as 'the black' and the white' are constructed as binary oppositional identity categories. It was shown how these identities are informed by unconscious processes; how feminism and the theories of Marx show that macro categories influence identities; how identities are used to 'gaze', to exercise normalising judgements and the ritual of the examination; and how important difference and oppositional identities are. But at the same time, even if identities are complex, fractured and

multi layered, unified identities are constructed. The discussion now turns to the more micro level of schooling and how schools may (re)produce heterosexism, homophobia, 'race' and patriarchy.

1.5. Schools and the discourses of heterosexuality and homosexuality

This study's object of analysis is a social group within a specific institution of a particular society. It studies experiences of gay and lesbian learners within South African schools. The study is therefore rooted within the discipline of sociology and it is defined as:

> *the study of social institutions, giving particular emphasis to those forms of society brought into being by the advent of modern industrialism* (Giddens, 1987: 1).

Sociology can be divided into studies of micro and macro levels of society (*Giddens, 1989*). Micro levels are the smaller levels and macro levels the 'bigger picture'. As an example, the institution of the school can represent the micro, sociological level, if it is viewed against macro, sociological levels such as political, economic, social and cultural systems. In other instances, the school can be viewed as the macro level, if structures such as the classroom or the playground are viewed as the micro level. Macro and micro sociological levels are in interaction. There is also interaction between structure and agency and this interaction defines the nature of both (*Giddens, 1987*). The human agent always knows in a certain sense what they are doing and the range of elements in the broader institutional context within which a particular action takes place. So for example, the individual going to school does so because of his/her intentions and reasons. However, having one's own intentions for action does not make one the master of one's own fate. Going to school draws on the social convention- the

structure- of schooling and thereby maintains and reconstitutes it, as well as drawing upon socially accepted values about schooling. The agent becomes a learner, his/her identity is influenced and shaped by structure, and the agent creates and upholds- by participating in it- the structure. The study is thus based within the discipline of sociology. There is interaction between micro- and macro sociological levels as well as a constitutive interaction between structure and agency.

There is a distinction to be made between schooling and education. Very often these terms are conflated and there is an assumption that a person who is well schooled is well educated. Education creates an environment in which individuals may realise their creative and intellectual potential. Education should provide learners with the necessary knowledge, skills and values to become active and innovative members of society (*Lyons-Zwarenstein, in Carrim, 2000*). A neutral role is assigned to schools in that they are viewed as serving the needs and intentions of the mass of the population and that school curricula and pedagogy are only instruments of transmission in serving these needs. Schools in Western capitalist societies have, however, proven that they not only maintain but perpetuate inequalities and stratification (*Brandt, 1996*). From the view point of structuralist and functionalist accounts of schooling, schools may be seen to reproduce society, and its inequalities, economically, politically, culturally and socially (*Giroux and Aronowitz, 1986*).

There is agreement that schools - as a micro level- are in interactions with macro

societal processes (*Woods and Hammersley, 1977*). Schools thus also construct broader societal sexual identities with which the school interacts. There are specific types of interaction within schools, that allow these processes to happen, and six such levels of interaction can be specified (*Brandt, 1986*). The first of these levels is that of school policy, the second is staff composition and interaction, the third is student composition and interaction, the fourth is pedagogical relations, the fifth is the curriculum and these five levels determine the sixth level- the ethos of the school. The question that can now be asked is how do schools- given the six levels of interaction- construct discourses of heterosexuality and homosexuality?

Within schools there are certain general qualities regarding sexuality (*Epstein, 1994*). The prevailing notion is of the innocence of childhood. Sexual matters will be all pervasive within schools- for example in pupil talk- but will be policed to heavily guarded spaces. If sexual matters are 'formally' discussed at all, it tends to focus on biological facts and key issues such as desire, pleasure, sexuality, power, autonomy and dependence tend to be left out. The de-sexualisation of schools makes talking about sexuality either embarrassing or there is an over-sexualisation of things, for example pupils seeing something sexual in everything. There are also certain general qualities within schools regarding heterosexuality and homosexuality. Schools can be heterosexist, an extreme example being policy statements restricting any discussion of homosexuality. 'Coming out', as either a gay/lesbian teacher or pupil, can be interpreted as then discussing issues of homosexuality. Those pupils or teachers who think they are gay or lesbian will

find it difficult to 'come out' as these identities are so heavily pathologised. The negative connotations of these categories may be viewed as not reflecting lived experience. Also, given the de-sexualisation of schools, it will be difficult to discuss one's homosexuality in an open and honest way. Even if one does claim the social identity of gay or lesbian, given a dominant, heterosexist culture, one may probably be confronted by discrimination. These general features of schools regarding sexuality and homo-and heterosexuality already touch on the types of interaction specified earlier. The discussion now turns to six levels of interaction and how sexual identities may be constructed within schools.

School policy can out rule any discussion of homosexuality. One such example is section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988 in the United Kingdom, which states that a local authority:

> *shall not promote the teaching in any maintained school of the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship* (Epstein, 1994: 33).

Given the de-sexualisation of schools and the belief that children are sexually innocent, it is more likely that school policies will avoid sexuality issues or if and when it is 'formally' allowed, police it to heavily guarded spaces (*Epstein, 1994*). If sexuality is mentioned it can be expected that it will primarily focus on heterosexual biological facts and issues such as desire will be left out. A formal silencing of sexuality issues, it must be kept in mind, will be enacted within a

general culture of heterosexism.

Teacher composition will more than likely be heterosexist. There is a dangerous misperception that gay and lesbian teachers are a threat to children. Gay and lesbian teachers are viewed as uncontrollable sexual creatures that will prang onto every child and molest them (*Epstein, 1994*). A lesbian teacher, giving her experience in a school in Britain, stated that she experienced silencing of her sexuality. This silencing happens within a teacher culture of heterosexism where heterosexual teachers display their sexuality through for example wearing wedding rings and telling classroom anecdotes about their spouses. 'Coming out' as a lesbian teacher could be interpreted as going against policy statements prohibiting any discussion on homosexuality- such policy statements being in place in Britain at that time (*Spraggs in, Epstein, 1994*). Teachers also reconstruct broader patriarchal gender roles. Male teachers will be associated with subjects associated with rationality (for example mathematics) and female teachers with 'softer' subjects such as arts and counselling. Furthermore, because female teachers are associated more with the values of irrationality and emotionality, they will also be viewed as not suitable to exercise discipline and will be left out from positions of discipline or authority (*Mac an Ghaill, 1994*).

Pupils or learners also re/construct broader gendered categories and sexualities. Various types of masculinities and femininities are constructed and a study done in Britain identified four such types of pupil masculinities (*Mac an Ghaill, 1994*). These typologies illustrate the relational quality of identities, that identity is

context specific, the interaction between schools and wider society, that identities are historical and changing, and have a strong emphasis on the influence of social class on identity. The description of the typologies of identity was done against the background of a school in Britain which is strongly stratified on class, gender and 'race' lines. It was done in the early 1990s against a wider culture which emphasises entrepreneurship, the school in the marketplace, and the rising importance of technology.

The first typology is that of the 'macho-lads' who came from a working class background, who were anti-school, who acted tough and whose masculinity consisted of 'fighting, fucking and football'. The 'academic achievers' came from skilled working class backgrounds and through their academic achievement aimed to be more upwardly socially mobile. Of note is that these pupils' masculinity did not oppose the traditional gender order in any way. The third typology was the 'new entrepreneurs' whose interest is in the new technological and commercial subjects and who constructed a masculinity emphasising values of rationality, instrumentalism, forward planning and careerism. The last typology was masculinities, which were constructed by pupils who came from non-commercial backgrounds, and which emphasised honesty, being different, individuality and autonomy.

Common to all of these constructed masculinities were compulsory heterosexuality, misogyny and homophobia. Sex and sex talk formed a significant part of the construction of masculinity and there was an emphasis on male sex as

exclusively vaginal with little emphasis on sharing and respecting womens' needs. This talk focused on the telling and the retelling of male sexual performance stories in which there were misogynist boasting, exaggeration of past heterosexual conquests and male heroic fantasies. Women were viewed as passive objects of male sexual urges and the main function of male sex talk was to publicly validate one's own masculinity to others. Homophobic abuse served the same function in that it validated one's own masculinity to oneself and to others. Male pupils were found to be more homophobic than female pupils, suggesting that masculinity has an interest in being homophobic. It must be kept in mind that homophobic abuse not only involves verbal abuse; body language becomes an important signifier of being masculine. One's stance, tone of voice are important signifiers of being masculine and especially working class males viewed it as important to 'look big' (*Nayak and Kehily in, Steinberg, Epstein and Johnson, 1997*).

Although sex talk plays a crucial role in the construction of gender formations, its' purpose is not mono-dimensional. Sex talk can also be part of oppositional pupil culture- given the power relations between adult/teacher and non-adult/pupils and the de-sexualisation of schools. Sex talk may be used to defy the authority of adults and middle class sensibilities; it may also break the silence on sexual matters imposed by middle class adults. Furthermore, homophobic abuse may be directed against pupils who always do their homework and submit to teacher authority (*Epstein, 1994*). Such pupils do not represent 'proper masculinity' - within the patriarchy of 'the lads'- and include those pupils who are not active in sports or who are not 'loud'. Actual sexual orientation is thus not the necessary

prerequisite for homophobic abuse.

Female pupils construct their identities within the context of teachers and pupils acting out their masculinity in terms of its constitutive elements of objectification, fixation and conquest (*Litekwa in. Mac an Ghaill, 1994*). Much of female pupils' leisure time is spent on the topic of dating and having a boyfriend and this serves as proof of 'being grown up' and being a 'normal' heterosexual. Homosexuality is rejected and viewed as deviant and a passing phase. Female pupil's talk of 'getting a man' feeds into the perception that women are irrational because of their emotional attachment to male pupils. Female pupils are thus seen as emotional and dependent on males with no real career interest. The objectification of females- through male sex talk- also makes them prone to sexual harassment.

A description of four gay and lesbian pupils' experiences of schooling within Britain provides some insight into how gay and lesbian pupils experience interactions with other pupils. Epstein (*1994*) provides such a description. It took place in 1992 and all of the pupils were involved in gay and lesbian student politics. Themes which arose from the description were early experiences of 'feeling different' and that they were attracted to the same sex, there was a hope that this was just a 'passing phase' and that they would turn into 'real' men and women. Homophobic verbal abuse was seen as part of general abusive language and there was no real connection between this abuse and what being gay and lesbian involved. Homophobic abuse was also used by members of the group to prove their own masculinity and it was used against pupils who conformed to

authority and who showed a strong reaction when it was used. There were also experiences of titular acceptance of being gay or lesbian but which went over into condemnation when it became real- for example a boy kissing another boy.

Looking specifically at the experiences of lesbians in high school, Malinsky (*in Harris, 1997*) studied the experiences of 27 self-identified lesbian and bisexual female high school students. The respondents, in relation to the forms of homophobia and heterosexism experienced, reported harassment, a lack of information on sexual diversity, an absence of positive role models, and a failure to provide counselling. I would argue that these experiences are not 'uniquely lesbian' and would probably hold for gay and lesbian learners. One study that noted some gender differences among gay and lesbian learners, is that of Harris and Bliss (*in Harris, 1997*) on 'coming out' experiences in high school. Gay learners suspected that they were gay and told their siblings and friends at significantly younger ages than lesbian learners. On the other hand, significantly more lesbian learners 'came out' to others while in high school. From these findings, it could be argued that gay learners face more discrimination and therefore do not disclose their sexuality as frequently.

A study done by D'Augelli and Pilkington (*Rey and Gibson in, Harris, 1997*) further provides some picture of the types of discrimination- and the extent of it- that gay and lesbian learners face. The study investigated anti-gay/lesbian victimisation among 194 gay, lesbian and bisexual youth between the ages of 15 and 21 from 14 different communities in the United States of America. The

sample included 142 males and 52 females and participants were asked if they experienced various types of discrimination, as a result of someone knowing or assuming that they were homosexual. Of the respondents, 80% reported verbal insults, 44% were threatened with attacks, 23% reported vandalism, 33% had objects thrown at them, 31% were chased or followed, 13% were spat upon, 18% suffered physical assaults, 9% were assaulted with a weapon, and 22% experienced sexual assault. In general, 83% of respondents reported that they experienced some form of victimisation.

It is also possible that gay and lesbian learners have positive experiences of their schooling. In a study of Jordan, Vaughan and Woodsworth (*in Harris, 1997*) the following studies are quoted on more positive experiences: 25% of respondents in the study by Telljohann and Price (*1993*) felt comfortable talking about their sexual orientation with the school counsellor and most had a generally positive response from both teachers and counsellors after disclosure; most lesbian and gay adolescents appear to be psychologically and socially healthy (*Savin-Williams, in press; cited in Savin-Williams, 1989*); and Herek (*in Kielwasser and Wolf, 1994*) proposes that gay and lesbian learners should be viewed as gifted children because of their ability to survive into adulthood by virtue of their powerful and creative resilience.

All respondents, in the earlier quoted work of Epstein (*1994*), were confronted by 'coming out' and they had different experiences. There was seeking of support, a feeling of condemnation from the Catholic Church and an attempt to commit

suicide, and a feeling that being gay is not such a big issue and that the identities of class and religion had a more significant impact on lives. 'Coming out' was felt to have the potential of empowerment as it broke the culture of heterosexism. It may also strip gay and lesbian youth of the 'protection of the closet'. Gay and lesbian youth may think that they are ready to face the world in terms of whom and what they are, but dealing with homophobia requires the ability of being questioned, justifying oneself and confronting verbal and physical abuse. These stressors require skills which gay and lesbian youth do not always have (*Forster, 1997*).

A study of Harris and Bliss (*in Harris, 1997*) aimed to learn more about the experiences of gay and lesbian people in educational settings, particularly about experiences around 'coming out'. The study had 106 gay- and 156 lesbian respondents, all adult and on vocation in a well-known gay/lesbian holiday resort in the United States of America. Although many participants reported individual positive experiences, almost all of them found various aspects of their high school frightening, oppressive and even dangerous. The study concludes that there are no simple answers in terms of to 'come out' or not. There is a tension between the potential benefits to openness, on the one hand, and the pain, distress and possible loss of relationships that might follow from 'coming out'. There is the possibility of losing support from friends, family and teachers when one 'comes out' which some respondents experienced. There were also positive consequences and many participants reported substantial and enduring friendships that resulted from their openness. There were also reports of relief, integrity, and personal satisfaction.

There is a range of consequences to homophobia and heterosexism, for gay and lesbian learners, within high schools. Morrow (*in Harris, 1997*) studied the effects of sexual orientation, 'coming out' and homophobia specifically in relation to the career development of gay and lesbian adolescents. Many gay and lesbian adolescents spend their adolescence dealing with the issues of 'coming out' and handling homophobia rather than dealing with personal and vocational identity development that characterise most young peoples' adolescence. If a gay or lesbian learner drops out of school, they foreclose an education as well as a financially secure future. They might also fall into work that is meaningless or harmful. Gay and lesbian learners also receive messages from society about their 'unsuitability' for certain careers. Examples would include not working with children because they would molest them, or the military that is only open to 'real men'. There are also limited societal role models available to gay and lesbian learners, specifically in relation to feasible career options. Typically such models would include being an interior decorator or florist for gay men and being a truck driver or mechanic for lesbian women.

Furthermore, a study of Jordan, Vaughan and Woodsworth (*in Harris, 1997*) reported that 35.3% of respondents had previous suicide attempts and that this is a figure consistent with previous literature. Remafedi (*Jordan, Vaughan and Woodsworth in, Harris, 1997*) found that 80% of his sample had deteriorating school performance, 40% were truant, 30% had dropped out of school, and 40% had lost a friend.

Returning to the six levels of schooling, on the level of curriculum, the 'formal' curriculum tends to construct heterosexism and a traditional division of sexual labour. Textbooks tend to be heterosexist and silence gay and lesbian issues (*Mac an Ghaill, 1994*). As an example, sex education focuses on biological facts of reproduction, assuming that the only purpose of sex is reproduction and that sex is only between a man and a woman. Gay and lesbian issues are not included in the curriculum of subject areas such as history or English literature. As an example, the sexual orientation of well-known poets is not brought into relation with their works. The curriculum also tends to maintain the sexual division of labour and class divisions; two such examples being the vocational- and technological curriculum. Vocational subjects that equip pupils with practical skills lead to female pupils obtaining 'caring' skills (for example housekeeping) and maintaining the notion of female as mother. Male pupils from working class backgrounds tend to obtain manual labour skills with its distinctive mixture of chauvinism, toughness and machismo (*Mac an Ghaill, 1994*).

Lastly, pedagogy also tends to construct patriarchal gender differences and heterosexism. Boys are seen as troublemakers and, especially in adolescence, go through a very difficult stage (*Musinger, 1971*). Adolescent boys are viewed as being naturally difficult and are thereby constructed as active; girls who display the same behaviour are viewed as problematic individuals. The passivity of girl pupils is further constructed through discipline and disciplinary codes. A proper girl does not do anything necessitating discipline, she abides by authority, is quiet and knows her place. Girls who are active and loud, who do challenge authority

and are restless, go against what is prescribed for 'being feminine'. Though such girls tend to be ignored by formal disciplinary codes, they are disciplined through normalising judgements such as name-calling and stigmatisation by, for example being called sluts or loose girls. It becomes important for girls to avoid these labels as it places them out of the marriage market. One does not marry a 'loose girl'.

Given the heterosexist assumption within schools, gay and lesbian learners will experience pedagogical relations as policing who and what they are (*Mac an Ghaill in, Epstein, 1994*). Pupils who begin to identify themselves as gay or lesbian, experience classroom discussions as a place to keep quiet. The reasons for this is that there is no open, honest environment in which one can deal with one's own sexuality, and the high probability of homophobic abuse against which one has no guarantee of the teacher challenging such abuse or not engaging in it him/herself.

As can be seen from the above discussion on the levels of interaction within schools, broader societal discourses of hetero- and homosexuality are re/constructed by schools, creating an ethos of heterosexism. It is against this background that gay and lesbian learners must negotiate their individual strategies. The last part of the theoretical discussion situates the discussion up to this point in present day South Africa. A significant part of this study's value is in applying these theories in the South African context and describing how some South African gay and lesbian learners interact with and experience these.

1.6. Discourses of schooling, heterosexualities and homosexualities in South Africa

One of the most outstanding qualities about South African society is that of 'race'. On 27 April 1994, Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as the country's first black president and all spheres of South African social life were formally de-racialised and desegregated. Before this date various mechanisms officialised racism. The following discussion further illustrates colonial discourses' constructions of 'the black/slave' and 'the white/master' on the levels of the social, the political and the economic. Laws under the Apartheid Government included the Population Registration Act, No 30 of 1950 which classified the population into different racial categories. These racial categories were treated differently by the country's laws and there were formalised discrimination against black people. As an example, the Native Lands Act of 1913 and 1936 allocated 87% of land to white people and black people were not allowed to purchase land in these 'white areas'. Opposition to these laws was violently repressed. The Suppression of Communism Act, No 44 of 1950 did not only ban and outlaw the Marxist doctrine but any attempt aimed to bring about any political, industrial or economic change in South Africa. Persons, organisations or publications, meeting the above requirements, could be banned. These bannings were widely applied. One such example is a campaign of the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan African Congress (PAC) in the early 1960s to present black people to police stations without their passes ('race' classification documents). Violence erupted all over the country, notably in Sharpeville and in Langa, and the ANC and PAC were subsequently banned. Economic prerogatives also favoured whites. The

'civilised labour policy' which had as its aim to pay white workers to the 'standard recognised as tolerable from the usual European standpoint' (*Horrel, 1963*). A further such example is job reservation that protected whites from black competition in skilled jobs. On an ideological level, there was a vehement emphasis on the values of Christian Nationalism. This ideology was strongly based on religious and pseudo-scientific arguments. J. D du Toit- a well-known Afrikaans poet and theologian and who had a crucial role in the creation of the apartheid Bible- said:

> *First, what God has joined together, man must not separate. This is the core of our plea for the unity of the people (the Afrikaner). Second, we should not bring together that which God has separated. In pluraformity the counsel of God is realised. The higher unity lies in Christ and is spiritual in character. Thus there can be no equalising and no miscegenation* (Dubow, 1991: 10).

The above quotation makes the link between apartheid and 'the will of God' clear. There were also pseudo-scientific justifications for apartheid. An example of such justifications can be found in the work of Geoff Cronje- a Pretoria University professor of sociology. He stated:

> *the mixing of blood between the white and the black races produces inferior human material in biological terms (physically and mentally). Miscegenation between whites and non-whites (sic) is therefore shown by*

biological research to be detrimental (Dubow, 1991: 22).

Institutionalised racism disappeared formally with the first democratic elections. Section 9(3) of the new South African Constitution reads:

> *the State may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth* (South African Constitution, 1996).

With the scrapping officially of apartheid, South Africa entered an era with a strong ethos of non-discrimination. The new South African Constitution specifies for the first time in the world, non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. However, not only the effects of apartheid discrimination, but other discriminatory practices over years and years, are still very much part of South African society. An example is the economic effects of apartheid on different races. A study done by the Human Sciences Research Council in 1994 found that 40.9% of South African households lived below the minimum living level; of this 68 % are black, 18% Indian, 38% coloured and 6.7% white. Poverty is concentrated in rural areas, reflected in Gauteng- the most urbanised province- having the lowest rates of poverty (*Race Relations Survey, 1994/1995*). These figures reflect not only the wide extent of poverty but that black people are mainly affected by it and that it is concentrated in rural areas. Over and above 'race',

present day South African society is characterised by its violent nature. One figure which reflects this, is the figures released by the World Health Organisation in 1995. In South Africa there are 54 murders per 100,000 of population, the international average being 5.5 (*Venter, 1997*). South Africa is thus not only dealing with issues of poverty and addressing the effects of 'race' discrimination, it is also an extremely violent society.

Discourses of heterosexuality are constructed around heterosexist, patriarchal gendered patterns. South Africa is a patriarchal society and on a macro level women are essentialised and disempowered. There is a strong notion of the woman as the mother. Such notions, as was discussed earlier, are supported by biological, psychological, religious and other discourses. One or two South African examples illustrate this point. Within the non-racial liberation movement, women got constructed as mothers of the nation (*Enslin, 1993/4*). Women are constructed as mothers, bearing children, caring, and providing a home. Women are dis-empowered as reflected in their economic status; 38% of women are employed versus 62% of men (*Lessing, 1994*). There is also extreme sexual violence by men directed at women. As an example, a study done by the Johannesburg Southern Metropolitan Local Council in 2000, found that 4 in 10 men had sex with someone without her consent before he was 18; 8 out of 10 men respondents claimed women were responsible for 'causing' sexual violence; 3 in 10 men thought that women who were raped 'asked for it'; and 2 in 10 men thought that women 'enjoyed' being raped. The study makes clear the intersection of patriarchy with the violent nature of South African society and had 27 364

respondents in central Johannesburg Soweto and a number of informal settlements (*Pretorius, 2000*).

Another example of the disempowerment of women can be found in Christian discourses. A South African women priest says that Christians usually argue that:

> *if Jesus had not called a women as one of his disciples, why should the church ordain women priests?* (Jakobsen in, Germond and De Chruchy 1997: 70).

There are however changes in this macro positioning of women. In 1990, the African National Congress (ANC)- the current ruling party- issued a statement recognising that there had been centuries of women subjugation, while simultaneously negating the notion that it was only colonialism and industrialisation which introduced inequality into African society (*Wolpe, Quinlan and Martinez, 1997*). There seems to be an acknowledgement in this statement that South Africa is a patriarchal society. South Africa also became a signatory to the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) which calls for the elimination of discrimination against women in rural areas and adequate educational provision, and for the state to adopt appropriate measures to achieve these aims (*Wolpe, Quinlan and Martinez, 1997*). With the coming into power of the new Government, macro constructions of women are shifting to empower women.

South African women may internalise essentialised, dis-empowered macro constructions of women. One study done on domestic workers in the Eastern Cape in 1978/9, makes this clear. Domestic workers, who are predominantly black, felt trapped in a condition of subjugation and immobility within which they are subject to intensive exploitation. This exploitation is expressed in these women's sense of being slaves, of relative depravation, of leading wasted lives, which they are powerless to change (*Cock, 1989*). The intersection between especially 'race' and gender is also illustrated by the history of South African women's struggles. These struggles also illustrate how women started questioning patriarchy. The point of departure for womens' organisations was to start with 'womens' needs' and their understanding of reality and to move at their pace - among others self-help groups, play groups, first-aid and literacy projects (*Patel, 1987*). Once women were part of organisations they developed a critical consciousness, confidence, organisational skills, a sense of female solidarity and a political consciousness. Turning to South African masculinities, Epstein (*1998*) argues that the gender order in South Africa was solidified in ways that include being violent. From the study of Epstein (*1998*) it appears that South African masculinities share qualities of an earlier quoted study of Mac an Ghaill (*1994*) on the common elements within British high school masculinities, that of misogyny, heterosexism and homophobia. In addition, South African masculinities are marked by the quality of being violent.

South African society also constructs the 'homosexual other'. Once again biological, psychological, religious and other discourses operate. As an example

of biological and psychological discourses pathologising 'the homosexual', 'aversion therapy treatment' was administered to gay men in the South African Defence Force/SADF (*Committee of South African War Resisters, 1986/1987*). Religious discourses also quote verses from holy texts in order to construct 'the homosexual' as sinful and as evil and as an example, gay and lesbian people were withheld from serving public office. Andre Muller is the minister of a large congregation in Pretoria who are open to anyone, but attracts primarily gay and lesbian Christians. He has all the necessary academic qualifications, but because of his openly gay status, can not be ordained in one of the mainstream South African churches (*Muller in, Germond and de Gruchy, 1997*). There is also a rejection by the Muslim religion of homosexuality. Bobby- a 'drag' artist in Cape Town in the 60s- describes how his strict Muslim family rejected him because he is homosexual. His family used religion in motivating why they reject him (*Chetty in, Gevisser and Cameron, 1994*).

Shifts are occurring within macro constructions of homosexuality within Christian discourses. Archbishop Desmond Tutu says in the foreword to a recent book on homosexuality and Christianity in South Africa, that:

> *We reject them, treat them as pariahs, and push them to the confines of our church communities, and thereby we negate the consequences of their baptism and ours. We make them doubt that they are children of God, and this must nearly be the ultimate blasphemy* (Tutu in, Germond and De Gruchy, 1997: Foreword).

'Race' also enters discourses of homosexuality. Homosexuality is constructed as being 'un-African'. In the 1991 Supreme Court criminal trial of Winnie Mandela- a well-known black activist and former wife of past-president of Nelson Mandela- it was argued by her defence team that homosexuality equates sexual abuse and that it is a 'white, colonising depredation' of 'heterosexual black culture' (*Holmes in, Gevisser and Cameron, 1994*). Homosexuality is thus constructed as something corruptible, it is associated with Western culture, and as 'foreign' to African culture. Homosexuality is in this way linked to Western ideas and 'oppressive' of African cultures. As was explained earlier, Western culture also constructs homosexuality as the abnormal, sick and foreign 'other'. There is thus nothing 'inherently African' in these statements but they reflect another attempt to construct discursively homosexuality as unacceptable (*Dunton and Palmberg, 1996*).

What happens when the gays and lesbians internalise macro, pathologised constructions of homosexuality? OUT (previously the Gay and Lesbian Organisation-Pretoria/ GLO-P) runs a psychotherapeutic support group for gays and lesbians. Some of the themes that arose from this group included a sense of not having self worth, of hiding one's sexuality, of isolation, loneliness and despair (*Nel and Joubert, 1996*).

People can however oppose macro constructions of homosexuality. Individuals involved in the gay and lesbian movement serve as an example. The Gay

Association of South Africa (GASA) was established in 1982 with a constitution advocating non-racialism. Simon Nkoli- a well-known South African black gay and lesbian activist and now deceased - described his experiences after he joined GASA (*Gevisser and Cameron, 1994*). GASA was a movement dominated by white, middle class males, who refused to link the struggle of gays and lesbians with the political liberation struggle of South Africa. GASA, for example organised social events at venues where their black members were not allowed. Simon organised a support group for black gays and lesbians in 1983, but after his detention for political activities many of this group's members fled the country in the mistaken belief that he was detained for his gay and lesbian activities. In 1988, the Gay and Lesbian Organisation of the Witwatersrand (GLO-W) was formed and GLO-W attracted a significant black membership. Since its formation, GLO-W has been involved in various campaigns including organising the first South African Gay and Lesbian March in 1990 and drafting a manifesto outlining demands. Of interest is that in this march, messages of support were received from five regions of the African National Congress.

Turning to more micro, individual and specific realities, Tanya Chan Sam describes how her life is marked by different components living in a 'coloured' township in Cape Town. She became involved in gay and lesbian politics through anti-apartheid politics. She was involved in the Workers Organisation for Socialist Action (WOSA) and because of their unwillingness to take a stand on gay and lesbian issues, she joined GLO-W. As a woman living in a violent area she was also not safe on the streets. Her life was further marked by complications because

she is a teacher. In the community where she lived, teachers were looked up to and 'coming out' as a lesbian could have diminished her standing in the profession. After she 'came out' where she worked, the children were very supportive while the administrators chose to ignore her being lesbian (*Krouse and Berman, 1993*).

Further examples of gay and lesbian specific experiences are to be found in conducted interviews with twenty black gay men. What is remarkable about these accounts is how interviewees understand their sexuality through discursive practises based on gender, supporting what was described earlier on constructions of 'the black homosexual' in relation to 'the black man'. In these interviews there is a strong sense of gender role division is here seen in a gay relationship where there is a man (an *injonga*) and a wife (a *skesana*). As Linda, one of the gay interviewees said:

> *I was planning to get married in 1984, to my childhood sweetheart Oupa. With his parents and the help of my parents we had everything organised for the wedding. Things like the white wedding gown; my hubby's tuxedo suit; the wedding rings; the cookers- everything was in order* (Mc Lean and Ncgobo in, Gevisser and Cameron: 174).

Some other themes arising from these interviews include an early awareness of sex and 'coming out' experiences being traumatic. What is interesting is that gay sons were not rejected by their families neither were they seen as being 'un-African'.

South African discourses of homosexuality and heterosexuality thus also construct the normal heterosexual (and the implied patriarchal gendered patterns) and its' pathologised, evil and sinful 'other'- 'the homosexual'. With the new South African Constitution and subsequent interventions, there seems to be shifts occurring in both gender roles and the meaning of 'the homosexual'. Another defining quality arising from the above discussion is how macro identities of gender, 'race', sexual orientation, and economic status intersect. In described experiences of Tanya Chan Sam it was seen that one is not only lesbian, but also a woman, of a certain profession, living in a certain 'raced' and economic community. In the description of her specific experiences and that of Simon Nkoli, it is clear how they had to fight for equality on the basis of their sexuality while also fighting apartheid. Tanya also had to negotiate being a woman, under patriarchy, as living in a very violent area. Furthermore, she had to negotiate the perceptions of lesbians in her career. If she were a white lesbian, probably then from a higher economic area, she would probably not have had to negotiate her existence in the same ways.

One could also argue that identity constructions of 'the homosexual' and 'the heterosexual' as well as 'the black' and 'the white', in South Africa, would be marked by earlier described unconscious processes. Regarding 'race', and as example, the reported findings of Cock (*1989*) on experiences of black domestic workers, do suggest unconscious meanings of 'the black' as 'the slave'. Respondents reported feeling relative depravation and feeling socially incompetent. Respondents also reported feeling like slaves and leading wasted

lives. There is a sense of what Fanon (*1986*) describes of 'the black' suspending self-worth.

I now turn the discussion to how the discourses of homosexuality and heterosexuality are constructed within South African schools.

As with all other spheres of South African life, official 'race' discrimination in education ended formally in 1994. Apartheid education legislation included the Bantu Education Act passed in 1953. Some of the consequences of this Act were that black schools were taken out of the hands of the church and other non-state bodies and placed in the hands of the apartheid state. Syllabus revision was centralised and the school syllabus stressed obedience, loyalty, ethnic and national separation, acceptance of allocated social roles, piety and identification with rural culture. Schools were as far as possible reorganised on a fragmented tribal basis. They were 'Bantu-ised' in terms of personnel and medium of instruction. At post-primary school level, schools were as far as possible located away from urban areas. The cost per student was reduced by means of, inter alia, double sessions, employing more under-qualified teachers, paying minimal salaries to black teachers, discriminating even further against women teachers, pegging the amount of the state's financial contribution, extracting more from the black communities themselves, phasing out school feeding schemes, and abolishing caretaker posts and making students responsible for school cleaning. The over-all rationale of this Act was to fit schools into the apartheid system (*Kallaway, 1984*).

As H. F Verwoerd, the Minister of Native Affairs at that time said:

> *When I have control over native education, I will reform it so that natives will be taught from childhood that equality with Europeans are not for them. There is no place for the Bantu in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour* (Verwoerd cited in, Christie, 1986: 12).

Nineteen Education departments were created- five administering white education, one each for Indians and coloureds, eleven for black education and one umbrella body controlling the purse strings and setting different 'norms and standards' for 'the rest'. An example of how equality was violated and how black people were discriminated against, is the much lower state expenditures for black education. Even in 1980, a black pupil received R1 from the state for R 10 spent on a white pupil. A further example of race inequalities is the teacher-pupil ratio of 19:1 for whites versus that of 45:1 for blacks (*Mncwabe, 1993*).

There has been fierce opposition to apartheid education. Probably the best-known example of such opposition is the 1976 Soweto uprisings. In 1975, the then Minister of Bantu Education instructed that half of the subjects in Standard five and Grade one must be taught in the medium of Afrikaans. On 13 June 1996, about twenty thousand people marched through Soweto (a black township outside Johannesburg) in protest against apartheid education. The police opened fire and the first victim, Hector Peterson, died. Uprisings spread across the country followed by government bannings and state violence (*Christie, 1986*). These

uprising and others had an impact on reforms within apartheid education. After the Soweto uprising, the Education and Training Act of 1979 was drafted to replace the Bantu Education Act of 1953. The Education and Training Act however maintained the tradition of separate education for separate 'race' groups and perpetuated the 'tradition' of whites taking decisions over black education and lives (*Mncwabe, 1993*).

Under the new democratic government, apartheid education formally came to an end. The preamble to the South African Schools Act, 1996 reads:

> *WHEREAS the achievement of democracy has consigned to history the past system of education which was based on racial inequality and segregation; and*
>
> *WHEREAS this country requires a new national system of schools which will redress past injustices in educational provision, provide an education of progressively high quality for all learners and in so doing lay a strong foundation for the development of all our peoples' talents and capabilities, advance the democratic transformation of society, combat racism and sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance, contribute to the eradication of poverty and the economic well-being of society, protect and advance our diverse cultures and languages, uphold the rights of all learners, parents and educators, and promote their acceptance of responsibility for the organisation, governance and funding of schools in partnership with the State; and*

> *WHEREAS it is necessary to set uniform norms and standards for the education of learners at schools and the organisation, governance and funding of schools throughout the Republic of South Africa* (Department of Education, 1996b).

Racial discrimination in education is thus officially stopped by the passing of this Act and the repealing of apartheid legislation. However, as was discussed earlier, the effects of years and years of race discrimination do not disappear with the passing of anti-discriminatory laws. South African schools suffer a lack of very basic facilities. In a School Register of Needs Survey, 32 000 education institutions were located, visited and mapped. One or two figures from this survey illustrate the effects of apartheid on a material level. In the Eastern Cape Province, 4505 schools do not have power supplies at their schools (versus 1340 which does), 19% has telephones, there were 46 785 learner toilet shortages, and 823 schools were in a very weak or weak condition (*Department of Education, 1997b*).

The majority of schools facing these structural inadequacies have black learners and are situated in rural areas. Apartheid also resulted in an education management crisis. Apartheid legacies in education include poor management to the collapse of teaching and learning. In many schools, decades of resistance to apartheid discredited many conventional educational practices such as punctuality, preparation for lessons, innovation, individual attention and peer group learning. Some school principals were discredited as being 'part of the system'. In large numbers of schools information systems have also broken down -including record

keeping and financial management systems (*Department of Education, 1996a*).

Over and above material, management and administrative problems, present day South African schooling is faced with a range of other social problems. Schools operate in a broader context of extreme violence. The Physical Resource Department of the Western Cape Educational Department found in a survey that 154 schools in their province are in 'red area' violence zones and that 77 had to make use of security services (*Wolpe, Quinlan and Martinez, 1997*). A general climate of violence spills over into pupil cultures represented in the presence of violent youth gangs. Youth engage in for example a culture of 'jackrolling' where gangs of young male youth abduct young women and gang rape them (*Wolpe, Quinlan and Martinez, 1997*). The violent nature of broader society and some pupil cultures make the discipline within schools extremely difficult. Teachers become afraid to discipline boys as there is a real chance of boys physically assaulting the teachers (*Truscott, 1994*). This lack of an ordered and disciplined environment works against the creation of a culture of learning. What further makes a culture of learning difficult, are the social disruptions in townships (such as boycotts). Schooling becomes irregular and many learners attend only two to three hours per day (*Truscott, 1994*).

Schools are also faced with a high rate of teenage pregnancies and high drop-out rates. The average teenage pregnancy rate in 1992 was 330 for every 1000 women younger than 19 years of age (*Truscott, 1994*). There is a high probability of these pregnant girls/women dropping out of school. In 1993, the drop-out rate among

black youth was estimated to be 66% and 43% among whites (*Wolpe, Quinlan and Martinez, 1997*). Even where learners do succeed to progress to Standard 10, in 1996 there was a pass rate of just over 50% (*Wolpe, Quinlan and Martinez, 1997*). The picture gets even worse. Matriculants do not have good prospects of finding jobs as they are perceived not to be equipped with the technological skills required by a global economy. There are also limited prospects of employment, given increasing unemployment rates.

In order to meet the conditions in present day South African schools, there are massive educational interventions. In discussing these interventions, I cover data up to 1998; other developments did take place which I do not cover.

To redress the material discrepancies within schools the National Norms and Standards for School Funding plan was announced in October 1998. This plan allocates the lion's share of money from provincial departments to the poorest schools- schools in townships and in rural areas. Funds for buildings, repairs, stationary, equipment and hostels will be channelled to schools with the greatest needs (*Pretorius, 1998*). A new curriculum- Curriculum 2005- was also introduced. In the introduction to the Department of Education Curriculum Policy Document it is stated that:

> *In the past the curriculum has perpetuated race, class, gender and ethnic divisions and has emphasised separateness, rather than common citizenship and nationhood. It is therefore imperative that the curriculum*

be restructured to reflect the values and principles of our new democratic society (Department of Education, 1997 a: 1).

Curriculum 2005 aims to put in place a curriculum emphasising democracy and non-discrimination. It promotes lifelong learning and puts in place a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) which-inter alia- recognises learning whether it takes place in formal or informal settings. There is a shift from a curriculum which is content based, to one which is based on outcomes or to Outcomes Based Education (OBE). Results are specified at the end of the learning process and the processes outlined which take learners to these endpoints. Learners- and not students or pupils- thus need to achieve certain measurable outcomes to obtain the relevant qualification. This process is neither confined to a certain time or setting.

On 20 February 1997, the Ministry of Education's Culture of Learning, Teaching and Service Campaign (COLTS) was launched. There are two main categories under which programmes of this campaign will fall. The first is building a positive perception of schooling by focusing primarily on finding, recognising and publicising examples of best practise in schools. In such schools, there will be learning free of violence, intimidation fear and threat; there will be respect of teachers and students; a climate of free enquiry, innovation and professionalism as well as community involvement. The second category is improving conditions in the schools where the focus will be on the professional development of teachers, ensuring scholarly conduct of learners, the elimination of crime in schools, the provision of basic resources to all schools, and the establishment and training of

school governing bodies. COLTS aims to achieve, in the year 1999, that all teachers and learners attend school for a full day, a full day week and a full term; that teachers prepare for classes for all learners and mark their work; that learners complete their homework assignment; that all schools work for their communities because all governing bodies are elected and working; all schools have the basic resource package to make meaningful learning possible; all schools are free of crime; and that a South African Education Charter is adopted by all school governing bodies, teacher organisations and student organisations (*Department of Education, 1997b*).

Within the Gauteng province the issues of material conditions, management issues within schools and other social problems, could be illustrated by a project done by Khulisa Management services. They were contracted by the Gauteng Department of Education in 1997 to do a baseline survey of 102 schools in the Kathorus Special Presidential Lead Project (*Khulisa Management Services, 1997*). Kathorus include the areas of Kathlehong, Thokoza and Vosloorus. A baseline report was produced and it summarises school management, governance and assessment situations. The methodology included distributing a qualitative and quantitative profile instrument to all participating schools and to verify the data and to examine some of the issues more in-depth in 15 schools, who were representatively selected for fieldwork visits. During these visits, a principal, teacher, learner, parent and non-teaching staff member were interviewed.

In terms of the baseline report and the issues of material conditions, management

as well as other social problems, the following could be noted. Of the schools, 93% were under-resourced. More than half of the schools indicated that they do not have at least one of the following facilities: home economics laboratory, library, science laboratory, school hall, technical workshops, fax machine, sports grounds. Thirty-five schools indicated that the conditions of their classrooms are poor. 50 schools have flushing toilets in poor condition, and the condition of running water is poor in 32 schools. While 9 out of the 15 principals interviewed thought that their school accommodation is adequate, the majority of teachers, parents, learners and non-teaching staff thought otherwise. The majority of schools indicated that sufficient resources are not available for the delivery of all programmes of learning and teaching. In particular, schools are poorly provisioned with multi-media resources, maths equipment and duplicating/photocopying equipment.

Regarding management issues, in the interviews done, there was agreement from the majority of participants that teachers are given the opportunity to participate in the management of the school. Principals commented on the lack of commitment from stakeholders, a need for fundraising training and a lack of communication between the school and stakeholders. Over 60% of schools have a development plan that takes into account clear mechanisms of stakeholder involvement, a staff development committee to review plans, clear implementation strategies and methods, and regular reporting on progress and resource and training needs. Regarding other social issues, schools reported a low annual number of thefts and of racial/political incidents. They receive approximately 6.8 complaints per year

from parents/community members regarding behaviour of learners. However in the in-depth interviews, all five stakeholder groups commented that theft/burglary and vandalism were among the worst problems in the school. Lastly, the matric pass rate in these areas in 1996 was below that of the Gauteng province: a 68.3% failure rate versus 42.24% for the province.

It thus seems that schools in Gauteng share many of the resource and management issues of schools within South Africa. One must also keep in mind the differences that could exist among schools categorised together; in the case of my study, those who are resourced and under-resourced. Carrim and Shalem (*1999*) states that:

> *there may be a temptation to homogenise these schools internally in South Africa as "black schools"..... outside South Africa, the temptation may be to homogenise these schools as "schools in developing countries"..... Yet, as these school "portraits" show, each school, albeit in a "black" and "developing" context, experiences very specific dynamics that are tied to the particularities of the forces, actors, and relations within that school* (Carrim and Shalem, 1999: 74).

As examples, under-resourced schools may not face the same degree of violence or if they do, experiences of violence differ. For example, a school could face violence through their learners being traumatised by acts of violence, or they could experience actual acts of violence within the school.

In conclusion regarding schools in South Africa, there are two distinct categories, those with relatively adequate resources and those without. Such a distinction stems from apartheid education and applies to material resources but also to management practises, conventional educational practises such as preparation for lessons, and social problems such as violence and applying discipline. Interventions are taking place. There are strategies to erode material inequalities, a curriculum emphasising democracy, a framework to acknowledge life long learning, and strategies to create a culture of learning and teaching. Lastly, one should be careful not to homogenise under-resourced schools or resourced schools and even though, as categories of schools, they are confronted with very similar issues, each of these schools has its own specific dynamics.

I now want to discuss the construction of gendered and sexual patterns within South African schools. On a general note, there is very limited South African research into gender issues within schools, and no study on the situation of gay and lesbian learners. In this regard, my study is important because it attempts to describe and 'break the silences' surrounding gay and lesbian South African learners, in particular.

On a policy level, the already quoted South African Constitution specifies gender and sexual orientation as a basis for non-discrimination. However, both the South African Schools Act and the Curriculum Policy Document highlight 'race' and gender identities as basis for non-discrimination, and omits specifying sexual orientation. There is thus a prioritisation of 'race' and gender identities for non-

discrimination. Over and above this prioritisation, it can be argued that the Preamble of the South African Schools Act of 1996 deals with equity and justice in education provision, on the level of distribution of resources and of access to the system. It does not prioritise addressing the construction of gender or sexual identities. It is possible to say that the new South African education system reduces educational equality to notions of measurable parity and distributive criteria and that it ignores processes of institutional change and the effects of social relations of power and domination in educational institutions (*Mc Lennan, 1993:4*). It does not seem that the construction of gendered and sexual orientation inequities will be a priority in the immediate future.

A Gender Equity Task Team (GETT) was set up by the Minister of Education. This Task Team finished its report in October 1997. In 2002, a Directorate for Gender Equality, within the National Department of Education, is responsible for executing the Task Team's recommendations. The Task Team's recommendations set priorities for all teacher training courses to include:

- theoretical and experiential knowledge about the construction of gender in different historical, economic and cultural contexts;
- that all teacher education courses include work to foster a full understanding of human rights issues and the inclusion of sexual orientation is specified;
- that a training programme should be developed for all department officials on gender issues;
- that a position paper on Gender Equity in Curriculum 2005 be drawn up to provide a comprehensive framework for teachers, parents and learners to

understand the full meaning of gender equity in the curriculum;

- that a clearing house on South African specific research into issues of gender equity in education be established and that this research includes school based action research to identify practices that perpetuate unequal gender relations; and,
- that a school's policy and a set of standardised procedures and protocols, for intervening in child abuse and all forms of sexual harassment, be developed by the Department (*Wolpe, Quinlan and Martinez, 1997*).

What is significant in the Report is that gender patterns are linked to sexuality issues *(Wolpe, Quinlan and Martinez, 1997: 53)*. Furthermore, there is an acknowledgement of the constructed nature of identity and how inequalities are constructed at both a macro and a micro level. The GETT Report's recommendations, at present, can potentially assist in addressing both the constructions of unequal gender patterns as well as unequal sexualities. It however remains to be seen how much of the recommendations materialise especially in the context of an emphasis of policy documents on equal access and resource distribution.

South African teacher composition reflects broader societal patriarchal and heterosexist norms. The majority of South African teachers are women but they are under-represented within authority positions. In 1997, 73.5% of primary school teachers were women. Males amount to 36% of teachers but they hold 58% of principal posts and 69% of deputy principal jobs. Differentiation between

women and male teachers regarding the Government Home Owner Scheme were only eradicated in 1992 and up to 1996 married women teachers were excluded from this Scheme (*Wolpe, Quinlan and Martinez, 1997*).

Unpublished qualitative research on the experiences of 150 black women teachers, over a period of four years, in Eastern Cape Secondary schools revealed that woman teachers' current working conditions replicated their experiences as learners. They all said that as school girls they were not expected to think critically and that now as teachers they must leave all decisions to male teachers. Women also tended to doubt their capacity to fulfil leadership roles (*Wolpe, Quinlan and Martinez, 1997*).

Very little or no account exists of South African gay and lesbian teachers. In an edition of Exit (*Highland Publications, 1998*)- one of the largest South African gay and lesbian newspapers- a support group for gay and lesbian teachers was advertised. The experiences of this group however are not recorded and since 2001 they no longer advertise in this publication.

What does South African learner composition and interaction look like? Very little literature is available on how masculinities and femininities are constructed within South African schools. In a study of how masculinities are constructed within white boarding schools in Kwa Zulu Natal in 1880-1930, it is described how masculinities are constructed around being very competitive and highly disciplined and to strive for economic and social power (*Morrell, 1993 4*). Such

notions of masculinity are supported by the ethos of Christian National education which underpinned apartheid; males being constructed as being extremely authoritarian, hierarchical, and paternalistic (*Truscott, 1994*).

Thompson's (*in Carrim, 2000*) study dealt with the construction of masculinities at an independent Johannesburg boys' school. The school is predominantly white, English, and Anglican and the study aimed to construct a qualitative account of some learners' experiences in their interactions with the school culture. It made use of an initial questionnaire eliciting themes, which were more closely examined during interviews. From the responses to the questionnaire, it became evident that sport, achievement and sexual orientation were the most significant issues. There was a contradiction between the issues that arose from the questionnaires versus that from the interviews. From the questionnaires it seemed that 'race' was a relatively minor issue. When it was probed in the interviews, it emerged that there was large-scale racial separation and a wide acceptance of the 'inevitability of racial incompatibility'. All in all, the type of male in this school was heterosexual, sporty, socially able and an achiever. Socially able includes being heterosexual, sporty and the position of one's sport within the sporting hierarchy (rugby being on top). In addition, it included one's 'race' and the belief that one's 'race' is an 'unfortunate normal' in one's social abilities. In this finding, there is South African support for unconscious constructions of 'the black/slave' and 'the white/master'. Un-consciously, 'race' determines allegedly one's social competency, with 'the black' being incompetent and 'the white' being dominant. Furthermore, regarding achievement, it was not just defined as academic but as an

'all roundedness'. The primary mechanism for defining it was the peer group and its' strata included being homophobic and not being seen with the gay boys, 'essentialising' gay learners as being 'feminine', discriminating against learners from religions other than Christianity, being xenophobic and valuing a very narrow definition of South African culture (outdoors, sporty and so on).

From the above-mentioned two studies by Thompson and Morrell it does seem that, within well resourced schools, masculinities are constructed which include homophobia, 'sportyness' and fitting into patriarchal masculine constructions. Furthermore, within predominantly (but not exclusively) white schools, one's 'race' greatly influences one's social abilities supporting unconscious processes of 'the white/master' and 'the black/slave'.

Expanding on girl learner constructions, given general levels of poverty, more among black people, girls must stay home to look after their younger brothers and sisters while parents work, or must go to rural areas to assist other family members (*Wolpe, Quinlan and Martinez, 1997*). This reinforces domestic duties of girls. There are further constructions of girl learners as passive. In the classroom girls are expected to behave in a quiet, unproblematic manner whereas boys are seen as experimental, outgoing and active. Girls' uniforms also constrain their physical movement contributing to the notion of their passivity. 'Boys' sport' also receives more acknowledgements than those of girls, further feeding into the idea of boys being active. Playgrounds also construct the passivity of girls where boys more than likely will engage in physical activity and girls engaging in passive

activity (*Wolpe, Quinlan and Martinez, 1997*).

It does seem that the construction of masculine and feminine learners reflect uneven power relations. From existing accounts it appears that boys have power over girls and that masculinity is constructed to include the elements of misogyny and compulsory heterosexuality. In a study by the National Progressive Primary Health Care Network (*Wolpe, Quinlan and Martinez, 1997*) it was found that sexual activity starts at a young age and takes place within unequal power relations, with boys having social power over girls. In rural areas, the norm is for girls to be active at the age of 12 or 13. Girl respondents in this study said that boys 'like to hurt us' and boy respondents felt pressure to conform to a masculine role. Asking what it means to be a boy, respondents - aged between 12 and 13- said to have sex with a women. Boys said that they had relationships because they wanted to conform to notions of being a 'real man' and not to feel different from such a norm. What is apparent from these findings is that rural, and one would assume majority black boys, are socialised into misogyny and compulsory heterosexuality.

Accounts from gay and lesbian learners are scarce or non-existent. One or two accounts of the experiences of gay and lesbian learners do however exist. In Port Elizabeth, a gay learner was expelled from his school because he participated in 'drag shows'. This was seen as an embarrassment for his school and used to expel him (*Coetzee, 1997*). Another recent example is that of gay and lesbian learners at a school in Kwa-Zulu Natal who were labelled 'spirits of the devil'. They claim

that they were put in a different class because of their sexual orientation. One of the gay learners said that teachers were so homophobic that they overtly discriminated against gay and lesbian learners. Life was made unbearable by being ignored when wanting to contribute in class or being on the receiving end of practical jokes. When questioned about the incident, school authorities said that there were no gays at the school, that there was no problem of homophobia in the school as they were a 'multi-racial' school. The school principal said that he knew the new South African Constitution and that gays and lesbians can not be discriminated against (*Mpofu, 1997*).

Although no formal intervention or study dealing with the experiences of gay and lesbian learners exists, the then National Coalition for Gay and Lesbian Equality (NCGLE, now called the Equality Project) did make a submission on gay and lesbian learners to the GETT (*Wolpe, Quinlan and Martinez, 1997*). NCGLE also passed a motion at its 1998 conference to address the issues of gay and lesbian learners and a NCGLE Education Task Team operated for a short while in Gauteng. A gay and lesbian youth camp took place in September 1998 and experiences within schools were also discussed. These initiatives, however, are not systematic research nor can they presently be used to influence formal educational processes and policies. In 2002, none of these initial initiatives were carried forward and there is no programme work planned, by the Equality Project, to intervene into experiences of South African gay and lesbian learners.

The fourth level of interaction, in the construction of gendered patterns and

sexualities, to be looked at is the curriculum. In a study done as part of a Working Paper commissioned by the National Education Policy Investigation in 1990, gender differences in different subjects become apparent (*Truscott, 1994*). In this study, available data was assembled to enumerate some basic facts and trends about girls and women in education. Ad-hoc group of girls and women were interviewed to gain some insight into the experiences of girls and women in the education system. Available literature (in South Africa, Britain and Tanzania) was reviewed in order to situate the issue in the context of the South African struggle and debate around education and to relate this to debates and projects elsewhere on gender in education. The study found marked gender differences. In Standards 5 to 10, in subjects such as Commerce and Home Economics there were more girls than boys; in subjects such as history there is a male bias and stories about male heroic wars dominate. Several woman participants in the study complained that they have been actively discouraged to do maths and science in schools. The only careers mentioned for girls were nursing, teaching and clerical work and they were discouraged from entering the business world as it was presented as 'too ruthless - a man's world'.

After South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994, there was a need to develop norms and standards, for the curriculum, as determined by the National Education Policy Act (*Department of Education, 1997a*). Frameworks were developed on which schools may build their learning programmes. These frameworks are contained in Policy Documents.

Policy Documents are divided into phases. Phases are divided into learning areas, with specific Outcomes that include assessment criteria, range statements and performance indicators. In the Senior Phase Policy Document, under the Learning Area of Life Orientation, a close reference to gender and sexuality issue is under Specific Outcome 2, that is to use skills and display attitudes and values that improve relationships in family, group and community. Under this Specific Outcome there is a performance indicator of identifying different kind of relationships that can exist between the sexes.

The GETT also called for developing position papers on each learning area of Curriculum 2005 to guide teachers in developing learning outcomes for gender equity (*Wolpe, Quinlan and Martinez, 1997*). These papers should include considering where, how and when womens' and girls' experiences have been excluded from the knowledge traditionally valued in the learning area; make explicit in the curriculum where gender issues and the construction of masculinities and femininities should be addressed; consider how the learning area can contribute to broadening both girls' and boys' access to knowledge and ways of being beyond those endorsed by the dominant culture. These recommendations are commendable in that they hold the possibility of including into the formal curriculum, how gender is constructed and the links between gender and sexuality. There is thus hope for a curriculum equipping learners to understand societal processes in the construction of gender and sexualities.

The last area of interaction to be dealt with is that of pedagogy. In the same study

of Truscott (1994), the feeling was that the way in which lessons were taught were gendered. Participants pointed out that the typical process of highly individualised learning in South African schools is more orientated to society's perception of 'male qualities' than 'female qualities'. Teachers are said to respond more to boys in class than girls. As part of the project student teachers were asked to tape-record their maths lessons with secondary school students. It was found that the number of teacher interactions with boys was two to three times higher than with girls. The form of mediation was also gendered. For example, when asked by girls to explain something, student teachers asked the boys to help the girls. Girls were seldom asked to explain to the class how they reached their answers.

Given the description of the five levels of interaction within South African schools it can be said that these schools have an ethos of patriarchy and heterosexism. The patriarchal and heterosexist order however do not remain constant or affect everyone in exactly the same way. Poverty, violence, a non- culture of learning, a lack of resources, and a re-allocation of present resources all have an impact on creating a 'gender and sexual orientation equal' society and school system. As examples rural schools, with almost exclusively black learners, are marked with girls having to drop out of schools because their parents can not afford it. These girls must fulfil domestic duties at home, their schools are probably badly equipped, have a non-culture of learning, do have under qualified teachers who also reflect broader patriarchal values. If a girl learner in such a scenario is lesbian, she would have to steer clear of boys' efforts, who define their own masculinity by having violent misogynistic sex with women. If people suspect that

she is lesbian, there is also a chance of her being called 'un-African'. On the other hand, a white gay boy in a well-resourced school in an urban area, will receive education from well qualified teachers and his school will have facilities which equip him with an education for a range of possible career options. If this boy is gay he could suffer homophobic abuse. However, if he 'looks big' and has a 'masculine social presence' such abuse may not even occur. The point is that there is a range of macro, constructed identities. There is also evidence that 'the black' is constructed as 'the slave' and 'the white' as 'the master'. Agents position themselves in terms of these constructions and for the purposes of this study, the most prominent of variables at play in such constructions are those of 'race', gender, sexual orientation and resourced/under-resourced schools.

This study is, therefore, based on the understanding that gay and lesbian learners have to negotiate a heterosexist and homophobic school environment. These gay and lesbian learners will not have same experiences and their experiences are mainly influenced by 'race', gender and level of resources. Their experiences will further be shaped by unconscious processes, by establishing I/other identities and difference, and the ritual of the examination. Their experiences thus will be multi-layered, complex and unique.

2. METHODOLOGY

My fieldwork consisted of interviews with selected gay/lesbian respondents as well as some fieldwork in their school environment. The interviews with the gay and lesbian respondents, and based on my theoretical assumptions, aimed to probe individual experiences of these respondents both inside and outside of their schools. As my interest was not to prove an empirical relation between concrete measurable variables but on individual experiences, my methodology is qualitative. My methodology is:

> *dealing with the direct experiences of people in certain contexts* (Cohen and Manion, 1994: 26).

Even though the focus is on actual peoples' experiences and not to make generalisations, there is a framework from which to assess the explanatory value of my descriptions. In this, the described experiences are not only a series of good stories which are completely relative and can not be judged (*Hall and Gieben, 1992*). The described experiences are constituted by theoretical understandings of the nature of late modern Western societies of realities being fractured; of 'race', gender and 'level of resources' variables having significant impact on individual experiences; certain discourses' construction of 'the homosexual' and 'the heterosexual'; how these constructions are re/produced within schools as well as in the South African context; and, then, how individuals might position themselves within all these resulting in the described individual experiences.

Regarding fieldwork in the school of the selected gay or lesbian respondent, I was also led by theory described in Section 1. In the theoretical overview of discourses of 'the homosexual' and 'the heterosexual' within schools, I identified five levels of schooling which could give rise to a heterosexist and patriarchal ethos (ethos being the sixth level): policies, teacher composition and teacher interactions in the school, learner composition and learner interactions in the school, curriculum and pedagogy. I did selective fieldwork regarding some of these levels in order to apply theory to corresponding practical situations and to offer a description of the macro, school structure of the selected gay or lesbian respondent. It allowed me to compare gay/lesbian learners' own reported experiences with what happens in their school. In so doing, I added validity to reported gay and lesbian learners' experiences by comparing it with external reports (*Cohen and Manion, 1994*). In relation to the identified six levels of schooling, I did further fieldwork around policies, learner composition and learner interaction, and some work on pedagogy, and teacher composition and teacher interaction. Reasons for not doing work on curriculum or more extensive work on teacher composition and teacher interaction, or pedagogy, are that it would have made my fieldwork too extensive.

The fieldwork that I have done on policies was an interview with respective principals in which I asked them if they have any gender policies in their school. Regarding learner composition and learner interaction, I did interviews with a group of boys and a group of girls from the class of the specific gay or lesbian respondent. These interviews aimed to describe constructions made of 'the homosexual' and 'the heterosexual', in broader society and on the level of the

school. I further gathered data on learner composition and learner interaction by doing two classroom observations as well as a playground observation. In the classroom observations, I focused on one issue, that of how different genders entered the classroom and its possible patriarchal constructions. In the playground observations, my focus was on patriarchal constructions by boys engaging in more physical activities than girls. The fieldwork that I did on pedagogy was during the classroom observations and included observing if gay and lesbian respondents received any special attention, and if boys were constructed as natural troublemakers and as experts. I also gathered some data on teacher composition by obtaining the relative number of male/female teachers in authority positions and asking the gay or lesbian respondents of their experiences of teacher composition and teacher interaction.

My study, over and above being qualitative, falls within the area of gay and lesbian studies. Abelove, Barale and Halperin (*1993*) define gay and lesbian studies as:

> *it intends to establish the analytical centrality of sex and sexuality within many different fields on inquiry* (Abelove, Barale and Halperin, 1993: xvi).

My study strongly emphasises the centrality of sexuality, both for 'the heterosexual' and for 'the homosexual', in broader society and in schools. Gay and lesbian studies are informed by resistance to homophobia and heterosexism. In this, it has a political nature but at the same time is also a field of scholarly

inquiry (*Abelove, Barale and Halperin, 1993*). I hope that my present study can contribute to interventions regarding the experiences of gay and lesbian learners within schools. My hope is that the described experiences lead to addressing heterosexism and homophobia in schools, as I was motivated by such reasons to embark on this study.

2.1. Variables

I identified the variables of 'race', gender and 'level of resources'. The variable of gender was identified in my description of discourses of sexuality where there are constructions of 'the heterosexual' and 'the homosexual' as binary opposites. In discourses of 'the heterosexual', men and women are constructed differently and patriarchy is constructed. Men and women, or girls and boys, have different experiences within patriarchal discourses. It follows that gays could have different experiences from lesbians. Furthermore it became apparent in my theoretical framework and fieldwork that there is a close intersection between gender and sexuality. As described in the work of Connell (*1992*), gay men are constructed as not being masculine because of their choice of a man as a sexual object. In my fieldwork it also became apparent that some of the lesbian respondents view themselves as 'men' while some of the gay respondents view themselves as 'women'.

The variable of 'race' was included because South Africans were officially classified into different 'race' groups up to 1994. Presently, there are efforts to address years of official 'race' discrimination and 'race' issues continue to be prioritised. In my theoretical overview, I indicated the prevalence of 'race' issues in South Africa. I have also indicated how important 'race' is on levels of the unconscious and in I/other identities. I focus on the differences between white and black people and do not include 'coloured' and Indian people in the definition of black. Including such further differences could have made my fieldwork too extensive for a study on this level. The variable of 'race' was furthermore included

because of its intersections with sexuality, seen in statements such as homosexuality being 'un-African', for example.

Closely related to discourses of 'race' are discourses of 'level of resources'. One of the consequences of apartheid was discrimination against black people on an economic level. As an example and as mentioned in the theoretical overview, this could also be seen in allocating money to schools. As experiences differ in different economic contexts, the variable of 'level of resources' was included. While black people have been economically disadvantaged under apartheid, it is not presently true that all black learners attend under-resourced schools. After 1994, a significant amount of black learners started attending previously white schools. It could also be that white learners attend under-resourced schools. I assume that by far the majority of white learners attend resourced schools and therefore did not include a white gay and a white lesbian respondent, from under-resourced schools, in my sample.

2.2. Sampling

I made use of purposive sampling where:

> *researchers handpick the cases to be included in the sample based on their judgement of typicality. In this way, they build up a sample that is satisfactory to their specific needs* (Cohen and Manion, 1994: 89).

I identified specific 'types of learners' based on my variables. I identified and included a white gay and lesbian from resourced schools, a black gay and lesbian from resourced schools and a black gay and lesbian from under-resourced schools. As already said, theoretically I also had to include a white gay and lesbian from an under-resourced school but I assumed that actually there are only a small number of such learners.

I experienced more difficulty than anticipated in identifying my respondents. My initial sense was that it would be relatively easy because of working in a gay/lesbian community group and being connected to the South African gay and lesbian movement and gay and lesbian organisations. I identified respondents in the following ways:

- I identified the white gay respondent from a resourced school through a student that completed a dissertation on gay men and stress related issues. The researcher put me into contact with the respondent. I obtained the respondent, and his principals' permission, after which I proceeded with my fieldwork;

- I obtained details about the white lesbian respondent from a resourced school, through the lesbian group in the organisation that I work for. I first got a name of a lesbian who has left school a year previously and through her, the name of a lesbian still at school. She gave me her permission but her school principal refused me permission to do fieldwork. He said that the school allowed for no studies to be done. I then got another name from the person who gave me the first name. I contacted the new person, she gave me her permission after which I got her school principal's permission for my fieldwork;
- I identified a black gay from a resourced school through people working at the then National Coalition for Gay and Lesbian Equality (NCGLE, and now called the Equality Project). The NCGLE had a camp for gay youth in 1998 and I was forwarded a list of about 7 names. I contacted a learner from this list, got his permission, did all the fieldwork in his school with the exception of a last planned classroom observation. At that point final examinations started and classes stopped. As the learner was in Grade 12, I could not do the last classroom observation. I identified a new respondent through people I know from my organisational work. I had a personal meeting with him where I obtained his permission after which I got permission from his school principal for my planned fieldwork;
- identifying the black lesbian from a resourced school was probably the most difficult. All avenues that I pursued did not produce a name in this category. Efforts included going to Soweto, linking up with lesbians that I know and going with them to houses of lesbians still at school. We did not have any luck in getting people at their homes. There was no other way to make contact as

these learners did not have telephones at their homes. I eventually started attending the services of a community church which has predominantly black gay and lesbian members. My hope was that I would at least meet someone who knew a black lesbian learner in a resourced school. I eventually got the name of a respondent and obtained her permission telephonically. After that, I got permission from the school principal to do my planned fieldwork;

- the first black lesbian from an under-resourced school identified, came from the previously mentioned list of the NCGLE. I could not complete my fieldwork as final year examinations started, classes stopped and the respondent finished school at the end of that year. Through this respondent I identified another lesbian in the same school, got her permission and completed my fieldwork in the school. At that point I already had permission from the school principal to do my fieldwork;
- the black gay respondent from an under-resourced school was identified through the first black lesbian mentioned under the previous point. I got his permission and then the permission of his school principal before proceeding to do the planned fieldwork.

Please note that in the rest of this document, I will assign a code to selected gay and lesbian respondents. The respondent will be indicated by firstly being gay or lesbian (G or L), secondly by 'race' (black- B, or white-W) and thirdly by resourced (R) or under-resourced (UR).

In terms of administering my instruments (questionnaires and interviews), the following difficulties were experienced:

- the interviews with the GWR and GBUR respondents took place in venues with high levels of background noise and where we were interrupted by people walking into the room where the interview was conducted. Background noises made transcriptions difficult. Both took place in the homes of the respondents. The interview with the GWR respondent took place first and I subsequently tried to do interviews in venues without these types of disturbances;
- I did the interview with the GBUR respondent towards the end of 1999 and the fieldwork in his school at the beginning of 2000. In this time, he dropped out of school and I did a follow up interview with the school principal on reasons why learners drop out of school;
- the interview with the LBUR respondent made use of an interpreter. When I confirmed her willingness to do the interview, she said that she was fluent in English. However, during the interview she said that the questions were difficult and that it would be easier if there was an interpreter;
- in the interviews with the first four principals (in the schools of the GWR, LWR, LBUR, and GBUR respondents) I spend too much time on contextual questions and not enough time on the most important questions on existence of gender policies and the issues around gender in the school. After being made aware of this, and in the schools of the GBR and LBR respondents, I spend significantly more time on gender related questions;
- in the interviews with the principals of the GWR and LBUR respondents I had to do a second interview as parts of my first interview got lost;

- in the interview with the principal of the GBUR respondent, I included questions on reasons why learners drop out of the school, an item not originally thought to be relevant for these interviews;
- I had to do an interview with a second group of girls in the school of the GWR respondent. The first interview was impossible to transcribe as I placed the tape recorder too far away from the group, making it impossible to hear what was said;
- in the group of boys, from the school of the GWR respondent, the GWR respondent was included. There were only five boys in the class and when I asked for nominations, all five boys were included. At that point I thought that I had to have five boys for this interview. The validity of this interview is greatly put at risk because of the presence of the GWR respondent. He is 'out' and answers from other group members could have been influenced by his presence;
- in both the groups of boys and girls from the school of the GWR respondent, not enough time was scheduled. To cause the least disruptions in the schooling programme, the interview was scheduled for their longest break. As these were part of my first interviews, I scheduled subsequent interviews with groups of boys and girls so that there would be enough time available.

The general procedure that I followed was to first make contact with the identified respondent. After I got his/her permission to do the planned interview with them, I sought permission from the school principal to conduct the other planned fieldwork in the school. Only when I had permission from both the principal as

well as the gay or lesbian respondent, did I proceed to do fieldwork. Regarding fieldwork in the school, I usually had a first meeting with the principal to make practical arrangements. At this point I would have finished my interview with the gay/lesbian respondent but this did not happen in all cases. It did take place in the case of the white gay and lesbian from resourced schools, the black gay from a resourced school, and the black gay from an under-resourced school. In the cases of the other respondents, I first did the work in their schools before I did the interviews with them. In the meeting where I made practical arrangements with the principal, I already knew the class and timetable of my respondent. I said that I needed to randomly select two classes in which I will do observations, and then these 'random selections' were a 'hard' subject ('rational', natural science subject like Mathematics) and a 'soft' subject ('emotional' subject like languages) that I knew my selected respondent will attend. I had to do this as I could not be open about wanting to observe classes of the selected gay and lesbian respondent.

On a more general note, when I made contact with the respective school principal, I said that my study deals with gender. Given the 'formal silencing' of sexual matters in the school, especially gay and lesbian sexuality, my chances of gaining access to the school could have been significantly lessened if I said that my study deals with sexuality (*Epstein, 1994*). Furthermore, given general homophobia and heterosexism, stating that it deals with gay and lesbian learners' experiences could also have made obtaining permission even more difficult. I could also not tell the principal that it deals with gay and lesbian experiences as s/he (the principal) could have asked why that specific school was selected and I would then

implicitly 'out' my respondent. Arranging the playground observation and the interview with the principal was without difficulties and we scheduled dates for this to happen.

2.3. Interview schedules

All instruments are attached as appendixes under 5.1.

2.3.1. Gay and lesbian respondents

I designed an interview schedule based on the theoretical overview. The aim was to obtain individual positionings within the described discourses, more specifically positionings within certain biological, psychological and religious discourses of 'the heterosexual' and 'the homosexual'. On a more micro school level, I sought their positionings on general qualities of learner sex talk as well as identified five levels of schooling which could give rise to heterosexism and homophobia i.e. policies, teacher composition and interaction, learner composition and interaction, pedagogy and curriculum. I also focused on 'coming out' experiences, and being asked to justify themselves and being questioned. Furthermore I asked questions on the intersection between 'race' and sexual orientation, participation in broader political struggles as gay and lesbian people, their meanings of South African constitutional protection on the basis of sexual orientation, their meanings of present day South African efforts to empower women, and their meanings of attending a resourced/under-resourced school. A shortcoming of this interview schedule was not to ask the respondents their positions on inter-racial dating. Including such a question could have elicited insights into the importance of 'race' on an unconscious level, opposition and desire, and constructions of 'the master' and 'the slave'. My interview schedule can best be described as a semi-structured interview. The questions were specified in advance and I probed answers according to how I saw fit. It was thus not completely structured in that my probes were not specified (*Cohen and Manion, 1994*).

The following items were included in the interview schedule:

- the construction of 'the heterosexual' through biological discourses of men being physically stronger than women and therefore protectors while women are natural mothers and caregivers; psychological discourses where there is a splitting of 'the feminine' and 'the homosexual' from masculinities; and fundamentalist religious discourses where women are constructed as evil. I also focused on shifts in present day South African society to empower women;
- the construction of 'the homosexual' through biological discourses of what causes homosexuality as well as the stigmatisation of unfit gay and lesbian parents; psychological discourses of gay and lesbian people being abnormal; and religious discourses of gay and lesbian people being evil and sinners. I also focused on homosexuality being 'un-African' (or the intersections between 'race' and sexual orientation) and participation of gay and lesbian people in broader political struggles as well as South African constitutional protection on the basis of sexual orientation;
- 'coming out' experiences; being required to justify themselves and be questioned; and own gender constructions within relationships;
- general qualities of learner sex talk including its' prevalence; how it constructs gay and lesbian people; and differences between its' informal nature and formal silencing;
- policy issues in the school including policies which protect women, gay and lesbian people; and what type of policy issues are prioritised;

- teacher composition and interaction including experiences of gay/lesbian and heterosexual teachers; and gender of the teacher in relation to subject taught and authority position;
- learner composition and interaction including boy learner sex talk which is misogynist, heterosexist and homophobic; and girl learner sex talk which is heterosexist;
- within the school, their feelings of being 'different'; 'coming out'; hoping that their sexual orientation being a 'passing phase'; and suffering homophobic abuse;
- curriculum issues including heterosexist content;
- pedagogical relations including boys seen as 'experts' and 'active'; and silencing of gay/lesbian issues;
- attending a resourced/under-resourced school; and differences between white and black learners.

2.3.2. School principals

I designed an interview schedule which aimed to obtain data on the contextual background of the school as well as data on gender policies and issues within the school. The primary aim was to obtain data on policies and issues around gender. The hope was that respondents linked sexuality with gender and provide more data

on these issues. As already mentioned under point 2.2, I could not ask direct questions on sexuality.

The schedule consisted of both open ended and closed questions. In relation to learner and teacher composition, I asked closed questions on the 'race' and sex breakdown of learners and teachers. I also got data on the nature of teacher composition through a question on the sex breakdown of teachers in authority positions. Regarding the level of resources available in the school, I asked a question on whether they thought certain material conditions are adequate or not.

In order to obtain some contextual background, I asked open-ended questions on the nature of support from the school community, problems in the school, and how the school is coping with educational reforms. Lastly, I asked open-ended questions on the main gender issues within the school and if the school has any policies regarding gender.

2.3.3. Groups of boys and groups of girls from the class of the selected gay or lesbian respondents

As in the case of the interview schedule designed for the gay and lesbian respondent, this schedule was based on the theoretical overview. The aim was to obtain more data on learner composition and interaction and more specifically how learners, from the class of the gay/lesbian respondent, position themselves within discourses of 'the heterosexual' and 'the homosexual'. My questions were

both on a broader societal level as well as on the level of the school and were largely the same as those asked to the gay and lesbian respondent on these matters.

2.3.4. Classroom observations

I did two classroom observations, one of a 'hard subject' and one of a 'soft subject' (see description under point 2.2). My aim was to obtain data on learner composition and interaction, some data on pedagogical relations, some data on resources, and some data on teacher composition. I was an observer- or non-participant- in the situation and the teacher said as much before the onset of the class. My observations took place in a natural setting i.e. the classroom (*Cohen and Manion, 1994*). My observations were recorded in a structured way.

I observed and recorded data in the following areas:

- 'race' and sex breakdown of the teacher and learners;
- physical condition of the class;
- learner interaction through treating girl learners as 'ladies';
- pedagogical relations; including constructing boys as experts and natural troublemakers and silencing the gay/lesbian respondent.

2.3.5. Playground observation

My aim was to obtain data on learner composition and interaction. I made observations on the activities of different sexes, if sexes group together and with

which group the gay/lesbian respondent groups. I recorded my observations in a structured way.

2.4. Discussion of data

I compiled two tables. The first was on the responses of gay and lesbian respondents and the second on the profile of the schools.

In terms the responses of the gay/lesbian respondents, I classified responses under the following categories:

- gender: if they are conformist or non conformist;
- homosexuality: if their experiences are positive or negative;
- school experiences: if these are discriminatory or non-discriminatory;
- views on self: if they are empowered or not.

In terms of classifying responses, I read the whole interview in order to establish their position regarding the specific item. In terms of respondents' views on gender, I looked how respondents construct patriarchal gendered patterns and within these, internalise the 'appropriate' gendered position. If the overall sense was that they do, both construct patriarchal gendered discourses and internalise the position of 'the man' or 'the woman' within these, their experiences were classified as conformist; if not, as non-conformist. Regarding respondents views on homosexuality, I looked at answers on questions of 'the homosexual'. Answers were grouped as negative if the respondent internalised meanings of heterosexist and homophobic discourses.

Respondents' school experiences were classified as discriminatory if they experienced significant discrimination. Significant discrimination refers to constant verbal abuse and any form of physical abuse and where there is a sense of their school experience being negative. A grouping of non-discriminatory thus does not mean that the respondent faces no discrimination. In grouping answers here, I mainly included answers on gay/lesbian respondents' experiences of policies, teacher and learner composition and interaction, pedagogical and curriculum issues, as well as their feelings of being 'different', 'coming out', hoping that their sexual orientation being a 'passing phase', and suffering homophobic abuse. I also included answers from the group of girls and the group of boys and compared if their constructions correspond with the selected gay or lesbian learner's experiences. If there were significant differences between the set of answers from the gay or lesbian respondent to that of the group of girls or boys, I offer explanations. Lastly, in terms of their views of the self, I focused on how they presently view themselves and if, in an overall sense, they feel that they have enough control over their environments.

The second table compiled was on the profile of the schools. In terms of responses, I classified it as:

- policy on gender: if it exists or not;
- staff: if its composition and interaction is conformist or not;
- resources: if it is adequate or not;
- location: if it is in a middle class or working class area.

If there were any formal written gender policies, it was classified as existing. In terms of the staff composition and interaction, it got classified as conformist if the management structure of the school was patriarchal through men dominating management positions in the school. The resources category consisted of answers given by the principal if she/he experienced specified material conditions as adequate or not. The location category offered a description on the area in which the school was situated.

I also described some contextual background features of the school based on the biggest problems within the school, how the school is coping with educational reforms, and the support from the surrounding area.

2.5. Limitations

All the gay/lesbian respondents whom I have interviewed are 'out'. They have made their sexual orientation known, either to friends with some sort of connection to groups within the South African gay/lesbian movement, or directly to groups within this movement. The selected gay/lesbian respondents at some point then made the choice to be open about their sexual identity and they adopt the sexual identity of gay or lesbian. The respondents in this study could be dealing with different sets of issues than gay/lesbian learners who are not 'out'.

Other limitations to the study have already been mentioned. To mention some of these limitations again: in some cases I did not manage to observe gay and lesbian respondents in the classroom; I did not do extensive work on the levels of the curriculum, pedagogical relations, and teacher composition and interaction; and that I did not have an adequate understanding of certain issues that the school principals raised like Outcome Based Education (OBE). One significant limitation to my study arises from the way that I conducted interviews. I had an overall tendency to seek confirmation for my theoretical understandings underlying questions asked. At various points, I sought such confirmation and did not listen and probe enough to get possible different and new understandings from respondents. Although these were minimised consciously during the study, it does, however, remain a contributory limiting factor.

3. DISCUSSION OF DATA

As already said (under point 2.4) I made use of two tables, the first is on the experiences of gay and lesbian learners and the second about the nature of their school. These tables are discussed in what follows:

	GWR	LWR	GBR	LBR	GBUR	LBUR
POLICY	Non-existent	Non-existent	Existent	Non-existent	Non-existent	Non-existent
STAFF	Conformist	Conformist	Conformist	Conformist	Conformist	Conformist
RESOURCED	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Not adequate	Not adequate
LOCATION/ AREA	Middle class	Middle class	Middle class	Middle class	Working class	Working class

Table 1: Profile of schools

	GWR	LWR	GBR	LBR	GBUR	LBUR
GENDER	Non-conformist	Non-conformist	Non-conformist	Non-conformist	Non-conformist	Non-conformist
HOMO SEXUALITY	Not negative	Not negative	Not negative	Not negative	Not negative	Not negative
SCHOOL EXPERIENCES	Non-discriminatory	Non-discriminatory	Non-discriminatory	Non-discriminatory	Discriminatory	Non-discriminatory
VIEWS OF SELF	Empowered	Empowered	Empowered	Empowered	Not empowered	Empowered

Table 2: Responses of gay and lesbian respondents

I will now proceed to discuss each respondent and his/her school.

3.1. Gay, white learner from a resourced school

3.1.1. His school

The school is situated to the west of Johannesburg, in an older suburb. It is a middle class area. The school is surrounded by fenced houses, tar roads and I assume that there are mainly white English speaking South African families living in this area. The school has 685 learners of whom 400 are white, 137 are black, 95 are 'coloured' and 53 are Asian. There are 342 boys and 343 girls. In terms of teacher composition and interaction, the staff composition is almost exclusively white. They have 40 teachers of which one is 'coloured'. There are 12 male teachers and 28 females. In terms of the 9 management positions in the school, 5 are male and 4 female.

It is a resourced school. There are no shortages in terms of desks and chairs for learners and there is no shortage of textbooks. There are enough overhead projectors, and the principal feels that the school's structure is adequate. The school has a computer room, a library, well-kept grounds and sport fields and an Olympic size swimming pool.

Some contextual background features of the school include that they would like to see more financial resources for the school. They would like more parents to pay school fees, that they get more involved in fundraising efforts for the school, and surrounding businesses to show more financial support. They view their

accountability as providing good educational-, sport- and cultural programmes and political involvement is viewed at the cost of these programmes. Some of the problems that they experience are a deterioration of discipline as well as a decline in learners' work ethic. Teachers' jobs have become more difficult in terms of motivating learners. White learners are de-motivated because jobs are scares and they feel that education will not help them in finding jobs. Black learners share this de-motivation but they find it difficult to adhere to the ethos of the school. The principal says:

> *ok so their parents say, ok go to a school like Y (school's name) so that you get a better education, but there is no back up from home, because they do not know any better* (Interview with GWR principal, 1999: 228-229).

Furthermore, since they started taking in 'children of colour', they have problems with the cleanliness of the playground as well as with fighting on the playground.

In terms of their policies and issues surrounding gender, the principal said that they do not have any policies on gender. They have experiences of a growing amount of cases where black boys harass black girls and they had to reprimand a number of black boys on this issue. They also have experiences of fist fights amongst boys and the principal says:

> *no the boys. I would not call that harassment. The boys will have their own fist hiccups with one another. They will have their fight, someone will give someone else a black eye or a blood nose and get it over and done with* (Interview with GWR principal, 1999: 160-163).

The girls have verbal fights amongst each other and they do not engage in physical fights. The principal is not aware of any cases where a girl harassed a boy and at no point during the interview raised the issue of sexuality.

3.1.2. His responses

3.1.2.1. Gender

The GWR respondent does not conform to patriarchal and heterosexist gender discourses. He does, however, also construct such discourses. He believes men are biologically determined to be physically stronger than women and they therefore are the providers (for women). Another heterosexist, patriarchal construction is the naturalness of women as mothers, of nurturing children, and of being more emotional. He has a sense of this changing and "*women doing their own thing*" (Interview with GWR, 1999: 57).

He opposes heterosexist, patriarchal gender discourses at various points. The first is his opposition to fundamentalist religious discourse portraying women as evil. Secondly, he also agrees with present day South African efforts to empower

women. He links these with being gay and that these shifts result in a greater sense of equality and of feeling respected. Thirdly, he has complex understandings of masculinities conforming to patriarchal, heterosexist constructions. At certain points, he conforms to these but there are significant contradictions and his responses are largely non-conformist.

Expanding on his positioning within patriarchal and heterosexist masculinities, he conforms to constructions of not easily crying in public and in this sense, splitting 'the masculine' from 'the feminine'. Reasons for this are that men are 'stronger' than women and that is the way he has been brought up. Crying is viewed as "*being more feminine*" (Interview with GWR, 1999: 73). He also says that crying also opens one up to scrutiny and allows other people to ask questions and that as a gay person there are certain questions that one does not want to answer.

He also splits 'the masculine' from 'the homosexual'. 'Real men' are straight, and are "*butch and naartjie thowers*" (Interview with GWR, 1999: 110). But viewed in historical terms, for the GWR respondent, heterosexuality is not always an indicator of masculinity. In historical Greek society, two men sleeping together were viewed as powerful and they were actually 'more of a man'. He also has had sex with these 'real, heterosexual men'. He thus questions the link made between gender constructions and sexuality and if they necessarily correspond. He asks:

> *no, how heterosexual must you be when you are on your knees giving a guy a blowjob?* (Interview with GWR, 1999: 101).

He proposes a biological scale for sexuality, that it is not that fixed, and that we *"all have a little twist"* (107). What further complexifies the situation is his perception that gay culture no longer consists of only effeminate constructions but that there are gay men who 'are masculine'. He places himself somewhere in-between.

> *I don't see myself as a real man but I don't see myself as a queen* (Interview with GWR, 1999: 120).

3.1.2.2. Views on homosexuality

He doesn't view homosexuality as negative. However, he does make a few negative constructions. Firstly, leading from his views on gender, his being gay does influence his sense of masculinity and it was described under the previous point. On the roots or what 'caused' his homosexuality, reasons centre around lacking. He traces 'the causes' to his lack of self-esteem, not having male role models and needing other guys to make him feel good.

> *that struck me, if you don't really have a father figure or male role model, I don't really have that and that is why I think I can relate to that to a large extend ...well, umm, living like a, very low self-esteem and not relating to my father. I thought if other guys can make me feel good or like*

> *these other people find me attractive and that will make me feel better* (Interview with GWR, 1999: 186-191).

He also constructs homosexual relationships as not having the same 'balance' as heterosexual relationships, and that they are not 'stable and secure'. He says:

> *I think that a lot of the time the gay community is very fucked up....two gay guys who knows, three years down the line or whatever, is going to find another guy. It is very risky..... and more fly by night and that a child maybe needs a more stable environment, and because of that they won't be good parents* (Interview with GWR, 1999: 212-218).

It is not clear what his present position is on homophobic and heterosexist religious discourses. There was initial internalisation of Christianity condemning homosexuality but it seems that this has changed since his 'coming out'. He now views the Bible as being open to interpretation and to focus on "*the good things in it*" (Interview with GWR, 1999: 259-260). Some other statements on homosexuality include that it is abnormal and was not meant to be but "*that it has been accepted now*" (Interview with GWR, 1999: 96-97).

In terms of homosexuality being 'un-African', he views public gay identities as Western or that Western societies have made it easier to adopt these identities. He seems to be saying that being gay is more accepted in cultures who are not struggling for economic survival and where people get bored and start different

things. He traces an absence of public gay identities to cultures which are fixed and which emphasises maintaining a certain order, and where there is an emphasis on 'masculine activities' like hunting. In South Africa and its constitutional protection on the basis of sexual orientation, he views as positive as it gives him the opportunity to be "*normal and respected*" (Interview with GWR, 1999: 336).

Although the above illustrates that he internalises heterosexist and homophobic constructions at quite a few points, he does not presently view homosexuality in negative terms. He is very aware of how broader society stigmatises homosexuality and he opposes this. Under points 3.1.2.3. and 3.1.2.4, I expand on him viewing homosexuality as not negative.

3.1.2.3. His school experiences

His experiences of school are not directly discriminatory. It is however a hostile environment in that it is heterosexist, where there are very limited understanding and addressing of gender- and sexuality inequalities, and where there are homophobic physical threats and verbal abuse. In such an environment, he breaks the formal silencing of sexual matters within the school and he challenges and breaks boundaries including issues of gender. He also has experiences of patriarchy, heterosexism and homophobia.

Regarding his challenge to the 'formal' silencing of sexual matters, he instigates discussions about being gay into the classroom. He mentions an example where

the whole mathematics class (including the teacher) was "*against him*" (Interview with GWR, 1999: 520), asking him "*every single question you can think of*" (Interview with GWR, 1999: 522). Another example is his going up to the teacher, pulling down his pants, for her to see the colour of his underpants. He also goes up to teachers, with girls, and makes sexual comments in class about which boys are cute and wanting to sit next to them. He says:

> *I will go to them and say ah man, what is that guys name over there and they say like Richard and I will say he is pretty cute can I sit in number 8 next to him* (Interview with GWR, 1999: 500-501).

Furthermore, he takes pornographic books to school and both the girls and boys are "*very, very interested*" (Interview with GWR, 1999: 413). He also confirms then that there is a 'formal' silencing of sexual matters. Both the group of girls and boys also confirm this, and where such spaces exist, the focus is on the biological. Tying in with his breaking of the 'formal' silencing of sexual matters, are his experiences of challenging boundaries.

> *one of my weaknesses is, I enjoy shocking people, I enjoy making people think and striking up, striking emotions up into them and they aren't really used to deal with* (Interview with GWR, 1999: 455-456)

and,

> *as I have said, I like shocking people, and so, I've been more out now than what I have ever been, and I would like to see how far I can go before it snaps and I realised that I could go very far before anything bad happens. So that discussing gay issues in the class, kind of got a kick out of it, and I enjoyed it, and then it became not so much of a game as what it used to be, it got more comfortable* (Interview with GWR, 1999: 1002-1005)

and,

> *I feel that I have a mission to do, to kind of educate them, I belong really.....I feel part of the school, something that the school needs, you know like they need me* (Interview with GWR, 1999: 880-886).

In his challenging of boundaries, he derives satisfaction and it gives him a place. In the above quotations, there has been a change from being a game to being more comfortable. Another example of challenging these boundaries is when he came to school in 'drag' to give a speech,

> *the next day, everyone was all of a sudden, like everything jolted in their minds and they had all these questions* (Interview with GWR, 1999: 528-529).

But in his example of coming in 'drag', he raises issues of gender and his own masculinity constructions. He needs to fit in and does so because he is not ugly

and also because how he "*plays it*" (Interview with GWR, 1999: 599); he is neutral and acts macho. 'Playing it' this way then allows him to step out of these boundaries by being 'feminine'. At times, he 'drags' or talks in a feminine voice but then "*comes back, then always showing them that I am still me*" (Interview with GWR, 1999: 602-603). Another point raised is that it is easier for a gay boy who is masculine than for those who are feminine. The point is confirmed by the respondent and in the interview with the group of boys; that there is a difference between being gay and 'acting gay'.

Regarding his experiences of heterosexism and homophobia, he does confirm that it exists within the school. He is not aware of any policies within the school protecting gays and lesbians, he has a sense that there are policies which protect women. On the composition and interaction of teachers, he only has exposure or experiences of heterosexual teachers. Teachers make homophobic and heterosexist remarks.

> *umm a lot of times teachers would make remarks to guys, won't you head along you moffie, wha, wha, wha. I mean one teacher saying to us if there were no woman on this earth, guys would not do their hair nicely* (Interview wit GWR, 1999: 730-734).

Male teachers engage in 'manly' activities like playing rugby and they will not be doing "*tapestry after school*" (Interview with GWR, 1999: 738). Male teachers are also more feared than the female teachers and are seen as the disciplinarians. In

terms of his experiences of learner composition and interaction, he does confirm that the boys in the school are homophobic. He says:

> *and then I had a few people who wanted to fuck me up and I was just like come, come try.....the whole thing is, you usually see these guys, hey you faggot, moo, moo, moo, but they are the guys hanging in their little groups of boys and no one else can come* (Interview with GWR, 1999: 534-536).

The boys are more threatened by gay boys whereas gays make good friends to girls. The 'in-crowd' of boys, the "*Brady Bunch*" (Interview with GWR, 1999: 542), portrays themselves as straight and heterosexist. He has had sex with one of these boys.

> *There was this one guy, he was part of the Brady Bunch. The crowd. He was very, very straight. Ja and I had this scene with him and I promised I would say anything.....no-one believed me, I had to show them proof, just to try and show them this is not what you expect...rugby player, um, uh, all the girls loved him. He went out drinking, very much the jock type.....it was more for his friends, it was almost like he was in the movies...everyone looked up to him...actually I told people that just to make them think.....a lot of people didn't believe me and then they realised after a while when I brought some of his clothing* (Interview with GWR, 1999: 541-564).

The boys' group interview in this school confirmed that there will be verbal and physical homophobic acts against a boy who dates another boy in the school. They also confirm that 'being a boy' means that one is heterosexual. The girls group also confirmed that there are homophobic acts in the school, boys being the perpetrators. They also confirm that boys' sex talk is about girls. They agree that a lot of learners' time is spent on sex talk and that in this, girls are made to be sexual objects by the boys. A respondent in the girls group says:

> *because I have often heard guys conversation or ask what they speak about and it is always girls, and boobs and that one is sexy and that one is a good lay* (Interview with GWR group of girls, 1999: 328-329).

As the GWR respondent says:

> *very arrogant, like I went to the girls house and we got down doing it, very proud* (Interview with GWR, 1999: 783)

and,

> *girls also talk about their boyfriends all the time but more, not as vulgar, they are scared of the reputation of being loose* (Interview with GWR, 1999: 836-837).

He doesn't experience pedagogical relations as a policing of his sexuality. As already mentioned, he breaks the formal silencing on sexual matters and he leads discussions on sexual matters and gay issues within the class. In the classes that I have observed, the gay respondent didn't receive any 'special attention', either from the teacher or from fellow learners. Regarding the curriculum, his experiences are that it is heterosexist. He does mention a recent example of where there is "*some kind of reference to a gay relationship*" (Interview with GWR, 1999: 930-931) in a prescribed work that they are doing. I did not however ask what work he is referring to.

He doesn't feel that the school has equipped him well for his future, in an emotional sense. Lastly he thinks that there are differences between black and white boys. He views black boys as more spontaneous whereas white boys are more self-conscious.

3.1.2.4. Own Self

He views himself in positive terms. This came about from some very negative experiences and a cycle of events which lead him to self-acceptance and not seeking the approval of others. At first he was up against two over-powering constructions. The first was that of Christianity and him thinking that he is evil.

> *well I have, ja I cut my wrists, I tried to gas myself, I tried to hang myself, I did not want to be gay, I did not want anyone to know that I was gay, I*

> *thought it was wrong. I was very into the whole Christianity thing. I thought if I was gay. I am evil and everything and I just argh. why. why me. you know. There are so many people. why must I be gay* (Interview with GWR. 1999: 345-348)

and.

> *with me realising that being brought up about this place in heaven. walking on diamonds and then someone saying sorry you are not going to get there because of your sexual orientation which you can not do anything about. It is like changing the colour of your eyes. I was let down hecticly and I thought like why* (Interview with GWR. 1999: 265-268).

The second was the image that other people create about being gay.

> *to me everyone else. like my family. like you have heard about gay people. like hear gay jokes from my parents. like I do not want to be one of those people... monsters really. They always made up to be monsters. Made out to be these people that did unnatural acts....I always learned that unnatural is evil...ja they are made out to be these people that take advantage. as I have said. being gay. there is a lot of things that goes with being gay... umm I saw. I didn't had to go. I just saw this long road ahead of me. I thought no I can't. I don't want to go* (Interview with GWR. 1999: 349-357).

He had a sense of feeling over-powered which led him to various attempts to take his life. He started rebelling against all the perceived thinking that he is 'bad and evil'. He reasoned that he will give them reason to hate him, started doing drugs and also 'came out' as gay. The more he did things so that others could hate him, the more he hated himself because he could not forgive himself. The cycle was broken when people didn't make such a big issue of the 'gay thing' and that it was not viewed as the end of the world. A lot of people, including from within the gay community, taught him that one does not need to be rebellious in order to love oneself. He realised that it is not important what people think and that one should love oneself.

His 'coming out' experience at school happened towards the end of his rebellious phase. In other words he was busy with issues of self-hate, others hating him, and looking for acceptance. Presently, he has accepted being gay. He seems to have realised the contradictions between that what is believed to be 'normal' and the 'abnormal'.

> *ja you see but all my answers have a but* (Interview with GWR, 1999: 237).

Seeing contradictions and the other side, results in a sense of the self which is complex. On the one hand, he internalises being 'masculine' including not wanting to show emotions in front of others and talking about sexual matters in a

macho way. At the same time, he is very open about being gay (a very 'un-masculine' trait), not scared to incorporate 'feminine' constructions in his life, and disregard the 'truth' of heterosexual masculinity. He acts on these contradictions, pointing it out to people and educating them; this also gives him a sense of purpose. Initially it fed into his self-hate, now it is from a position of being comfortable, not primarily seeking affirmation or acceptance and getting appreciation for his openness and honesty. It is clear that he is very able to challenge contradictions. It is also clear that he still internalises negative constructions about being gay. Being able to see contradictions lessened his internalisation of gays 'as monsters', or as 'evil', or as 'abnormal'. However, it is not that clear from the interview if he opposes such constructions. One could argue that he is possibly still busy with rebellion, informed by self-hate and internalised homophobia, rather than challenging from a position of comfort.

3.2. Lesbian, white learner attending a resourced school

3.2.1. Her school

The school is situated in the eastern side of Pretoria, a middle class or upper middle class area. I assume that the majority of families are white Afrikaans speaking. There could also be a fair number of white English speaking and black families living in the area. The school has 984 learners of whom 838 are white, 124 are black, 10 are 'coloured', 2 are Asian, and 10 'other'. There are 254 boys and 730 girls. In terms of the teacher composition and interaction, they have 41 permanent staff members, one of these is 'coloured', the rest are white. Of the permanent staff, 7 are male and 34 female. They have a governing body of 7 of which half are male and the other half female; they are all white with the exception of 1 'coloured' woman. They also have between 30-40 part-time teachers, who are all white with the exception of one Asian woman.

It is a resourced school. They have enough desks for learners, they supply their own textbooks and have control over its replenishment. The school structure is good, and they have enough overhead projectors for classes. I observed the following which indicate the resources in the school: there are three secretaries all with computers, a tuck shop, a shop selling music books and -instruments, a computer room with about twenty computers, and a wing of private studios (for dance, music activities etceteras).

Some contextual background features of the school include that the school draws its learners from different geographical areas. It is an art school and learners with specialist interests attend the school. Parents thus do not stay in the immediate geographical area and tend to be less involved in the activities of the school. It appears that parents are not struggling financially, they do not have problems with paying of school fees, or them being so busy making ends meet that they can not give needed attention to their children.

Being a specialist school there are some uncertainties regarding the staffing of the school. They still do not know their position for the next year and this affects staff's morale to some extent. They also have specialist knowledge on areas such as how Curriculum 2005 would apply to a school such as this one. During the time I did my fieldwork, the school was raided by the South African Police for drugs. The principal views the raid as a preventative measure, illustrating to learners that external parties are serious about their possible drug usage.

In terms of their policies and issues surrounding gender, they do not have any gender policies and it is not seen as a big issue. The principal's understanding of gender is that it is a specific drive to recognise the ability of women. They do not press the issue or *"ah shame girls, oh please girls, we just go on as normal"* (Interview with LWR principal, 1999: 340-341). They only had one or two complaints of a boy using nasty words in front of a girl, and that was dealt with. But he says:

> *and that is dealt with because I do not think that is a gender issue, this is a courtesy issue, you do not use nasty words in front of girls* (Interview with LWR principal, 1999: 353-355).

He allows for the possibility for boys verbally harassing girls and "*that is a day to day thing*" (Interview with LWR principal, 1999: 366). These cases do not come to his attention and are not reported. Girls handle it on their own, they are more empowered and stand up for themselves. He has had one case in the last year where he heard from a girl that boys were touching her. The boys were called into in his office and were from "*a certain cultural group*" (Interview with LWR principal, 1999: 372). The way he dealt with it is to threaten the boys that he will notify the girl's dad. The cultural group that he refers to is black people.

3.2.2. Her responses

3.2.2.1. Gender

She does not hold conformist views regarding patriarchal, heterosexist discourses on gender. The exception is constructing men as being born to be physically stronger than women. She opposes constructions of women as natural mothers and in her experiences, her father was the one who nurtured the children and there are fluctuations in which of her parents nurture at which time.

She also does not cry easily in public, and she is therefore not 'typically feminine'. She will not easily cry because other people will start asking questions, she will not be able to give answers and there is thus no point to it. She confirms that it is easier for girls to cry in public but she doesn't agree with these constructions. Furthermore, she does not conflate gender and sexuality. She does not view being gay as automatically meaning that one is 'more feminine'. She has had a personal experience in a previous relationship where "*in my previous situation I could switch over to a more feminine side*" (Interview with LWR, 1999: 110). 'Being masculine' means initiating things, primarily in bed. She also opposes fundamentalist religious interpretations constructing women as 'evil' and agrees with present day South African efforts to empower women. She however doesn't believe that women have the same opportunities as men. As an example, she says it is easier for gay guys to come out than for lesbian girls.

3.2.2.2. Homosexuality

She doesn't have negative experiences of being lesbian. Firstly, it is difficult to say if she thinks that one is born to be gay or lesbian. She did have an awareness of being lesbian when she was 5 years old. She cites as reasons for her knowing, that she used to play with cars and that she kissed her cousin at this age. She does not construct any 'lack' or 'abnormality' with homosexuality.

Secondly, she thinks that gay and lesbian people can be good parents and that it depends if one can provide financially for children. What will further make it

easier is if your parents have accepted you as a gay or lesbian person, they can then teach and positively influence your children. Thirdly, she did not doubt, initially, if being gay or lesbian goes against the Bible or the 'natural order' or if it is 'evil' or a 'sin'. Lately, through interactions with her sister, who is studying spiritual healing and who believes that 'one can change', the respondent has her doubts. Fourthly, she doesn't believe that gays and lesbians should be 'cured'. She also agrees that homosexuality can be found in all cultures. She expresses her discomfort with labels, that at times she just wants to be, not straight, but just be.

Some other responses are that she agrees with gay and lesbian people participating in broader political or societal issues and struggles and she would participate in these. Her reasons include that gay and lesbian people have the same abilities as heterosexual people and that they can achieve the same. Regarding constitutional protection of gays and lesbians within South Africa, she draws an analogy between gay and lesbian people and black people. Here, she not only expresses racist views but also make heterosexist and homophobic statements.

> *It gives a start.....not accept them to be, well accept them. They still have this thing of umm, some of them.....and you can not expect them to be normal like the rest of us or whatever, and it will take time.....Black people, not only black people but because of racism and whatever, now suddenly it has swapped around and everyone expects them to be better, and be whatever, they can't, not*

now, maybe in two or three generations time, because they still have to get used to (Interview with LWR, 1999: 332-338).

She also mentions that heterosexual people think that homosexuality "*is not for love, it is just for pleasure*" (Interview with LWR, 1999: 219) and that you just want to get into their pants. Lastly, people coming out as being gay or lesbian, are always open to other people accusing them of dishonesty because 'being hidden' implies lying. She mentions two points, the first around 'coming out' to her parents and secondly in relation to a friend that has not 'come out', where lying became an issue.

3.2.2.3. Schooling experiences

Her experiences of her school are non-discriminatory. She also does not experience it as a hostile environment and that it is much more open and accepting than previous schools she attended. However, there are discrepancies between her experiences and constructions made by both the groups of boys and girls who I interviewed.

One theme which arises is the importance for her to have a small group of people or individual/s who support her. These people either inspire her or accept her lesbian sexual orientation.

> *I had one friend who sort of accepted me, who sort of helped me... because she had a lot of friends who are gay or lesbian, so I went to this other school and I hated it... ...I always meet someone that really mean a lot to me or inspires me to do something with my life or whatever. And it would be a great opportunity to come here because there are so many different people and they are actually working for what they want and then I came here and I was happy* (Interview with LWR, 1999: 400-407).

In her present school she does not feel as different, and that she can express herself more freely, as what she could in previous schools that she attended. Her present school- the whole school- is like the group she belonged to in her previous school.

> *no you can basically do what you want. If you want to go and sit in a pool of water you can, you can do what you feel like, they won't say* (Interview with LWR, 1999: 812-813).

Her expression of herself in these ways seems to be more important than expressing a lesbian identity.

> *I felt like this and I do not think about it the whole day, you know* (Interview with LWR, 1999: 803-804).

Regarding her experiences of school policies, she is not aware of policies protecting women because it is not an issue. She is also not aware of any policies protecting gays and lesbians and foresees such discrimination happening.

> *my friend who is hostel head-girl, if they know she is lesbian they will take position* (Interview with LWR, 1999: 629-631).

Such incidents of discrimination are later contradicted when she says that there is no discrimination in the school. The exception is discrimination from the side of the principal. He is racist because white learners can not wear their hair in the same way as black learners. Her experiences of teacher composition and interaction are also that it is not patriarchal, homophobic or heterosexist. They have gay and lesbian teachers in the school. Her Afrikaans teacher is gay and speaks openly about it in class, makes jokes about it, has read them a poem he wrote to his lover, and has offered his assistance to a gay boy in class. There are, however, lots of heterosexual teachers in the school, who wear their wedding rings, bring their husbands and wives to the school, and talk about their families and children. She does not believe in patriarchal constructions of males being better teachers in 'hard' subjects and women better in 'soft' subjects.

Regarding learner composition and interaction, her experiences are that there is not a lot of learner sex talk which construct patriarchy, heterosexism or homophobia. It is an art school, learners are more adult, and there are a lot of gays and lesbians for whom sex talk is not typical. People in the school tend to talk

about issues such as a recent drug raid in the school, what they did over the holidays and interesting things in life. She also affirms that sexual matters are not dealt with in a 'formal way'.

According to the LWR Respondent, it is possible for a boy to talk openly about his feeling for another boy in the school but that it will not be the same for a girl having feelings for another girl. She relates personal reasons, she will not tell her roommate that she is lesbian because the roommate will go around and tell people the LWR Respondent does not want to know. Gays and lesbians are not talked about in derogatory terms because there are open gay/ lesbian learners and teachers in the school. As already said, her experience is that the school is very open, not only around being gay or lesbian, but also around other issues such as not judging one for what music you listen to, the way you dress, and so on.

Her experiences of learner sex talk and constructing of heterosexism, patriarchy and homophobia do not correspond with constructions made by the girls and the boys. Both groups say that sex talk happens a lot and for the boys it centers around sex whereas the girls focus more on 'emotional issues'. The girls group interviewed also affirmed that boys talk more about sex rather than emotions. The boys group constructs strong homophobia. One respondent says:

> *but I wouldn't like the gay person to be close to me as a friend because I am scared that one day he will get to touch me, so I have that fear around* (Interview with LWR group of boys, 1999: 824-826).

Asked what he will do if the gay person does touch him, he says:

> *aiich, I will lose my temper, maybe I will slap him, I do not know but I pray that it does not happen*" (Interview with LWR group of boys, 1999: 828-829).

In both groups there is more of a condemnation of gays who act 'like women'. In terms of heterosexism and if a boy will openly date another boy in that school, the boys say that they have never seen that and that they do not think that it will happen because people will talk. The girls group thinks that it will happen.

There is thus strong homophobia and patriarchal constructions from especially the boys. It seems that my respondent has negotiated ways not to interact with these constructions. As said, she chooses a small group who accepts her, for her 'style' and also for being lesbian. She seems isolated from broader norms to that of her small group.

The curriculum does not teach her anything about 'being gay or lesbian' or anything about 'being heterosexual'. She does not affirm patriarchal learner composition in terms of the boys being better in 'rational' subjects or the girls being better in 'softer' subjects. She also doesn't confirm pedagogical relations where boys are viewed as 'experts' or as 'natural troublemakers'.

She would raise gay and lesbian issues in the class if necessary. Sometimes what they raise has got nothing to do with 'being gay or lesbian' and she will not respond to these. She thinks that her present school equips her well for her future. It allows her to pursue art which is the most important to her and secondly it allows her 'to be'. In terms of differences between white and black learners, they joke with each other. She mentions the examples of black people joking about white people drinking coffee. White people joke about 'typical' black people's behaviour like throwing rubbish around.

3.2.2.4. Own self

She is empowered, getting support from people who accept her for who she is, and she has 'come out' to significant people in her life. Leading from what was said about her schooling experience, she seems to group with a small group of people which accepts her for what she is, and keeps her distance from the 'general mass'. Acceptance is not primarily of her lesbian sexual orientation but more in ways she chooses to express herself, like how she wears her hair, how she dresses, her music and what she does with her life.

She has three types of reactions from other people regarding her being a lesbian person, i.e. being called names, being pushed aside and being accepted. In all these reactions, she does not articulate any of them being traumatic and there is a sense of her being in control. Regarding being called names or rather abuse that she has suffered, she told a good friend that she is lesbian in a previous school.

This came out in a small group to which she belonged. She then heard people talking about her behind her back and was asked in the class if she was lesbian. She was unsure how to handle it, eventually laughing, leaving the class and leaving it for them to decide. She did not experience it is as hurtful or traumatic but as unexpected. At that time she had a boyfriend, not because she felt pressured but because she was busy with a 'stage in her life' trying out the option of having a boyfriend. She says that she "*tried to but I could not*" (Interview with LWR, 1999: 414).

Regarding acceptance, she relates an incident where she told a friend and the friend's reply was that she knows and she didn't push the LWR Respondent away. She could talk to the friend about issues and told her about a girl that she fell in love with. She has also told 5 close friends in her present school that she has a lesbian sexual orientation and they all accepted that. Regarding her being sidelined, she told a girl in school that she loves her and the girl then started ignoring her.

She has 'come out' to close friends, her one sister and two women that she loved. She has not 'come out' to her parents and she expects that it will be a big shock to them. As was mentioned already, she fears that her parents would think she has lied up to this point by keeping something from them. Furthermore, she doesn't mind other people asking her questions or where she needs to justify herself. An example is her sister's heterosexist statements and believing that being gay or lesbian to be a 'passing phase'. She says that she finds it quite funny and that it

gives her the opportunity to make people understand. Once again, there is a sense of not 'being delivered' to others' reactions but placing it so that she feels in control.

3.3. Gay, black learner in a resourced school

3.3.1. His school

The school is situated in a traditionally, white, Afrikaans suburb in the north of Pretoria. The schools name honors one of the great apartheid ideologues. The area is middle class or even a bit lower middle class. They also attract learners, mainly black learners, from central city areas. The school has 744 learners of whom 446 are white, and 298 are black, 'coloured', or Asian. There are 306 boys and 438 girls. In terms of the teacher composition and interaction, they have 27 teachers who are all white. Of these, 6 are male and 21 are female. In terms of authority positions, there are 5 females and 2 males.

It is a resourced school. They have enough chairs and desks for learners, enough textbooks, and overhead projectors for classes. A frustration expressed is that their classes were not built for such large amounts of learners. Their classes got bigger. Before 1992, they regarded a class of 32 to be big, nowadays they have classes of up to 54. The school structure is satisfactory although it is old and in need of structural repairs.

Some contextual background features of the school include that they struggle with parental involvement. They have more than one million rand outstanding in school fees and there is only a small group of parents, a support club, with an active interest in the school's activities. A variable in parental support is the distance that

families live from the school, those closer get more easily involved. It is usually black parents who live further away from the school. There is also a certain sector of parents, living close to the school, who get more involved. These parents are economically better off, they all attend the same church and have a sense of community.

In terms of problems experienced, discipline has deteriorated. In the past they could rely on parents to 'sort out' issues with their children but nowadays learners come into the office because they have problems with their parents. Parents have lost their jobs, there is no general care from home, and a general sense of hopelessness. Learners then get involved in drugs, bunking school, and not doing their homework.

Regarding educational reforms, the principal feels that they are already implementing some aspects of Curriculum 2005. Some of their subjects are structured on an outcome-based model and they do continuous assessment. He feels that they have achieved racial integration and learned about each other's 'different' backgrounds. An example for him is learning that black learners are 'loud' because they think that talking in soft tones means that you are scheming behind someone's back.

Regarding gender issues, the first issue raised is of Western people being more 'ready' for gender equality. It is difficult for black boys to accept authority from

girls such as the head-girl. He has had discussions with black boys and they still regard women as sexual objects. He says:

> *you know some of the black boys, they say very harshly things* (Interview with GBR principal, 2000: 375).

A second point raised is that girls are standing up for themselves. Thirdly, he affirms that boys 'need to score' with certain girls in order to impress their boy friends. But it is not a case of boys aspiring to constructions of sleeping around a lot and "*you know their idols are the first team rugby players and not the guy that sleeps around*" (Interview with GBR principal, 2000: 464-465). Fourthly, it seems that boys' sexual awareness is now earlier, where in the past it used to be Grade 9.

They have had 'formal' discussions on sex matters. In their AIDS programme and talking about sex, boys stressed the issue of using condoms whereas girls highlighted love and emotions which precede sex. He also deals with sex matters in orals, essays, and poems.

In terms of the type of boys in the school, he says they have the whole range, from the total macho to a boy that wants to have a sex change. In terms of the 'masculine' boys, the 'grade of masculinity' is a lot less than a few years ago. In the past, in an Afrikaans school such as this one, there were certain 'milestones' that you had to reach before you were accepted. It includes being physically active, playing sports, and not 'being feminine' or gay. It is less these days but

there is still an aspiration to these values. Other things are however also becoming more important, for example appearance and grooming, and boys nowadays are able to make friends with fellow gay learners.

Some of the boys discriminate against the mentioned boy who is contemplating a sex change. This boy stands up against such forms of discrimination and is also able to engage in 'masculine' activities such as ab-sailing (going backwards down a cliff making use of a rope). In terms of the girls in the school, they aspire to physical beauty and to do well in sports. 'Academic girls' are not that looked up to and do not have a lot of respect in the school. The girls experience the boy, who is contemplating a sex change, as a bit of a trespasser. He groups with them but they feel that he is still a boy and that they want to discuss 'girl things'.

They have gender policies in place, and issues of sexual orientation seem to be touched upon. When the Grade 8's come into the school, they spend time with them on racial and sexual respect. They tell them what the school's policy is on sexual harassment "*well actually we tell them listen if you make a comment like this or this to a girl it is regarded as sexual harassment*" (Interview with GBR principal, 2000: 691-692). He also says "*pupils know that regardless of whatever, their orientation or gender or 'race' or whatever, everybody is equal*" (Interview with GBR principal, 2000: 695-696). They try and influence attitudes, specifically those of the boys, rather than to threaten them if they should transgress.

3.3.2. His responses

3.3.2.1. Gender

He holds non-conformist views regarding patriarchal constructions of gender. Reasons are him viewing himself as 'a woman', having a 'feminine social presence', and opposing patriarchal constructions.

Firstly, he views himself as a woman,

> *yes definitely, I do because it is like, I do not see myself, I am physically a man but I do not see myself in that light, see... ... I see myself as a woman but in the physical body of a man* (Interview with GBR, 2000: 72-75).

He only has the body of a man, the rest of him, "*his social life, my being, my doings, what I do and how I live my life, the style of my life is that of a woman*" (Interview with GBR, 2000: 79-80). Examples he uses include that he is close to female family members and not to his brother or father. He feels secure and comfortable with women and that they understand him. He feels normal whereas with men he feels "*that passion, you know, that something, I feel that I do not belong there*" (Interview with GBR, 2000: 119-120). It seems that he has an emotional reaction against men and "*what I mean like, I feel like, seeing that I am against them or the opposite to them. So I feel that I do not belong there*"

(Interview with GBR, 2000: 126-127). He feels excluded from 'men'. Furthermore, he also says that one must not always look if it is a man or a woman but at the human being. Here he expresses his opposition to gender categorisations.

Secondly, he has a 'feminine social presence'. He will cry in public when he wants to and does not go to the gym for muscles as "*I do not bother myself with such stuff, see*" (Interview with GBR, 2000: 97-98). He also opposes patriarchal constructions. He does not believe that men are born to be physically stronger than women, rather that society expects men to be 'stronger' and therefore these type of constructions. He does believe that women are 'natural mothers'. It is based on his own experiences where his mother and his father have been separated. His mother took care of everything, also in providing financially. He does also have experiences of women doing 'masculine activities' like providing financially.

He opposes fundamentalist religious interpretations of women being evil. He traces such constructions arising from women seducing men, but views seduction as part of 'normal human behaviour'. He agrees with present day South African efforts to empower women; women have "*the power by means of the knowledge, it is now becoming the truth thing and they are proving us right*" (Interview with GBR, 2000: 144-145). In this quote he includes himself in the category of women.

3.3.2.2. Homosexuality

He does not have negative constructions of being a gay person. There are however various statements conflating gender and sexuality.

He thinks that gay people can be good parents and has personal experiences of a gay couple with children and they "*work very hard because like they do not have the opportunity to make one. It is like they give all they have*" (Interview with GBR, 2000: 179-180). Regarding fundamentalist religious discourses and homosexuality, he has encountered people telling him that being gay or lesbian is a 'sin', 'unnatural' and 'evil'. In his experiences, it is said to most gay people but he does not agree. He believes that the Lord has made him not to live 'a man's life' and that he is happy this way. If he tries to change he will lie and qualities, other than 'being a man' or being gay, are valued.

> *it, it is in you, I guess because the Lord wants you to be happy. I am happy this way and I do not think that I am going to make it. It is, as if I am going to be, my life is going to be a lie. Now I am living my life and that is the way that I want to be and that is the way that I want to do it* (Interview with GBR, 2000: 191-195)

and,

> *and what I normally tell them is that He gave me. He made me a man but I can live the other life because He said that I am going to make you like this and then you decide whether you, how you are going to handle your life. As long as you respect the temple of the Lord, that is it* (Interview with GBR, 2000: 210-213).

He does not believe that being gay or lesbian should 'be cured'. Once again, he conflates gender and sexuality issues.

> *from the gay to change him from a gay to be a man* (Interview with GBR, 2000: 238-239).

He believes that it is futile to try and change. He had a friend who tried to "*be normal*" (Interview with GBR, 2000: 251), he would hang out in men groups, and "*who wanted to be like those muscle men....but he did not survive because the inner him was a gay person*" (Interview with GBR, 2000: 253-254). Furthermore, he thinks that you get gay people in all cultures including African cultures. He believes that gay people should participate in broader political struggles and that we need more activists participating in these struggles. He senses that gay people are being forgotten in the 'bigger struggles' in South Africa and that constitutional protection is therefore positive as it gives an acknowledgement of existence and that "*at least there are people who care for us*" (Interview with GBR, 2000: 323-324). Constitutional protection is also important because there are people who are

against gay people, especially men "*who teases us and tell us about being a man*" (Interview with GBR, 2000: 339-340).

3.3.2.3. School experiences

His experiences of school are non-discriminatory. It is a hostile environment where there are heterosexism, homophobia, and conformist constructions of masculinities. He is open about his sexuality and 'femininity', and has support for his actions against verbal abuse. He also has support from some teachers, and from girls and another gay friend in the school. He engages with the 'mainstream' and 'race' is important in his experiences.

In terms of the described six levels of schooling, he has awareness and experiences regarding policies protecting women as well as gay and lesbian people. Regarding women, "*when there is a fight, most of the time the girl wins when it is taken to the principals' office, always the girl is right and each and every argument the girl wins*" (Interview with GBR, 2000: 672-674). He also thinks that there are policies which protect gay and lesbian people. He relates an incident where one guy used an Afrikaans swear word and he went straight to the principal. The principal suspended the offender. He does not believe that there is one issue that the school will prioritise in terms of discrimination and that they will treat all matters in an equal manner.

In terms of his experiences of teacher composition and interaction, it is not entirely heterosexist. He also has negative experiences from heterosexual teachers. On the positive side, he suspects his art teacher to be gay because he is also able to communicate with the teacher. Negative experiences are heterosexual teachers in the school that he feels "*are against gay people because I think that they hate me or something*" (Interview with GBR, 2000: 729-730). He constructs patriarchal teacher composition, he thinks that male teachers are better in more 'rational' subjects. His language teachers have always been female and his art teachers have always been gay men. He thinks that female teachers make better school principals because they are more dedicated to their jobs. He relates an experience of his principal being racist. Two boys were fighting, the one black and the one white, the respondent saw what happened and that the white boy was guilty but the black boy got more days suspension.

In terms of learner interaction, he affirms that sex talk is significant amongst all the learners including the girls and boys as well as the white and black learners. He also confirms that the boys focus more on sex and the girls more on emotions. He also confirms that boys talk about these issues as if they are 'in competition' with each other. Regarding learner sex talk and homophobia, he says that gay people are talked about in positive terms but that there are exceptions. Gay and lesbian people are seen as friendlier, more social, and liking parties. There are some who are negative, they want gay people to get out of the way and think there is something 'wrong' with gay and lesbian people. The respondent also had homophobic name-calling directed at him but never any physical assaults. In

addition to homophobia, there are heterosexist constructions, as a boy who has feelings for another boy will not openly talk about it because of fear for discrimination and being laughed at. There seems not to be as strong heterosexism and homophobia amongst the girls. The GBR respondent groups with them and according to him, there is no group pressure amongst the girls to have a boyfriend in order to prove that one is 'normal' or 'grown-up'.

In terms of the boys and the girls that I have interviewed in this school, they also conflate gender and sexuality. As one boy says:

> *I will say yes because they allow the boy to play with girls stuff, she, the boy has like an older sister and like wears her clothes .. and he does not play with other boys* (Interview with GBR group of boys, 2000: 219-220).

The boys group construct patriarchal and heterosexist masculinities. They split both 'the feminine' and 'the homosexual' from 'the masculine' and their sex talk focuses exclusively on physical appearance of women. The girls also confirm that boy sex talk focuses on sex.

> *the guy is always cool if he has sex with a girl but if the girl do, she is a slut, she sleeps around* (Interview with GBR group of girls, 2000: 426-427).

Of interest, are the boys' constructions for what type of men girls go for. Boys who are still at school are seen as babies, girls like more mature men who are rich and who can provide them with material things.

The boys will physically assault a gay person who makes a move on them. They also do not foresee a boy openly dating another boy in the school, and they will "*see this boy right*" (Interview with GBR group of boys, 2000: 553). A white boy says that it is an Afrikaner school and 'they are all men'. The girls are much more positive towards gay people. They like them, think that they are open and honest and have gay and lesbian friends. The girls also confirm homophobia and heterosexism in the school and say that a boy will not openly date another boy in the school, as one girl says:

> *people are very judgmental, they will look at them funny, they will laugh, they will turn away, they do not want to see such things* (Interview with GBR group of girls, 2000: 546-547).

The respondent remembers 'formal' discussions of sexual matters, he had guidance classes where dating and relationships were discussed but this was stopped a year ago. They talked about sex, but not gay sex, and learners were told not to 'rush' into sex and to use protection. Both the groups of boys and girls confirm that they had one or two discussions in class about sexual matters but that the content was not that relevant. What is discussed is not relevant to their experiences and they are told things that they already know.

Regarding the curriculum, the respondents' text books include topics such as reproduction but not anything about being gay. Lastly around pedagogy, his experiences are that girls in the school are better academically and that the boys are more 'playful'. They interrupt in class, they do not do their homework and so on. In the English or the 'soft' class that I have observed, there was a boy that constantly aimed at other learners with a rubber band. The teacher asked if he was concentrating. He replied that he was and it was left at that. During my playground observation, boys were also more active, two boys groups were playing with a ball and running around with a suitcase whereas there were no girls group doing the same.

He is 'out' at school, everyone knows that he is gay. He has told some of them and the rest can see from his 'feminine ways'. At first he did not tell people that he is gay. He decided that he can not go on like this and started hanging out with another gay friend at school and they socialised with girls. People realised that there is something 'wrong' and they started teasing them. He and his friend would join group discussions and they would talk to people and tell them exactly 'what he is'. The boys and the girls had different reactions. The girls were more understanding, accepted them and said they were proud of them. Some straight boys teased them but there were also boys who accepted them. The latter group of boys is becoming more because he and his friend "*spoke, and spoke and spoke*" (Interview with GBR, 2000: 445). The learners never had contact with a gay person before and they were desperate and wanted to know more. The white boys

discriminate more, especially the "*first team boys, the big ones*" (Interview with GBR, 2000: 481). According to the respondent the reason is because peer pressure and because they have not had exposure to gay people. The respondent chooses not to mix with white boys as they do not communicate well. He feels that white learners are straight tunneled and they take a long time to accept things. He has spent more time with black boys supporting their exposure to a gay person and thus lessening homophobia and heterosexism.

He feels 'different' from other learners in that when there is any discussion about sex such as the reproduction system, he feels on the spot and that they are talking about him. About this school he says: "*I do not have any problems. I am happy*" (Interview with GBR, 2000: 911). He mentions that there are big differences in the school regarding white and black learners. He relates two incidents where black people were totally under-represented. Because of this, he now wants to contact the Department of Education. In both the boys and the girls groups that I have interviewed, black learners make statements about the racist nature of the school. The black boys mention black learners being under-represented in terms of prefects, and where black learners are told that they can not take outside partners to the matric farewell but not so to white learners. A black group member says "*to them we are making noise... they tell you to keep quiet and you know that you are not making a noise*" (Interview with GBR, 2000: 621-622). There are 'race' statements made in the girls group as well. A white respondent says that black people are 'noisier'. In the girls' group, black learners also said that the school is racist. Examples mentioned is when something good happens learners are

addressed in Afrikaans, when something bad happens they are addressed in English implying that black learners are involved. Even if you were not at a specific event, they will point fingers and say that all the black learners were involved. When, for example, black learners are in a fight they will keep on emphasising that, whereas if white learners were involved in the same, it is soon forgotten.

3.3.2.4. Own self

For the respondent, being gay and 'being feminine' is a package, it goes together and the only 'manly' gay people are a "*man people who try to be gay*" (Interview with GBR, 2000: 257). It is thus only heterosexual people who 'try to be gay' who can have a 'masculine social presence'. The respondents' position does not seem to cause any discomfort, he is happy, and feels that he engages openly and honestly with other people.

At a young age he realised that he is different but did not know what he is. In his environment women spoke to his mum and she was the one that "*gave me the light. What am I*" (Interview with GBR, 2000: 352-353). Before he spoke to his mum, he sometimes forgot that he was a man. His mother told him that he decided to live his life like this and that she does not have a problem with that as long as he respects her. She told him "*just say to yourself well-done because it is like a journey and that she is proud of me, see*" (Interview with GBR, 2000: 361-362).

He has acceptance from his mother, as well as girls and his gay friend in school. His family, people at school, and friends know he is gay. He has 'come out' to all of them or they can see from his 'feminine manner'. His biological family accepts and supports him and their support "*gives me the courage that yes I am on the right track, the support that I have and that is what I need*" (Interview with GBR, 2000: 407-408). There are more distant family members who do not accept him but they are changing their attitudes because he informs and educate them.

In terms of his community, he felt that he experienced the usual pressure and that it is because of a lack of communication. He engages with them and experiences other people's questions as their need to know more. At first it felt a bit uncomfortable, speaking about his life, but the more he spoke the more comfortable it became. A negative experience regarding who he is, is when he has relationship problems. He then thinks why am I like this? Because the problems are so difficult, he needs to blame and then blames himself.

3.4. Lesbian, black respondent from a resourced school

3.4.1. Her school

The school is situated to the west of Johannesburg in a middle class area. It is an older area and the school is surrounded by fenced houses, tar roads and I assume an even mix between white Afrikaans and English speaking families. The school has 1107 learners of which 261 are black, 513 are 'coloured', 29 are Indian, and 304 are white. There are 501 boys and 606 girls. Of interest is that the majority of learners are not white, in this a previously 'white school'. Reasons could include that the school is easily accessible from major transport routes to townships and the principal confirmed that the majority of learners do not come from the immediate geographical area. In terms of teacher composition and interaction, the staff component is predominantly white. They have 48 teachers of whom 42 are white, 3 are black and 3 are 'coloured'. There are 9 male teachers and 39 female teachers, with 4 males and 10 females in authority positions.

It is a resourced school. It has well kept gardens, shaded carports for teachers' cars, there is a reception area, an administrative office with computers, and an armed security response service. They do not experience problems with chairs, desks, textbooks for learners, there are enough overhead projectors and the state of the school building is described by the principal as excellent *(Interview with LBR principal, 2000: 15).*

Some contextual background features of the school are that they experience a declining support from parents. Reasons cited include that parents live far from the school and that they are too busy to make ends meet. The school experiences a range of problems. In 1999, there were 4 suicides among the learners and this was a very serious issue for the school. They addressed the situation through focusing on drug taking and how to deal with emotional problems. They started a team of people who learners can speak to, called TEENAID. A few other issues raised include that as a former Model C school, they attract a large number of learners who are not 'familiar' with the basics' i.e. neatness and punctuality. They also have problems with their Grade 9 boys as they are 'natural troublemakers'. The girls, on the other hand, are continually gossiping about the boys. Furthermore, there is also a construction of black boys being good athletes (Interview with LBR Principal, 2000: 337) and the girls not being interested in sports. They also have a discipline policy (which does not include corporal punishment) where misdemeanours are listed as well as the corresponding punishments. The principal confirms a good culture of learning and teaching with teachers being punctual, well prepared and so on.

They do not have a gender policy because,

> *they were never told to formulate one, as simple as that* (Interview with LBR principal, 2000: 561).

The biggest gender issue mentioned is that there is a lack of male teachers to help with the boys' sport. Another issue identified is that girls go out with older boys and these older boys cause trouble in the school. In terms of femininities, authority, culture and an 'all roundedness' are important. In terms of what 'counts' for boy masculinities, sport are identified as well as intelligence and eloquence. The boys in the media centre are "*the real odd ones*" (Interview with LBR principal, 2000: 731).

3.4.2. Her responses

3.4.2.1. Gender

She holds non-conformist views regarding patriarchal gender constructions and opposes these constructions at a few points. Examples include her opposition to biological constructions of men born to be physically stronger than women; agreeing with macro-empowerment of women in present day South African society; and not agreeing with female teachers being better in 'softer' subjects or male teachers being better in 'harder' subjects or boy learners being better in these 'harder' subjects and girls being better in 'softer' subjects. At some points she also constructs patriarchal gender patterns; for example that women are 'naturally' better mothers and that males make for better school principals because they are better disciplinarians.

A further example of her opposing patriarchal gender constructions is that of her not conflating gender and sexuality. She views herself as a women and does not internalise constructions of her sexual object choice of a female making her 'un-feminine' or 'masculine'. It was not always like this and until Grade 8 she thought of herself as 'a boy'. She changed this view when she came into contact with a group of primarily black lesbians in town. Presently, she describes herself as a "*butch lesbian*" (Interview with LBR, 2001: 574) but at that she is "*still a women that loves other women*" (Interview with LBR, 2001: 64-67 and 366) and "*that is all it is*" (Interview with LBR, 2001: 80).

3.4.2.2. Homosexuality

She does not hold negative views on homosexuality. She does not trace homosexuality to a genetic predisposition and states that homosexuality could arise from either biological or social factors. She also does not think that homosexuality is either 'evil' or a 'sin'. She never had a sense of going against the Bible but feels that God wants one to be happy with oneself. Furthermore, she does not think there is anything 'abnormal' about homosexuality and that there is a need for any 'corrective treatments'.

She does not internalise constructions of homosexuality as being un-African because she knows many black gay and lesbian people. She states that, within the wider black community, homosexuality is seen as a "*white man's disease*" (Interview with LBR, 2001: 206). Her social circle is lesbians in town and that

"the people in my community. I do not socialise with you know. I just greet them and go past. I do not talk to them" (Interview with LBR, 2001: 342-343). She also agrees with gay and lesbian people as 'normal' and they should therefore participate in broader political struggles. She says:

> *they should because they are like normal people you know. I am not saying that you are abnormal or anything but you are part of the community and everything. We need houses* (Interview with LBR, 2001: 231-233).

Finally, she does not feel that South African constitutional protection on the basis of sexual orientation made a significant difference in her life. However, it did have an impact and the example that she mentions is that it allowed her to speak her mind in school, knowing that she has this protection to fall back on.

3.4.2.3. School experiences

Her school experiences are non-discriminatory. She has never suffered physical homophobic abuse. She also does not seem to suffer from verbal abuse *"only when joking around"* (Interview with LBR, 2001: 623).

However, her school environment is heterosexist and homophobic and there are constructions of heterosexist and patriarchal gender patterns. On a general level, there is a split between informal learner sexual culture and how sexual matters are

handled within the classroom. She confirms that learners spend a lot of time talking about sexual matters and playing 'the dating game' but these issues are silenced in the classroom. She also elaborates on differences between teachers and learners regarding sexual matters. Teachers are focused on abstinence whereas learners "*wants to have fun*" (Interview with LBR, 2001: 400). The split between sexual matters dominating learner culture and the 'formal silencing' thereof is confirmed by the group of boys and the group of girls. In the group of girls, teachers are differentiated and there is one teacher with whom you can talk about anything. One girls says:

> *like girls going out with older guys, the car, money and everything* (Interview with LBR group of girls, 2000: 599).

This teacher is open and there are opportunities to share experiences. The other teachers only tell the "*don't do this, don't do this*" (Interview with LBR, 2001: 633). Commenting on the dominance of sexual matters among boys, one boy says:

> *that is the main topic of this school, thank you, it is the main topic. Nothing, I mean after a weekend on a Monday nothing else gets talked about besides who kissed whom, who slept with whom, who did what to whom* (Interview with LBR group of boys, 2000: 585-587).

A statement in the boys group makes the link between learners all coming from the same area and that 'the dating game' in these areas, then gets discussed in the school. Another comment in this group highlights the split between teachers and learners regarding this matter. One boy says:

> *it is very stupid for a 40 year old to come here with a cucumber or a carrot to show us how you put a condom on, because we are just going to laugh at them. Because we know what we do* (Interview with LBR group of boys, 2000: 779-781).

The lesbian respondent seems to break 'formal silencing' of sexual matters in the classroom. She always talks about sex and relationships in class but is not sure why she does so.

Turning to the type of masculinities and femininities constructed by the boys and the girls, the boys construct patriarchal gender patterns. They internalise constructions of men being physically stronger, that women are natural mothers, that the father is the 'guardian of the family', and that the women provide nurturing. For the girls, they also all agree that men are born to be 'physically stronger' than women, and that women are 'natural' mothers. In both groups, there are some agreements with fundamentalist religious interpretations of women being evil. Statements in the girls' group include when women have no power over men (job opportunities and so on) they use their 'evil' – in this case

seduction – qualities. Nowadays there have been a lot of changes in terms of equal opportunities, a situation that both groups agree with.

The boys split 'the feminine' and 'the homosexual' from the masculinities they construct for themselves. A statement made in the boys' group illustrates this:

> *if you cry, you have lost of whatever. But if you get smacked, why you must cry, um that is being girl, or like they say being like a woos (someone that is scared)'* (Interview with LBR group of boys, 2000: 217-219).

It is however not an un-problematic situation and the boys comment on socialisation processes, peer pressure, and an awareness of not being able to let one's emotions out. They also do not mind physical contact with other boys as long as it is not interpreted as being intimate and that everyone knows that they have girlfriends. Their masculinities are also misogynist in that girls are treated as objects in 'boy performance stories'. Comments include:

> *two guys will come up and shake your hand* (Interview with LBR group of boys, 2000: 680)

and,

> *but to the girls it will not be that way, it will all be opposite* (Interview with LBR group of boys, 2000: 682).

According to the boys there are differences in how boys from different races talk about dating girls. Whites are 'restrained' and have sex within relationship contexts, 'coloured' boys have casual encounters, and there is no knowledge of black boys within this group. White girls also prefer coloured boys because, as one boy respondent says:

> *I have heard girls, white girls telling me that colored guys have bigger penises than the white guys and they satisfy them more* (Interview with LBR group of boys, 2000: 745-746).

Statements within the girls' group confirm that the boys view the girls as objects. As an example:

> *I think that a group of girls will be confiding within each other you know. You are telling your best friend what has happened over the week-end, who you slept with whatever. And then with the boys it will be more like bragging* (Interview with LBR group of girls, 2000: 481-483).

In terms of homophobia and the construction of gender patterns, both groups do have problems with homosexual people of the same sex as them. The girls feel that lesbians are "*disgusting*" (Interview with LBR group of girls, 2000: 680)

whereas gays are "*good company*" (Interview with LBR group of girls, 2000: 671) and "*there is nothing wrong with them*" (Interview with LBR group of girls, 2000: 676). The boys can not stand gays and they do not like them at all. One boy says:

> *it happened to me once in a club, a gay guy came up to me and he was like dancing with me in that kind of a way, his arse was on me you see. And I looked at him and I smacked him, when I told him that I am not gay, so fuck away from me* (Interview with LBR group of boys, 2000: 806-809).

Regarding lesbians, one boy says "*I love them*" (Interview with LBR group of boys, 2000: 848) and this seems to be the consensus in the group. Lesbians are women and they love women and maybe she could be a "*double adapter*" (Interview with LBR group of boys, 2000: 860). The boys also confirm homophobia in the school and that this is a way to show "*I am the main man*" (Interview with LBR group of boys, 2000: 923).

The lesbian respondent agrees that boys in the school view girls as sex objects and as part of a competition between themselves. She also confirms that learners are homophobic and relates an experience of a gay friend in her school who is afraid of discrimination.

On the level of policies, the lesbian respondent is aware of policies protecting women but is not clear if such policies exist regarding gay and lesbian issues. Teacher composition and interaction is heterosexist and there is a lot of talk about husbands and wives, and family photos are displayed. In terms of pedagogical relations, and if the lesbian respondent received any 'special attention', I did not observe anything to this effect. I did not observe, during the classroom observations, any 'special attention' to the boys as 'natural troublemakers' or as 'experts'. However, during the playground observation, more boys' groups were engaged in physical activities. Lastly, the LBR respondent's textbooks have not taught her anything about gay and lesbian issues.

3.4.2.4. Own self

She is empowered. She always had a sense of who she was, that she was 'different'. At first, she thought that she was 'a boy' but after making contact with a group of lesbians in town she realised that she is lesbian and a woman who loves other woman. This group of lesbians also offered her a social network.

Her 'coming out' process was not un-problematic. She always "*felt like this*" (Interview with LBR, 2001: 257-258) and in Grade 8 she questioned herself about feeling 'different'. It was at this point that she made contact with the lesbians in town and where she understood and accepted that she is lesbian. Her 'coming out' to her mother was marked by an initial discomfort but her mother later accepted her being lesbian.

3.5. Gay, black learner in an under-resourced school

3.5.1. His school

The school is situated at one of the entrances of a township to the east of Johannesburg. It is the same township as the school of the black, lesbian in an under-resourced school. The school has 368 learners, all black. There are 186 boys and 182 girls. In terms of the teacher composition and interaction, they have 19 staff members, all black. There are 10 males and 9 females. In terms of teachers in authority positions, there are 4 males and 1 female.

The day I did my first observations, a lot of learners arrived late for assembly. The school is big with three blocks, two of which have three stories each. A lot of the classes are not used. The school-grounds are un-kept and facilities such as bathrooms are dirty. It is an under-resourced school. They have enough chairs and desks for learners and the principal does not view the state of the school structure as adequate. There are also not enough overhead projectors or textbooks for learners.

Some contextual background features of the school include support from the community as minimal. If they call a meeting there would be about 10% of parents attending. A reason for this, mentioned by the principal, is that in the past the education system was authoritarian and parents did not play a role in education but were told what to do. They would like to see parent involvement in the maintenance of the physical facilities and secondly to give inputs on the type of

education offered. The principal would also like closer interaction with the community on the relevancy of new ideas and how useful these are for them, for example gender.

In terms of problems experienced, they had a lot around the fighting between Pan African Student Organisation (PASO) and the Congress of South African Students (COSAS). The school was a battlefield. When the violence started, PASO members no longer attended school and when peace dawned, all those PASO members were brought to this school. It led to big fights between COSAS and PASO within the school and learners aligned to these groups. There was no democratic culture but the use of violence and intimidation. The principal says:

> *and as it stands, you know guns are brought into the school. Certain areas are declared as, um, no zone. Even in the school yard we know where to get whom, you know because of these zones* (Interview with GBUR principal, 2000: 99-101).

He says that there are still zones in the school but that over the last two years that there has been a decline in the violence in the school. The violence has led to them losing learners because learners involved in violence do not devote time to studies. These learners are 'troublesome' and difficult to discipline. Also parents do not want to bring their children to the school because the school has a reputation of violence and their enrollments have dropped.

They are turning the reputation of the school around. At the moment the school is under the direct supervision of the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) because of its poor results. They also had workshops on working with political differences. Boys involved in these fights are also seeing their leaders being killed and realising that this type of life is not productive. They have also started to expel learners with bad attendance records. In the second interview that I did with the principal on why people dropped out of the school, he named the expulsion of learners with bad academic records and the culture of violence as reasons.

A further problem is that most of their learners are adults in terms of their responsibilities. They have children and these learners then come late because they must first take their children to a crèche before they come to school. There are boys who are self-supporting and who can only come to school on certain days because on other days they need to go and work. They need to work in order to buy something to eat. These learners live with extended family members who do not have the means to support them. The girls in these types of situations tend to get a boyfriend who can support them and usually fall pregnant.

In terms of gender issues in the school, he does not foresee that people will oppose the concept of gender equality but that this will be difficult to obtain in practice. He mentions the example of male teachers not accepting the authority of a female principal. Male learners seem to be more accepting of female authority and have worked well with female heads of departments over the last four or five years.

There are also shifts in the attitudes of male teachers and they have attended gender workshops from the Gauteng Department of Education.

They do not experience problems around issues such as rape and harassment. On why it is that boys are the ones involved in violence, he says that they think that they need to 'look strong'. He relates an incident of a problem he had with a boy learner. At some point, this boy pulled a gun on the principal and threatened him. Regarding gender policies, they do not have these but he says that it is included in their mission statement.

3.5.2. His responses

3.5.2.1. Gender

He holds non-conformist believes regarding heterosexist, patriarchal discourses on gender. The main reason is because he views himself as 'a woman' and because he opposes patriarchy. He does however also construct patriarchal gender discourses. He agrees that men are born 'physically stronger' than women and that women are 'natural mothers'. Based on personal experiences, when he is hit he will not go to his father but to his mother. His father will not nurture him but tell him to go back and hit the person back. He will not cry in public because he will feel embarrassed and other people will laugh at him.

He sees himself as a woman and this point is discussed more in relation to his views of himself. He opposes patriarchal gender discourses through his not believing fundamentalist religious constructions of women as evil. He also agrees that it is good that women are getting more opportunities nowadays.

3.5.2.2. Homosexuality

He does not hold negative beliefs about being gay. He thinks that gay and lesbian people can be good parents because of a lot of children not having parents. Where he lives he always saw street children and felt that he wants to help them. Gay and lesbian parents are thus a way to help these children.

He opposes heterosexist, homophobic religious constructions of homosexuality as being evil or a sin. He attends the Catholic Church and they do not believe that homosexuality is wrong. He is 'out' in church and was accepted. He also does not believe that homosexuality is 'abnormal' and that it should be 'cured'. Furthermore, he opposes constructions of homosexuality as un-African. He says:

> *like my grandmother says aich, in my house....such a big thing, when you grow up there is a lot of people like you* (Interview with GBUR, 1999: 365-366).

He feels that it is important for gay and lesbian people to participate in broader political struggles. The example he mentions for participating in broader political

struggles is that of modeling. The South African constitution's equality in terms of sexual orientation, has given him a lot. He has a sense of empowerment and 'normality' and when other people call him names, he can stand up and tell them that they are not allowed to do so.

3.5.2.3. School experiences

He has discriminatory experiences in his school. He has experienced physical and verbal abuse and since conducting the interview and the time of its transcription, he has dropped out of school.

In terms of the identified six levels of schooling, he does think that there are policies which protect girls/women. When a boy hits a girl, he thinks that the boy will be in trouble. He does not believe that there are policies which protect gay and lesbian people within his school.

The respondent thinks teachers are heterosexist and homophobic. He likes netball and relates an incident of where he went to play netball and the teacher asked if his 'husband' is going to play rugby. My respondent says "*it hurts me that thing, really bad*" (Interview with GBUR, 1999: 622). There is also a teacher who tells people to accept my respondent because he is gay. He likes this teacher and she gives him lot of support. He agrees with constructions of male teachers being better in 'rational' subjects such as mathematics and female teachers being better in subjects such as languages. He also agrees that males are better school

principals because learners will not listen and accept authority from a female principal.

Regarding learner composition and interaction, he agrees that learners talk a lot about sexual matters. Girls talk about boys and boys talk about girls, and there are no differences in the ways these groups talk about each other. He also agrees that there are constructions of heterosexism and homophobia in learners' sex talk. In terms of how they talk about gays and lesbians, some say that gay and lesbian people are fine "*but other aich*" (Interview with GBUR, 1999: 762). They call gay and lesbian people names and make heterosexist statements like how they can't understand two men being together. He also says that a boy will not openly date another boy in the school. It is especially the boys calling gay and lesbian people names. He confirms that there is no 'formal' handling of sexual matters in the school.

Regarding his own experiences of homophobia, he has been called derogatory names. Boys have also threatened him with guns and they have also kicked him in the toilets. He says that there are boys in the school who do not like him, especially those with guns and "*they say they are going to shoot you*" (Interview with GBUR, 1999: 867). The girls, on the other hand, love him.

Both the groups of girls and boys, who I have interviewed, confirm that learners spend a lot of time on sex talk. They also confirm that these matters are not 'formally' handled. The girls confirm that it is acceptable for boys to date a lot of

girls but not for girls to date a lot of boys. "*because if people see a girl with many men, they are going to talk about him and say this girl is a bitch*" (Interview with GBUR group of girls, 1999: 335). When they see a boy with 20 girlfriends they will say that he is a playboy. In terms of the boys, there are constructions of heterosexism and homophobia. They do not think that a boy will openly date another boy in the school and asked what they will do if another boy asks them on a date, one respondent says and he will hit this boy and "*it will simply be showing that he undermines me, that he is taking me very cheap. I can not do that*" (Interview with GBUR group of boys, 2000: 528-529).

The girls also confirm heterosexism. They do not think that a boy will openly date another boy in the school and they will be shocked and laugh when this happens. They are also homophobic but will not engage in physical homophobic acts against gays and lesbians. They say that they do not like gays because "*and wear earrings, the rings, all the things that women wear, they wear*" (Interview with GBUR group of girls, 2000: 383). The boys also conflate gender and sexuality. One respondent says:

> *you can not exactly differentiate between a gay and a woman at times. For example if a gay is far away and you are coming especially at night, you can not see, because when he talks, he acts like a girl, and it will be like she is a girl* (Interview with GBUR group of boys, 2000: 308-310).

Members in the boys group said that boys in this area get involved in crime because they need to impress girls. They need money to buy material things if they want a girl's attention. Parents are not willing to give money to boys (but will to girls) and boys are told at a very young age that they should earn for themselves. Boys then get involved in crime and it stops them from pursuing studying and so on. Girls also then go for older guys who have already left school because these guys can buy the wanted material things. One boy respondent says:

> *they are very concerned with that, because sometimes when you don't have money and you go and propose a girl, even if you look nice, they won't accept you because you don't have money* (Interview with GBUR group of boys, 2000: 374-375).

For the gay respondent, the curriculum and his textbooks did not teach him anything about being gay. They do teach him about being heterosexual and "*teach me how to be a man*" (Interview with GBUR, 1999: 1151). In terms of pedagogy, he does affirm that boys are 'natural troublemakers'. They do not respect the teacher, they smoke dagga outside, and they come late at school. He will not discuss gay/lesbian issues in the class as it will lead to questions that discriminate against him, make fun of him and which has no real interest. As an example he will not discuss anything about dating because learners will ask whom he will date, a boy or a girl? In the 'soft' and 'hard' subjects that I observed, there were only boys present. The girls were absent and no issue was made of that (in the 'soft' subject). In the 'hard' subject, the teacher asked where the other learners

were and it was said that they were sick. The matter was left at that. The classroom of the 'hard' subject was dirty, newspapers, tissues and sweet papers were lying around. I also observed, between periods, that a lot of learners disappeared behind the one block and only well into the next period, went to the next class.

The gay respondent never hoped that being gay is just a 'passing phase'. Lastly, he told his best friend at school that he is gay and she supports him. The other people in his school also know that he is gay because of "*my voice, my movements*" (Interview with GBUR, 1999: 1093).

3.5.2.4. Own self

He is not empowered. He has had experiences of rejection, especially from his mother and father. He seems to be at the receiving end of other people's extreme homophobia and he does not indicate a sense of having control over his life. Other themes are the conflation of gender and sexuality and the great importance of support.

He grew up with girls and played with the girls. He played with girls' toys, thought of himself in feminine terms, and did 'feminine activities' like cooking. They were four sisters and he was the only boy. When he was fifteen or sixteen, he had an erotic dream of another man. At that point he realised that he is gay and that it was difficult because "*I am a man, I am a boy*" (Interview with GBUR,

1999: 476). It seems that he had an early awareness of 'being feminine', and that this awareness and the erotic dream made him adopt an own identity of 'being feminine' and gay.

His mother and father do not seem to have a good relationship and he relates how his father will get drunk and beat his mother. They never treated him with respect. At some point, it seems that he 'came out' to his mother and father. Both his mother and father then rejected him and his mother does not speak to him and "*she used to say you are a boy*" (Interview with GBUR, 1999: 523). He does not stay with his parents but with his grandmother, who seems to have some understanding of gay and lesbian people. His parents threw him out of the house and their actions were hurtful. He says:

> *its hurting because I am a gay....they do not take me as their child. I am his child, but you never know my child anymore because you are a gay* (Interview with GBUR, 1999: 557-563).

They also told him that "*because in fact in this house, there is a boy not a girl*" (Interview with GBUR, 1999: 569) and "*ja because when I come back from school, aich, you are a girl, stabane, go out, with my mother's place, I do not want you here. And I told them when you kick me out, you yeoaa, what... because I am your child*" (Interview with GBUR, 1999: 574-576).

He has also told his sister that he is gay. She did not reject him. He has also 'came out' to friends and they supported and loved him. He also has support from his church and from his pastor. He says that he needed support and if he did not have this "*I would kill myself*" (Interview with GBUR, 1999: 634).

When he told other people that he is gay, they questioned him a lot. They asked him questions such as how it feels to sleep with a man and if he acts 'like a woman' in bed. He did not answer because he felt embarrassed to tell them about his life. He is pressured by these questions and is put on the spot by them.

3.6. Lesbian, black respondent in an under resourced school

3.6.1. Her school

The school is situated in a township to the east of Johannesburg. It is surrounded by four bed-roomed houses and one gets access to the school by taking a dirt road. It is a working class area where black families live. The school has 1353 learners and they are all black. There are 656 boys and 697 girls. In terms of teacher composition and interaction, they have 38 teachers, all black with the exception of 1 white teacher. There are 22 males and 16 females. They have 9 teachers in authority positions, 4 females and 5 males.

It is an under-resourced school. They have enough chairs for learners. There is not an adequate amount of desks for learners and there are four classrooms without any desks. Desks broke, the Department of Education came to fetch them a year and a half ago and still have not replaced it. A private company has built the school but they subsequently re-located their head-office and there is no money to maintain structures. I have observed that there are quite a few broken windows and there are dilapidated tennis courts and netball fields. They do not have overhead projectors for classrooms. The principal says:

> *ja that is where we lack the most...at the end you end up with nothing, if you look at the outside, the grass for instance, we do not even have the lawnmowers, we had some... once they are broken* (Interview with LBUR principal, 1999: 85-89).

They have very limited support from the school community. As an example the principal mentions is that when people broke into the school, people living across the road did not co-operate in terms of identifying the culprits. Parents are also not supportive. They only see parents in cases such as when he threatens to expel a learner or when a learner has failed. Even when he talks to the parents, they do not co-operate. For example, he had a case of a boy threatening to shoot another boy. When this boy's parents were called in, they denied that they have ever seen a gun in their son's possession. Parents thus become involved when there is a crisis but are not interested in the development of the school. Learners do not tend to stay with their biological parents but rather with a grandmother or an aunt. These relatives do not have such a direct interest in the learner's activities.

In terms of problems experienced, the boys are violent. They had to address the boys on carrying of weapons and threatened them with random searches. He recently had to confiscate a knife from a boy who stabbed another learner. Even parents are scared of their own sons and "*I think that parents are afraid of their kids, especially the boys*" (Interview with LBUR principal, 1999: 181-182) and "*you know, if you take an issue, he will call his comrades and shoot you, they kill you and all that*" (Interview with LBUR principal, 1999: 188). There is pressure between the boys to carry weapons and "*I generally think that they want to be seen as, as, you know, the Golliath*" (Interview with LBUR principal, 1999: 379).

These boys come from a background of anti-apartheid struggles where they became used to violence. Many of their leaders are from the 1980's and they are not scared of violence. He talks about a boy learner who has been shot and says:

> *but he was not scared because he, when he wants to kill me, they can kill me. And when I was shivering, it was when he was told me about this incident, and it is worse, a child to be shot here at school* (Interview with LBUR principal, 1999: 422-423).

Tying in with violence and involvement in political struggles are the disruptions these boys cause in the school. They are the ones heading things like boycotts, stay-aways and so on. They have not had a full year of teaching since the late 80's up-to earlier the previous year. An example is when some COSAS learners were arrested the previous year. They embarked on a boycott and also stopped learners, who attend schools in town, to attend school. The principal says:

> *because they are saying if you get to town it means that you must also stay in town because if you are going to sleep here, we are going to burn your house because your child is getting to school and ours not* (Interview with LBUR principal, 1999: 526-528).

These boys will also join wider political and labour issues. They argue that they are affiliates of COSATU and whenever one of their affiliates strike, these boys would join. They might be influenced by bleak prospects and not having any

options as well as living in families where everyone is un-employed. He always tries and installs some hope among the learners by telling them that they should not waste the opportunity that they have. Even if there are no jobs now, it doesn't mean that there won't be any in a few years time.

There is a further problem with the boys in terms of wide spread use of drugs and drug trafficking. It seems that the problem has now also reached the girls. Still another problem with the boys is their poor academic performance and that they seem to be proud of not achieving academically. The learner's homes are also not conducive to studying. Family members are not literate and can not assist learners and there are not spaces to study. In this regard, they keep the school open till eight o'clock in the evenings.

Teachers also have a weak work ethic. They struggle with large absenteeism and the good teachers leave the school. Their present teachers are academically well trained and two thirds of them have university degrees. Teachers could be de-motivated through things like preparing for lessons and then learners suddenly calling a stay-away.

Furthermore, they struggle with the Gauteng Department of Education. As an example, they have put in a budget in March of that year and in September, they still did not receive anything of that budget. It includes buying of paper and they were now experiencing a problem of nearing examinations without having paper.

He has to go to primary schools in order to try and get some paper and running around like this takes a lot of his time and is at the cost of other activities.

Regarding educational reforms, they do not have experience of implementing Outcomes Based Education. In terms of creating a culture of learning and teaching, they try and empower teachers through inviting speakers. He feels that learners and teachers are stuck in the past. They are used to disruptions and debating unnecessary things like if one can come late or not.

Regarding gender issues, the principal says that a lot of boys are from an African culture where there is no respect for women. These boys will verbally and physically assault girls. The school does not have formal gender policies or programmes.

3.6.2. Her responses

3.6.2.1. Gender

She does not hold conformist views about patriarchal gender constructions. She does not view men as being 'physically stronger' than women or women as 'natural mothers'. She opposes fundamentalist religious constructions of women as evil. She agrees with present day South African efforts to empower women. She feels that everything is done by men and women are now being given chances. She believes that men and women have the same opportunities.

Regarding her sources for support, she stays with her mother and it does not seem she is close to her. When she has problems, she will go to her friend who understands her. She also feels that her father is more understanding than her mother.

3.6.2.2. Homosexuality

She does not hold negative views on homosexuality. She favours social issues 'causing' homosexuality. She does not specify what these factors are but says that, for her, it (homosexuality) 'just happened'. She believes that gay and lesbian people can make good parents. These parents will not seek to adopt a child if they are not sure that they can take good care of the child. She also does not believe heterosexist/homophobic fundamentalist religious interpretations of homosexuality being a sin or evil. In her experiences, people say that but she opposes this. She also does not see being gay or lesbian as 'abnormal' but that 'it is right'. Furthermore, she does not see homosexuality as un-African and says that gay and lesbian people are in all places. She believes in gay and lesbian people participating in the broader political issues in South Africa. Gay and lesbian people must talk for themselves. They must represent gay and lesbian issues in broader political struggles and heterosexual people can't do so. Gay and lesbian people are part of the community and should participate in the struggles of that community. The constitutional protection in South Africa of gays and lesbians gives her the opportunity to stand for herself, it gives her power, and a feeling that she has equal rights.

3.6.2.3. School experiences

She does have non-discriminatory experiences of her school. However, in her experiences, the school has a patriarchal, heterosexist and homophobic ethos and this is confirmed in the interview with the group of boys and girls. In the main, she chooses people who understand her and seems quite unaffected by her macro school environment. She also does take matters further when there is direct discrimination against her.

In terms of policies, she does not believe, or have experiences, of policies which protect either women or gay and lesbian people. She mentions an example of where she quarreled with some boy learners. She took the matter to the Student Representative Council and they told her that they can not do anything about the problem and she should sort it out herself. She mentions discrimination from the boys when she wanted to play soccer and they told her she can not. In the other schools, lesbians play soccer and she feels that the principal should do something because she is a member of the school and wants to participate. She is however not sure if the principal will do something like this.

She does not think that there are gay or lesbian teachers in the school and she has never seen a teacher who 'looks like a gay or a lesbian'. Her teachers are heterosexual because "*if she looks at them, they look so much like women, the other they look so much like men*" (Interview with LBUR, 2000: 589-560). She

constructs patriarchal teacher composition. For the LBUR Respondent, male teachers are better in 'hard/rational' subjects and men make better school principals. Her reason for saying this is that men/boys in her community will not listen to a woman.

In terms of learner composition and interaction, she confirms that boys and girls talk a lot about each other. There are no differences how the girls and boys talk about sexual matters. She has not heard how other learners talk about gay and lesbian people. There is however a curiosity from the side of other learners about what she does with her girlfriend. She does not have time for people asking questions like these as they do not have a real interest. As already mentioned she has experienced discrimination from the side of the boys in them not wanting her to play soccer. Over and above these incidents, she has not had any verbal or physical abuse directed towards her. She does affirm heterosexism and homophobia as she has not had any experiences of a boy who loves another boy and them openly dating. If they do that, other learners will "*tell him that he is crazy. Can't he see that he is a guy, he can't go out with another guy*" (Interview with LBUR, 2000: 680-681). People will call them names and some will fight with them. The same will happen with two girls openly dating. She also confirms that they never had any 'formal' discussion about sexual matters. The boys and girls also said that they never had any 'formal' discussion on dating or sexual matters. The girls group also mentions that the guidance teachers do not show up for these periods.

There is confirmation from both the groups of girls and boys of heterosexism and homophobia within the school. The boys make statements such as gays are the 'trouble in this country' and that they are the ones making people 'sick'; and that gays will 'take advantage' of them, they will make you drunk in order to seduce you. They will take violent homophobic actions against gay and lesbian people. If a guy makes a move on them, one respondent says "*I am going to shoot him in the legs*" (Interview with LBUR group of boys, 2000: 633). Another respondent says that if they find a lesbian, they will rape her. The girls group confirms that boys are misogynist, one respondent says: "*they will also be talking about girls, how they are sexy, girls are bitches, all that stuff*" (Interview with LBUR group of girls, 2000: 389). Another girl says that boys must "*prove how strong they are. And they want to brag to their friends that I have slept with so and so. So I think that they take that as a rule that boys must do bad things, but they take bad things as a conquest*" (Interview with LBUR group of girls, 2000: 413-415). Comments are made in the girls group about girls only going out with boys who have cellular phones or cars; they condemn the strong focus on material possessions. There are statements in the girls group where gender and sexuality are conflated. As one respondent in the group of girls says, referring to lesbians:

> *no you must stay a girl not wanting to follow someone's character. As a girl you say, oh I wish I was a boy, start acting like one, playing sports with the boys, do all that stuff. Just be proud of who you are*" (Interview with LBUR group of girls, 2000: 475-477).

According to the girls, the boys are homophobic and heterosexist and a boy will not openly date another boy because "*I do not think that it will happen here in my school because they always think that they are the men and have to get the big girls*" (Interview with LBUR group of girls, 2000: 570-571).

The boys also conflate gender and sexuality and one says: "*there is a guy, a small child of my auntie, he is a boy, the way he behave, he behaves just like a girl, and the way he talks, just a small child, when he grows up he just become a woman*" (Interview with LBUR group of boys, 2000: 296-298). And another: "*you have a penis but you want to make yourself a girl*" (Interview with LBUR group of boys, 2000: 570).

They also comment on the fights between student organisations in the school and the area. Learners are afraid to come to school because they come into school and start shooting, one boy respondents says: "*they are just fighting for fun because of these fucking guns*" (Interview with LBUR group of boys, 2000: 746-747). One member in the boys group also had personal experiences of violence; he was shot. The girls also view the activities of student organisations as disruptive. In addition, they do not feel that they are being equipped well enough for the future because there are not enough needed facilities, and teachers do not care. Lastly, regarding learner composition and learner interaction, during my playground observation, boys' groups were more involved in physical activities.

In terms of the curriculum, the lesbian respondent does not have any books that teach her anything about 'being lesbian'. They however have a book in their school library teaching them about 'being straight'. I did not probe the book that she was referring to. In terms of pedagogical relations, it does seem that boys can be constructed as 'natural troublemakers'. The lesbian respondent says that the boys "*like breaking, the lights and the windows, playing in the classroom in the wrong time*" (Interview with LBUR, 2000: 843-844). I, however, did not observe such behaviour in the classes that I observed. She will discuss gay and lesbian issues in her classes if the class has a real interest. She however does not think that this is the case, people do not want to get to know her better but they want to use what she says against her.

She does not feel 'different' from the other learners and has never wished her being lesbian as being just 'a phase'. She has told her classmates that she is lesbian but only those who understand. She feels that her school prepares her well for her future and expresses some concerns about fighting between two student organisations. Their fighting leads to disruptions and my respondent is concerned about how this will influence her writing exams.

3.6.2.4. Own self

She is empowered and has support. She however also chooses not to deal with certain issues, such as 'coming out' to her parents, and there are under-lying

emotions involved. She is scared of her parent's reaction and the reactions of other people seemed to have hurt her.

When she realised that she is lesbian, she had a contradictory experience. She likes being a lesbian a lot but she was also shocked. She was shocked because she was scared and did not know what she was going to do. She did not know what her parents will say and if they will allow it. She has not 'come out' to her parents but has told her sister and some friends. They reacted by wanting to know what a lesbian is. She then sat down with them and explained to them. Those people that she told and accepted her, remain friends but some chose no longer to be her friend. Her sister accepted her and supported her and this was good for her.

She has significant experiences of other people questioning her. When she told others that she is lesbian, they asked her a lot of questions "*they ask her where she is going to end with this thing of hers, is she going to change maybe as time goes on*" (Interview with LBUR, 2000: 382-383). Boys also said to her that "*she is doing herself a boy and that does not make her comfortable*" (Interview with LBUR, 2000: 374-375). She did not like these questions, it made her sad and she did not even answer them. She chooses to interact with people who understand her or those who have a sincere interest.

4. ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1. Respondents are positive about being gay or lesbian but went through some struggles. Their struggles are due to being confronted by dominant constructions, verbal abuse, physical abuse, suicide and alienation/rejection.

All six respondents are positive about being gay or lesbian. They are confronted by the discursive object of 'the homosexual', and its dominant constructions of being evil, sinful or abnormal. Respondents oppose these dominant constructions of 'the homosexual' and in this, have fragmented and dispersed realities.

All respondents- with the exception of the GWR respondent- oppose biological discourses of genetic or hormonal abnormalities as the cause for homosexuality. The GWR respondent also constructs medical discourses stigmatising gay and lesbian people and argues that gay people are not good parents because of the fly-by-night nature of their relationships. Secondly, respondents have significant experiences with Christian fundamentalist discourses of 'the homosexual' being evil, a sinner and going against the natural order. The LWR respondent is the only respondent who is presently unclear about her opposition to such discourses. Because of the influence of her sister, who recently became a fundamentalist Christian, she is unclear if homosexuality is a 'sin'. All other respondents oppose these types of discourses.

As an example of the influence of these discourses, the GWR respondent said:

> *well I have, ja I cut my wrists, I tried to gas myself, I tried to hang myself, I did not want to be gay, I did not want anyone to know that I was gay, I thought it was wrong, I was very into the whole Christianity thing, I thought if I was gay, I am evil and everything and I just argh, why, why me, you know. There are so many people, why must I be gay* (Interview with GWR, 1999: 345-348)

and,

> *with me realising that being brought up about this place in heaven, walking on diamonds and then someone saying sorry you are not going to get there because of your sexual orientation which you can not do anything about. It is like changing the colour of your eyes. I was let down hectically and I thought like why* (Interview with GWR, 1999: 265-268).

But not all churches condemn gay people. The GBUR respondent found support from the Catholic Church and it was significant. If it was not for this support, he says that "*I would have killed himself*" (Interview with GBUR, 1999: 634).

Thirdly, all respondents oppose psychological discourses attempting to cure 'the homosexual'. Furthermore, respondents oppose constructions of homosexuality being un-African. Four of the respondents are black and describe themselves as gay or lesbian, in itself support for the presence of homosexuality in all cultures.

There is no justification in the data for statements of homosexuality being a 'white, colonialising depredation' of 'heterosexual black culture' (*Holmes in Gevisser and Cameron, 1994*). As the GBUR respondent says:

> *like my grandmother says aich, in my house.....such a big thing, when I grew up there is a lot of people like you* (Interview with GBUR, 1999: 365-366).

All respondents believe that gay and lesbian people should participate in broader political struggles. They view political participation as an opportunity that should not be withheld from them. Only the LBR respondent understands political participation to address broader injustices. She says:

> *they should because they are like normal people you know. I am not saying that you are abnormal or anything but you are part of the community and everything. We need houses* (Interview with LBR, 2001: 231-233).

South African constitutional protection on the basis of sexual orientation has significant meaning for all respondents. It makes them feel 'normal', respected, and equal.

They then do not view themselves as 'evil', 'abnormal', 'un-African' or as 'sinful'. They have commonalities in their opposition to these types of constructions. But, their 'oppositions' are also unique and individual. Their sense

of self furthermore consists of other diverse elements. There are commonalities in that all respondents integrate their sexual orientation in their identities, they are able to choose how they deal with their worlds, and they have a sense of control. The exception is the GBUR respondent who faces extreme discrimination and who does not have a sense of own control. The following discussion highlights respondents' diverse sense of self.

Turning to each individual respondent, the GWR respondent demands acceptance and if this is not forthcoming, he disengages. He also wants to educate others and deal with the world in an open and honest way. He is aware of people's contradictory constructions and uses these in his education of others. As example, he is aware that being gay places one outside 'the real man' (*Johnson in, Steinberg, Epstein and Johnson, 1997; Connell, 1992; Mac an Ghaill, 1994*) but that these public constructions are different to private practice. He has had sex with one such boy, a 'real man'.

> *there was this one guy, he was part of the Brady Bunch. The crowd. He was very, very straight. Ja and I had this scene with him and I promised I wouldn't say anything....no-one believed me, I had to show them proof, just to try and show them this is not what you expect... rugby player, um, uh, all the girls loved him. He went out drinking, very much the jock type....it was more for his friends, it was almost like he was in the movies... everyone looked up to him... actually I told people that just to make them think.....a lot of people didn't believe me and then they realised*

after a while when I brought some of his clothing (Interview with GWR, 1999: 541-564)

and,

no, how heterosexual must you be when you are on your knees giving a guy a blow job? (Interview with GWR, 1999: 101).

The LWR respondent values acceptance of other parts of herself- like how she wears her hair, how she dresses, her music and what she does with her life- than that of her lesbian identity. For her, she seeks and chooses people who share her interests and who also accept her lesbian identity. Both the GBR and GBUR respondents' gay identities are dominated by 'being women'. As the GBR respondent says:

yes definitely, I do because it is like, I do not see myself, I am physically a man but I do not see myself in that light, see... ... I see myself as a woman but in the physical body of a man (Interview with GBR, 2000: 72-75).

A difference between these two respondents is that the GBR respondent challenges discrimination directed at him while the GBUR respondent does not. The GBUR respondent also experienced much more severe discrimination than any of the other respondents. There is a sense of trauma, his mother told him:

ja because when I came back from school, aich, you are a girl, stabane go out. With my mother's place, I do not want you here. And I told them, when you kick me out, you yeoaa, what.....because I am your child (Interview with GBUR, 1999: 574-576).

The LBR respondent identity is dominated by moving between two worlds. One is her immediate geographical community dominated by constructions such as homosexuality being 'un-African' and the other, a community in town where these constructions are opposed. She chooses how she engages with which of these two worlds. Lastly, the LBUR respondent chooses to avoid people who will make fun of her, or who do not treat her seriously.

Overall, respondents thus have positive constructions about 'the homosexual', themselves and are empowered. But they have been through certain struggles. I focus on their experiences of dominant constructions of 'the heterosexual', verbal abuse, physical abuse, suicide, and rejection/alienation. Once again, they are faced by common struggles which they experience in unique ways.

Respondents have experiences of dominant constructions of 'the heterosexual', which also results in patriarchy and heterosexism. Half of the respondents (GWR, LWR, GBUR respondents) construct biological discourses of men being born to be physically stronger than women; and half of the respondents (GWR, LBR, GBUR respondents) construct women as natural mothers. There is thus not a clear-cut opposition for biological constructions produced to fix patriarchal and

heterosexist gender roles. Boy respondents are more likely to make these constructions: these constructions making things convenient for men (*Oakley in Haralambos, 1996*). All respondents oppose fundamentalist religious constructions of women being evil. There is support for what Khanum (*in Saghal and Yuval-Davis, 1992*) calls 'refusing holy orders'. Respondents oppose constructions of women being seducers leading to them bearing children and being confined to the home.

Regarding psychological discourses where 'the masculine' is split from 'the homosexual', boy respondents make such constructions. The GWR respondent does not view 'real men' as gay but also states that it was not like this in all cultures at all times. He furthermore has experiences of a gay culture where people have a masculine social presence and in this, does not comply to hegemonic masculinity's construction of gay men being effeminate (*Connell, 1992*). Based on these two factors, this respondent places himself 'in the middle', as he says:

> *I do not see myself as a real man but I do not see myself as a queen* (Interview with GWR, 1999: 120).

Both the GBUR and GBR respondents view themselves as 'women'. The GBR respondent views himself as having only the body of a man, the rest of him,

> *my social life, my being, my doings, what I do and how I live my life, the style of my life is that of a woman* (Interview with GBR, 2000: 79-80).

The GBUR respondent says:

> *I am gay, if I am gay, I am gay now, in my mind, in my heart, I should have been a woman* (Interview with GBUR, 1999: 202-203).

All boy respondents thus internalise constructions of 'the homosexual' being split from 'the masculine', albeit in varying degrees. 'Race' is an important variable where the black boy respondents have 'more' of such an internalisation. I elaborate on this issue under point 4.5.

Lesbian respondents do not have these strong constructions of themselves in opposite gender terms. However, there is also some sense of conflation between gender and sexuality. The LWR respondent views herself as being able to switch between 'being masculine' and 'feminine'; for her being masculine means taking the lead in bed (*Interview with LWR, 1999: 118*). The LBR respondent did initially view herself as 'a man' but through contacts with other lesbians, she now describes herself as a woman loving other woman and,

> *that is all it is* (Interview with LBR, 2001: 80).

It is unclear how the LBUR respondent views this issue but she does confirm constructions of gay men 'being women' where she lives. 'The feminine' thus does not split itself from 'the homosexual' to the same degree as 'the masculine'.

From gay and lesbian respondents' constructed gender identities, there is thus proof that 'the homosexual' is expelled from 'the masculine'. Another variable in gay and lesbian respondents' gender identities, is exposure to cultures where gender and sexuality are not conflated. The LBR respondent views herself as a woman, after coming into contact with lesbians in town that did not conflate gender and sexuality. The GWR respondent was also influenced by his exposure to a 'masculine gay' culture. Both the GBR and GBUR respondents view themselves as 'women', also reflecting dominating constructions in the townships where they live. There are strong conflations between gender and sexuality within South African townships.

Turning to verbal abuse, all respondents suffer from such abuse. The GWR, GBR, and GBUR respondents have been called homophobic names. Respondents are also questioned and asked to justify themselves (*Forster, 1997*). In the case of the GWR, GBR, LBR, and LBUR respondents, they use such questioning to educate others and do not mind it taking place. There is also an example of talking behind one's back and creating a hostile environment. The LWR respondent experienced talking behind her back and suggestions/hints that she is lesbian.

Respondents stand up against verbal abuse. As an example, the GBR respondent was sworn at and he resolved the matter by taking it to the principal who suspended the offender. Respondents are thus confronted by homophobic name-calling, questioned and asked to justify themselves, and can be put in awkward situations if they are not 'out' to everyone. Respondents have a strong sense of

agency of taking these matters on, educating others and taking actions where there is discrimination. Verbal abuse of gay and lesbian learners is common. In the study done by D'Augelli and Pilkington (*Rey and Gibson in, Harris, 1997*) on the types of discrimination- and the extent of it- that gay and lesbian learners face, it was found that 80% of respondents reported verbal insults.

Only the GBUR respondent has experience of physical abuse. Boys in his school have kicked him in the toilets and he has been threatened with guns. As will be discussed later on, under the theme of schooling masculinities and femininities, boys are and need to be more homophobic than girls. As will also be seen, even if respondents have not experienced physical violence, boys in their schools will be physically violent towards gay people. There is an underlying threat of physical violence, the GWR respondent says:

> *and then I had a few people that wanted to fuck me up and I was just like come, come try....the thing is, you usually see these guys, hey you faggot* (Interview with GWR, 1999: 534-535).

Regarding suicide attempts, it is only the GWR respondent who contemplated suicide. The GBUR respondent also said that he would have killed himself if it was not for the support that he received from the Catholic Church. A minority of respondents thus considered suicide because of the seriousness of perceived or real discrimination directed at them.

Lastly, regarding certain struggles of the respondents, they all had to deal with rejection. The GWR respondent was rejected by fundamentalist Christian discourses. He also wanted people to hate and reject him because he felt that he was committing a 'sin' and contentiously did things in order to bring this about. Of interest is that he 'came out' as part of giving other people reason to hate him. The LWR respondent was ignored by a girl who she declared her love to. The LBR respondent was rejected by her mother when she first told her that she is lesbian. The GBR respondent is not accepted by distant family members but does get support from closer relatives. The LBUR respondent is scared to tell her parents about her sexuality and fears their reactions. She has also been rejected as a friend by people who did not accept her sexual orientation. The GBUR respondent faces extreme rejection such as his parents chasing him out of their house and boys in his school being physically violent against him.

In summary, respondents are confronted with 'the homosexual'. Constructed as the binary opposite of 'the heterosexual', respondents have experiences of these 'unified identities' being constructed by psychological, biological, religious, and 'African' discourses. These discourses provide insight into existing sets of relationships and in South Africa, as an example, religion makes statements on homosexuality being 'a sin' or 'evil'. It has the power to do so, there are negotiations on the theme of homosexuality being 'a sin' and a positioning of agents within these discourses, but all along 'the homosexual' and 'the heterosexual' are constructed/maintained (*Foucault, 1972*).

The respondents oppose 'the homosexual' being 'evil', 'abnormal' and 'pathological'. In their oppositions, there are differences and fragmentations. As an example, fundamentalist religious discourses of 'the homosexual' as evil led the GWR respondent to self-hate, evolving later into self acceptance and opposing constructions of the evil homosexual. On the other hand, the GBUR respondent had crucial acceptance from Christianity and will never accept constructions, from this source, as him being evil. Respondents also have a different sense of self. There are commonalities in that the majority is empowered but within this, there are differences. As an example, the LWR respondent chooses friends who accept her for her total range of expressions while the GBR respondent chooses mainly girls because he is 'a girl'.

Respondents are confronted with 'the heterosexual', and have common struggles in that they have to negotiate verbal and physical abuse, suicide, and rejections. Once again, the specifics of what they are confronted with and how they act differs. For example, boy respondents more 'deeply internalise' psychological discourses which split of 'the homosexual' from 'the masculine'. But in this, black boys construct more of such a split because of 'race' constructions in the West of 'the black man'.

'The homosexual' and 'the heterosexual' are thus material in the lives of the respondents. However, there is no support for an 'inner identity core' for 'the homosexual'. Respondents are confronted by common constructions in their lives, but how they react to these and what they make of it, differs. There is support for

the Cartesian subject being de-centered (*Hall, Held and Mc Crew, 1992*). To mention two of these 'de-centerings', belonging to different structural groups, such as 'race' and gender, influence own identities. Secondly, the unconscious impacts on identities (*Freud cited in Hall, Held and Mc Crew, 1992*) and as example, there are splits between 'the masculine' and 'the feminine'.

4.2. There are unique ways of 'being out'

All the respondents have 'come out', the process where they have made their sexual orientation known to others. But they view their gay and lesbian identities differently and they act differently as a result. In terms of defining qualities of their gay and lesbian identities, I distinguish between the following ways of 'being out':

- ***'Classic OUT', the Gay White Resourced respondent***

The respondent went through struggles of thinking of himself as 'evil' and as a 'monster' and 'being unnatural'. These types of pathologised constructions do not reflect lived experiences (*Epstein, 1994*) and were traumatic for this respondent. Because of perceived ideas about 'who he is', he attempted suicide and rebelled against society. He started taking drugs and 'came out'- seen as another way of rebelling. The difference came when he made contact with people who accepted that he is gay. The cycle of viewing himself as 'evil' and 'unnatural', leading to

rebellion and a self fulfilling prophecy of others hating him and him hating himself, was thus broken when he was accepted as a gay person.

The phase where he first 'came out' to other people was thus within a cycle of eliciting hate in others. After being accepted, he now demands acceptance and respect. He is 'classically out' in that he values his opposition to heterosexism and homophobia. He is needed for this, as he says:

> *I feel that I have a mission to do, to kind of educate them, I belong really. ..I feel part of the school, something that the school needs, you know like they need me* (Interview with GWR, 1999: 880-886).

His approach to opposing heterosexism and homophobia varies from standing up in the face of physical threats, to verbal oppositions, to more complicated ways to subvert. An example of such a subversion is where he takes pornographic books to school and pulls his pants down in front of the teacher, thus breaking 'formal' silencing of sexual matters (*Epstein, 1994*). Furthermore, according to him he has a 'masculine social presence' in school (*Interview with GWR, 1999: 599*) but introduces 'feminine' qualities like giving a speech in drag. In this, he questions what it means to 'be a man' and supports the earlier described conclusions that Connell (*1992*) reached of gay men being accepted as part of 'the masculine', gay men themselves having a 'masculine social presence' but also introducing 'feminine' elements to this.

- ***'Insular OUT', the Lesbian White Resourced respondent***

The respondent had an early awareness that she is lesbian, when she was about 5. She 'came out' to a close friend of hers in her first school and was accepted because this friend had many gay and lesbian friends. The friend meant a lot to the respondent and inspired her. She subsequently went to another school where she hated it before coming to her present school (a school for the arts) and:

> *there are so many different people and they are actually working for what they want and then I came here and I was happy* (Interview with LWR, 1999: 400-407).

Her happiness stems from having a small circle of people with similar interests and 'ways of being', and who also accept her sexual identity. She is insular and chooses not to engage with 'the rest'. For example, she relates an incident where a teacher asked her if she is a lesbian. The respondent's response was to walk away, laugh at the question, and not answering. She also has objections against peoples' constructions of 'the homosexual' as just being interested in sex but do not engage with these. Furthermore, she objects to labeling people, has experiences in her school of this taking place, but does nothing about it. Lastly, her experiences are that there is great freedom in her school, that they have gay/lesbian teachers and acceptance, which was not the constructions made by the boys or girls whom I have interviewed; a further sign of her insularity.

- ***'In community OUT'; the Lesbian Black Resourced and Lesbian Black Under-Resourced respondents***

The LBR respondent's 'coming out' began with feelings of being different. At first she thought that she was 'a man' because she was not sexually attracted to the opposite sex. After making contact with lesbians in town in Grade 8 (about 13 year old) she realised that she is lesbian, she had spaces to discuss the issue, and realised that she is not a 'man' but a woman sexually attracted to other woman. She 'came out' to her mother soon afterwards and her mother did not speak to her and did not give her transport money to school or money to buy lunches at school. After eight months her mother started accepting her lesbian identity. Her social network is the lesbians in town (primarily black) and not her immediate geographical community (in a black township/suburb). As she says:

> *the people in my community I do not socialise with you know. I just greet them and go past. I do not talk to them* (Interview with LBR, 2001: 342-343).

The LBUR respondent also chooses a social network that accepts her and who does not make fun of her. She is willing to interact with her macro environment around her lesbian identity and interests. When boys in her school said that she can not play soccer, she took the matter to the school principal because she is a member of the school and wants to participate. Her 'in-community out' position thus differs from that of the LBR respondent in that it emphasises being taken

seriously rather than being understood. In both cases, the 'in-community' offers acceptance, support and common understandings without being insular.

- ***'Heterosexist OUT'; the Gay Black Resourced and Gay Black Under-Resourced Respondents***

The GBR respondent felt different from a young age. His mother approached him because other people said that he is gay and she brought him clarity about him being gay. She accepted him and told him:

> *just say to yourself well-done because it is like a journey and that she is proud of me, see* (Interview with GBR, 2000: 361-362).

His mother made the link between his sexual orientation and him viewing himself 'as a woman'. As quoted under the previous theme, both respondents view themselves as 'women'. The GBUR respondent grew up with girls and played with girls. He thought of himself in feminine terms and had an erotic dream of another man when he was 16. At this point he realised that he is gay. As already mentioned he was rejected by his parents, and faced other severe forms of discrimination, as he says:

> *its hurting because I am a gay..... they do not take me as their child. I am his child, but you never know my child anymore because you are a gay* (Interview with GBUR, 1999: 557-563).

Under point 4.5, I elaborate how 'the homosexual' is excluded from Western constructions of the 'black man'. What needs to be emphasised here, is that heterosexism is constructed. It is not only a case of being excluded of constructions of 'the black man' but also constructing women as the only option as sexual partner for men. Being gay for these respondents are about being 'a woman', thereby internalising heterosexism themselves, as well as allowing 'the black man' further constructions of himself in these ways because he is having sex with 'a woman'. Constructions of heterosexism in these ways are also supported by the example mentioned in the theoretical overview of Mc Lean and Ncgobo (*in Gevisser and Cameron, 1994*) of a gay wedding where the gay interviewee is the woman, dressing in a white wedding gown, while the partner was the man, in his tuxedo suit. It is a heterosexual wedding, with all its dress and other rituals.

In conclusion regarding 'coming out', it was described how there are many different ways to do so. A common theme is the importance of support. For the GWR respondent it broke a cycle of self-hate and wanting others to hate him; for the LWR respondent it was tied up with more important support for her total being; for the LBR and LBUR respondents it brought new reference points that now is a big part of their lives; and for the GBR and GBUR respondents it made it possible to be gay 'as women'. One needs to keep in mind that the 'coming out' process is difficult. There is a negotiation of other peoples' reactions and being true to oneself (*Harris and Bliss in, Harris, 1997*).

4.3. Masculinities and femininities are schooled in the face of 'the homosexual other'

In the following discussion, it will become clear how constructions of hegemonic masculinities and femininities happen in the face of `the homosexual other`, that what `the heterosexual` `is not`.

- ***Boys are more homophobic***

All the boys and girls interviewed, as well as the interviews with the selected gay and lesbian respondents, confirm that boys are more homophobic than girls. The following examples illustrate this point.

Under the first theme discussed in this section (4.1), it was described how the GWR respondent has had sex with a boy that was part of the `Brady Bunch`. The boy was a rugby player, a `jock`, and all the girls loved him. No one believed the respondent when he told them that he has slept with this boy. It is a classic example of what Johnson (*in Steinberg, Epstein and Johnson, 1997*) describes as the process whereby `the homosexual` is split from `the masculine`, that own homosexuality is expelled and projected onto `the homosexual other`, at the same time desiring and fearing `the other`. It is feared because it can destroy `the self` and desired because it something in the self, lost and seen in `the other`. Because of own fear and desire, `the homosexual` must be `kept at a distance` and this could be done through homophobic acts but also to `look big` (*Nayak and Kehily*

in, Steinberg, Epstein and Johnson, 1997). 'The boy 'looked big', he was a 'jock', played rugby and was 'the real man'.

A further example of how boys discriminate is medical discourses that stigmatise 'the homosexual'. In the school of the LBUR respondent, one boy said that gays are the 'trouble' in this country and they are the one's making people 'sick'. He traces the HI Virus to the 'lifestyle' of gay people and 'the homosexual' is constructed as sexually deviant and they hold the 'threat' through their own decadence to infect and 'rot the general public' (*Redberg in, Steinberg, Epstein and Johnson, 1997*).

The girls interviewed in this school also confirm that boys are homophobic, one respondent says:

> *but there is another guy and he has not come out, and everybody believes that he is, and everybody, the guys like ohh stupid fag and la, la, la* (Interview with GWR group of girls, 1999: 402-408).

In the school of the LWR respondent, the boy group interviewed also constructed homophobia. In these examples, the 'threat' of 'the homosexual' is clear, the ability of 'the homosexual' to destroy the heterosexist self. One respondent says:

> *but I would not like the gay person to be close to me as a friend because I am scared that one day he will get to touch me, so I have that fear around* (Interview with LWR group of boys, 1999: 824-825).

Asked what he will do if the person touches him, he says:

> *aich I will lose my temper, maybe I will slap him. I do not know but I pray that it does not happen* (Interview with LWR group of boys, 1999: 828-829).

Boys are willing to be physically violent when gay people 'make a move on them'. As one of the boys interviewed in the school of the LBR respondent says:

> *it happened to me once in a club, a guy came to me and he was like dancing with me in that kind of a way, his arse was on me you see. And I looked at him and I smacked him, when I told him that I am not gay, so fuck away from me* (Interview with LBR group of boys, 2000: 806-809).

The boys interviewed in the school of the LBUR respondent, also expressed 'the threat' of 'the homosexual'. They are afraid that gay people will take advantage of them, they will make them drunk and then seduce them. Here, then, is also an example of masculinities intersecting with violence and for what Epstein (*1998*) argues, that the gender order in South Africa is solidified in ways that include being violent. It is also in line with other statistics on the high levels of violence in

South Africa such as those reported on the murder rate (*Venter, 1997*) and the violence directed against women (*Pretorius, 2000*). Asked what they will do if a boy makes a move on them, a respondent in the group of boys interviewed says:

> *I will shoot him in the legs* (Interview with LBUR group of boys, 1999: 633).

The GBUR respondent also said that there are boys in his school that do not like him and:

> *they say that they are going to shoot you* (Interview with GBUR respondent, 1999: 867).

In conclusion, there is wide support, specifically in my interviews with the groups of boys, of them being much more homophobic than girls. It is in line with what Mac an Ghaill (*1994*) describes as the common elements in the different type of masculinities that he studied. Even though his study focused on specific macro elements in Britain and how these interacted with masculinities constructed, he did identify a common element of masculinities being homophobic. In the same way, there are different macro elements in present day South Africa, but all the heterosexist boys interviewed construct homophobia. 'The homosexual man' poses a 'threat' for these boys and reflects a splitting of their own homosexuality from 'the self'. Heterosexist boys need homophobic acts to protect themselves and it will be violent when the 'threat' comes 'too close'. Hegemonic boyhood thus

constructs its masculinity through homophobia. In the words of one of the boys interviewed in the school of the GBUR respondent, asked what he will do if a gay boy asks him on a date:

> *I will slap him. It will simply be showing that he undermines me, that he is taking me very cheap. I can not do that* (Interview with GBUR group of boys, 2000: 528-529).

Gay boys will thus face more discrimination than lesbian girls. It is in line with the findings of Harris and Bliss (*in Harris, 1997*) on gay men, in schools, facing more discrimination and therefore not 'coming out' as frequently as lesbian women.

Selected gay and lesbian respondents in this study, oppose homophobic talk and actions. As examples, the GWR respondent stands up to threats of physical violence and the GBR respondent started engaging with boys who were homophobic but who are changing because he and his friend:

> *spoke and spoke and spoke* (Interview with GBR, 2000: 481).

Both the LBR and LBUR respondents also express the need for information, and that people do not know what gay and lesbian people are about. Gay and lesbian agents are thus not only passive recipients of homophobia, they oppose and educate.

- ***Sex talk***

Over and above homophobic learner statements, there are further qualities to learner sex talk. Firstly, there is a split between 'formal' sex talk and informal learner sex talk. All the gay and lesbian respondents, as well as the group of boys and girls, confirm that there is a 'formal' silencing of sexual matters. It reflects the prevailing notion of the innocence of childhood and the de-sexualisation of schools. Even when sexual matters are formally handled, the focus is on biological facts and key issues such as desire, pleasure, sexuality, power, autonomy and dependence are left out *(Epstein, 1994)*. 'Formal' sexual discussions are removed from learner cultures. In the words of one of the boys in the school of the LBR respondent:

> *it is very stupid for a 40 year old to come here with a cucumber or a carrot to show us how to put a condom on because we are just going to laugh at them. Because we know what we do* (Interview with LBR group of boys, 2000: 779-781).

The LBR respondent says that teachers focus on abstinence and:

> *don't do this, don't do this* (Interview with LBR, 2001: 633) while learners *want to have fun* (Interview with LBR, 2001: 400).

Learner culture is dominated by sex talk. As one of the boy respondents in the school of the LBR respondent says:

> *this is the main topic of this school, thank you, it is the main topic. Nothing, I mean after a week-end on a Monday morning, nothing else gets talked about besides who kissed whom, who slept with whom, who did what to whom* (Interview with LBR group of boys, 2000: 585-587).

The assumption is one of compulsory heterosexuality, further support for Mac an Ghaill's (*1994*) findings of the central elements of masculinities. It is also in line with findings of the study of the National Progressive Primary Health Care Network *(Wolpe, Quinlan and Martinez, 1997)* on compulsory heterosexuality being a central component to masculinities. Sex and sex talk play an important role in boys 'proving' their heterosexuality. There is also support for the third element that Mac an Ghaill (*1994*) describes, that of misogyny. Boys' sex talk focus on the telling and re-telling of 'male sexual performance stories' in which there is a misogynist boasting and exaggeration of past 'heterosexual conquests' and 'male heroic fantasies'. In the words of the GWR respondent:

> *very arrogant, like I went to the girls house and we got down doing it, very proud* (Interview with GWR, 1999: 783).

Two further examples. A girl respondent in the school of the LBUR says:

> *boys must prove how strong they are and they want to brag to their friends that I have slept with so and so. So I think that they take that as a rule that boys must do bad things, but they take bad things as a conquest* (Interview with LBUR group of girls, 2000: 413-415).

In the group of boys from the school of the LBR respondent, the following statement:

> *two guys will come up and shake your hands.... they will respect you, but to the girls it will not be that way, it will be the opposite* (Interview with LBR group of boys, 2000: 680-682).

Boys become 'real men' when they brag about their heterosexist conquests. If girls do the same, they are seen as 'loose', as 'sluts'. The GWR respondent says:

> *girls also talk about their boyfriends all the time but more, not as vulgar, they are scared of the reputation of being loose* (Interview with GWR, 1999: 836-837).

In the words of one of the girls interviewed in the school of the GBR respondent:

> *the guy is always cool if he has sex with a girl but if a girl do, she is a slut, she sleeps around* (Interview with GBR group of girls, 2000: 426-427).

Girls thus construct their identities within the context of boy learners acting out their masculinities in terms of its constitutive elements of objectification, fixation and conquest (*Litekwa in, Mac an Ghaill, 1994*). Name-calling like sluts and so on, are normalising judgements, attempting to bring them back to the norm of heterosexist marriage (*Foucault, 1977*). One does not marry a 'slut'. There are however quite a few points where girls interviewed expressed their dislike being constructed in these ways. As a girl in the school of the GWR says about boy sex talk:

> *they are disgusting* (Interview with GWR group of girls, 1999: 332)

As with gay and lesbian people, girls do not automatically occupy 'their positions' in the construction process of hegemonic masculinities. There is disapproval.

Furthermore, girls seek boys who can provide materially. Respondents in the group of girls in the school of the GBR respondent, the LBR principal, the GBR principal, the girls in the school of the LBUR respondent, and the boys in the school of the GBUR respondent, all made statements to this effect. In the words of one of the boys in the school of the GBUR respondent:

> *they are very concerned with that, because sometimes when you don't have money and you go and propose to a girl, even if you look nice, they won't accept you because you don't have money* (Interview with GBUR group of boys, 2000: 374-375).

Economic issues are thus important in heterosexist dating, relationships and sex talk. It is especially so for black girls interviewed. Because of apartheid, the majority of families living below the minimum living level are black (*Race Relations Survey, 1994* 5). In addition, the patriarchal nature of South African society results in women being more likely to be unemployed (*Lessing, 1994*). Black women, as a structural group, are thus the most disadvantaged economically. Resting on patriarchal and heterosexist constructions, these women could then want a man that is economically successful.

On a more general level, one should keep in mind that patriarchy constructs the male as the breadwinner (*Tiger and Fox in, Haralambos, 1996*). Under patriarchy, all women can construct the economic as an important factor in relationships. However, given the history of 'race' discrimination in South Africa, occupying the 'traditional place' of black women under patriarchy, and finding an economically successful male partner, is a way to 'rectify' economic and 'race' discrimination.

One should also keep in mind that there are unconscious processes within economic issues. The one with economic power will probably be the active partner, controlling, choosing and dominating. Intersecting the violent nature of South African society with these type unconscious processes, the extreme sexual violence of men against women becomes understandable. I have earlier quoted the study of the Johannesburg Southern Metropolitan Council (*Pretorius, 2000*) that illustrated the extent of such violence. An example of violence against women,

here intersecting with homophobia and heterosexism, is a boy in interviewed in the school of the LBUR respondent who said that he will rape a lesbian.

One further consequence is for boys. As Staples (*1982*) argues, there is institutional discrimination against black men, and unconscious constructions, that stop them to fulfill their 'patriarchal obligations'. It is historically true in South Africa. Crime could then become a viable option to fulfill 'patriarchal obligations'. Members interviewed in the GBUR group of boys confirmed that boys in their area get involved in crime because they want to 'impress' girls.

'Race' also enters discourses of sex talk. There are constructions of 'the black man' and his sexual prowess. As one of the boys interviewed in the school of the LBR respondent says:

> *I have heard girls, white girls telling me that colored guys have bigger penises than the white guys and they satisfy them more* (Interview with LBR group of boys, 2000: 745-746).

I will elaborate on the sexual prowess of 'the black man' under point 4.5. In conclusion, there is support is this study's data for the common elements of hegemonic boyhood as described by Mac an Ghaill (*1994*). These are homophobia, compulsory heterosexism and misogyny. These central elements of hegemonic boyhood are opposed by those on the 'receiving end', girls and gays and lesbians. Based on all the learners interviewed, there are significant splits

between the informal learner sex culture and the formal culture. Significant inequalities, constructed through learner sex talk, are also not addressed by teachers. It supports the argument of Mc Lennan (*1993/4*) that social relations of power and domination are ignored within South African educational institutions.

Another element of heterosexist relationships is economic status. Especially for black girls interviewed, their male partner's economic status is of great importance. It could also be a contributing factor to violence of men towards women as the male partner's better economic status does place him in a 'dominant position'. Both in terms of misogynist and homophobic acts, boys have been physically violent or are willing to be physically violent. There is also proof that 'race' enters learner sex talk and I will further discuss this issue under point 4.5.

- ***Curriculum***

All the gay and lesbian respondents confirm that the curriculum is heterosexist. There are some exceptions and the GWR respondent mentions a recent example where:

> *there is some kind of reference to a gay relationship* (Interview with GWR, 1999: 930-931).

I, however, did not probe for more details regarding the mentioned work. The LWR, GBR, LBR, LBUR and GBUR respondents all confirm that there is no gay

and lesbian content in their curriculum. Gay and lesbian issues are thus not included in the curriculum of subject areas such as history and English literature. The contributions of gay and lesbian people are not reflected. A South African example is the contribution of gay and lesbian people to the liberation struggle. Seen in the earlier described accounts of Simon Nkoli (*Gevisser and Cameron, 1994*) and Tanya Chan Sam (*Krouse and Berman, 1993*), gay and lesbian people were part of this struggle.

Respondents have not experienced planned curriculum changes, such as those specified under Curriculum 2005 Senior Phase Policy Document to:

> *Identify the different kinds of relations that can exist between the sexes* (Department of Education, 1997a: LO-9).

- ***Teacher composition and interaction***

All the schools have patriarchal teacher composition with male teachers holding relatively more authority positions than their female counterparts. It is in line with figures quoted in the GETT Report (*Wolpe, Quinlan and Martinez, 1997*) on South African male teachers holding more authority positions. Teacher interaction is also homophobic and heterosexist. As an example, the GWR respondent says:

> *um a lot of times the teachers will make remarks to guys, won't you head along you moffie, wha wha, wha. I mean one teacher saying to us if there*

were no woman on this earth, guys will not do their hair nicely (Interview with GWR, 1999: 730-734).

The GBUR respondent also has experiences of teachers making heterosexist and homophobic remarks. The respondent likes netball and he relates an incident where he went to play netball and the teacher asked him if his 'husband' was going to play rugby. The GBUR respondent says:

It hurts me that thing, really bad (Interview with GBUR, 1999: 622).

There is further confirmation by the LBR, GBUR and LBUR respondents that they do not know of any gay lesbian teachers in their schools. It is in the light of teachers wearing wedding rings and telling classroom anecdotes about their spouses (*Spraggs in Epstein, 1994*), which all respondents have experienced. However, there are also examples of teachers either being openly gay or lesbian, or being supportive, and its importance for gay and lesbian learners. The GBUR respondent relates how he received support from a teacher and that it was significant. The LWR respondent has an Afrikaans teacher who is openly gay and who speaks about 'gay issues' in class.

Overall, teacher composition is, with minor exceptions, heterosexist. It is also patriarchal in its composition. There are also examples of teachers being supportive to gay and lesbian issues and learners, as well as one 'out' teacher.

- ***Pedagogical relations***

It is very possible for gay and lesbian learners to experience pedagogical relations as a policing of their sexualities (*Mac an Ghaill in, Epstein 1994*). The majority of gay and lesbian respondents interviewed, however, did not experience these relations as such. The GWR, LBR, GBR and LBUR respondents all indicated that they initiate conversations on sex and gay and lesbian issues within the classroom. It is, however, questionable how open and honest these conversations are (*Mac an Ghaill in, Epstein, 1994*). The LWR respondent had an experience where she was asked if she is lesbian by a teacher, to which the respondent did not give a direct reply. The respondent did not know how to handle the question and what to say. In the case of the GWR respondent, he is engaged in challenging the formal silencing of sexual matters, or using sex talk (and actions) to defy the authority of adults and middle class sensibilities (*Epstein, 1994*). The GBUR and LBUR respondents will not discuss gay and lesbian issues in class as people will make fun of them and discriminate.

In my classroom observations, gay and lesbian respondents did not receive any 'special attention'. In terms of patriarchal constructions, in my observation of the 'soft' subject of the GBR respondent, a boy at the back of the class shot an elastic band at the boy sitting in front of the gay respondent and the teacher either did not see this or chose not to reprimand this boy. When the teacher left the class he imitated her and the teacher asked him later on if he was paying attention. His behaviour reflects the boy as 'natural troublemaker' (*Mussinger, 1971*). The

GBUR respondent also confirms that boys are the 'natural troublemakers', they do not respect the teacher, they smoke dagga outside and they come late for school. Related, but as part of my playground observations in all schools, there are more boy groups that engage in physical activities during breaks. In all the schools, there were boy groups playing a sport during break while there was only one girl group (in the school of the GBUR respondent) who played a game involving physical activity. It is in line with what the GETT Report (*Wolpe, Quinlan and Martinez, 1997*) describes, as part of constructing girls as passive, and how this happens on the playground where girls engage in passive activity. Thus, there are constructions of boys being 'natural troublemakers' and 'active'. Gay and lesbian learners do not receive special attentions, are not silenced on sexual matters but also do not engage with these in an open and honest way.

- ***Summary***

In summary, regarding the construction of hegemonic masculinities within schools, 'the homosexual other' is of great importance. Hegemonic boys use 'this object' to prove to themselves and to others that they are not one of 'them'. They do so through sex talk and acts of homophobia, which are physically violent, and have the potential to be physically violent.

Referring to the six levels of schooling mentioned by Brandt (*1996*), the level of learner composition and interaction is thus marked by constructions of homophobic and heterosexist masculinities. These constructions are not

challenged by teacher composition and interaction or by the curriculum. Furthermore, there are no open and honest discussions on sexuality issues within the classroom. There are also no other formal interventions to address power relations and sexual equality. The only challenge is from gay and lesbian learners who are 'out'. The hegemonic notions of boyhood, constructed in South African schools, are also misogynist. Similar to gay and lesbian learners, girls oppose being constructed in these ways. In addition, economic status and 'race' are also elements in heterosexist dating games.

4.4. There are macro influences on schools

There are differences between schools in town (more resources) and those in the townships (less resources). Schools in townships-or previously schools for black people- suffer from the consequences of apartheid education. The schools in town are all situated in previously white middle class areas whereas township schools are situated in mainly black working class townships.

All the principals from schools in town, said that their resources are adequate while principals from schools in townships did not view their levels of resources as adequate. As the principal in the school of the LBUR respondent says regarding material resources:

> *Ja that is where we lack the most....at the end you end up with nothing. If you look outside, the grass for instance, we do not have lawnmowers, we*

had some once....they are broken (Interview with LBUR Principal, 1999. 85-89).

They do not have overhead projectors and I have observed broken windows and dilapidated tennis courts and netball fields. In the school of the GBUR respondent the school grounds are un-kept and the bathrooms are dirty. Schools in town, on the other hand, all have well-kept grounds, there are no broken windows and there are facilities like Olympic size swimming pools, rugby fields and so on.

Only the schools in the townships experience violence. Both of the township schools where I did fieldwork, are in the same township. There has been a long struggle between two student organisations, the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) and the Pan African Student Organisation (PASO). How they experience the impact of this struggle differs. When the fighting started all PASO members stopped attending school and when they came back to school, they went to the school of the GBUR respondent. These learners were not interested in their school work and learners who were, started leaving the school. The school has a very low amount of learners, 368 in total versus 1353 learners of the school of the LBUR respondent. A lot of the class rooms in the school of the GBUR respondent are not in use. The school is fighting its reputation as a battleground not marked by a culture of learning. The school of the LBUR is marked by boys being violent. Anti-apartheid struggles and the struggle between COSAS and PASO created a culture where boys are very violent. As the principal says:

you know if you take an issue, he will call his comrades and shoot you, they kill you and all that (Interview with LBUR principal, 1999: 188).

Disciplining boys with guns is extremely difficult (*Truscott, 1994*). The lack of an ordered and disciplined environment makes a culture of learning difficult. What further make this difficult are the social disruptions in townships such as boycotts. In the school of the LBUR respondent, boys join wider political and labour issues because they are affiliates of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). In the school of the GBUR respondent, learners also stay away from school but for different reasons. Learners have children and first need to take them to a crèche before they come to school. A lot of boys have to economically support themselves resulting in them only being able to come to school on certain days because they work on others.

According to the principal in the school of the LBUR respondent, teachers have a weak work ethic. In my observation of the LBUR 'soft' subject (English), the teacher sat at his desk the whole period talking to another person. Ten minutes into the period he told the class to take notes from the blackboard. During the whole period he concentrated on his work and ignored learners putting up their hands. The girls interviewed also said that teachers do not show up for guidance periods.

In summary, the two schools in this township have many similar experiences. They experience level of resources as not being adequate, have experiences of violence, as well as disruptions in their school programme. However, the ways in which they experience the impact of violence and disruptions vary. It supports what Carrim and Shalem (*1999*) argue, that even if schools are in a 'black' and 'developing' context, they have particular and individual experiences.

The schools in town do not experience problems on issues of material resources, violence or a culture of learning and teaching. As with schools in townships, they all experience problems around parent involvement with parents not taking enough interest in the activities of the school. Another common issue, regarding resourced schools, is drugs amongst learners (GWR, LWR, LBR schools). However, the LBUR principal also mentioned it as a problem.

Common issues unique to resourced schools, are their 'race' constructions and normalising of gender inequalities. A clear example of 'race' constructions, is mentioned in the interview with the group of girls in the school of the GBR respondent. When something good is announced it is done in Afrikaans, meaning that the black learners will struggle to understand and implying that they were not part of it. When something problematic takes place, the announcement is in English, assuming black learners are involved. Another clear example from this school, is that black learners are told that they can not bring outside partners to the matric dance, but not so the white learners. Further examples of 'race'

constructions include the GWR principal questioning if black learners can achieve 'white standards' and how schools became dirtier since the enrolment of black learners.

Both the principals in the schools of the LWR and GBR respondents, commented on black boys making a 'sexual nuisance' of themselves. The black boys pester girls and such constructions could reflect the sexual prowess of 'the black man'. I further discuss this matter under point 4.5.

Principals in resourced schools also normalise patriarchal gender patterns. They claim equality and that gender is a non-issue, but there is very little awareness. The LWR principal feels that there is no specific need to recognise the ability of women and it is not a case of:

> *Ah shame girls, oh please girls. We just go on as normal* (Interview with LWR Principal, 1999: 340-341).

The principal in the school of the GWR respondent views boys as 'natural troublemakers' and she says:

> *no the boys, I would not call that harassment. The boys will have their own fist hiccups with one another. They will have their fight, someone will give*

> *someone else a black eye or a blood nose and get it over and done with* (Interview with GWR Principal, 1999: 160-163).

The principal in the school of the LWR respondent says, regarding the use of foul language:

> *I do not think that it is a gender issue, it is a courtesy issue, you do not use nasty words in front of girls* (Interview with LWR Principal, 1999: 353-355).

Principals in resourced schools, thus construct boys as natural troublemakers, girls as ladies and gender equality as meaning 'extra effort' to 'help girls along'. Furthermore, gender is de-prioritised. In the words of the LBR principal, regarding their absence of a gender policy:

> *We were never told to formulate one. As simple as that* (Interview with LBR principal, 2000: 561).

Only one principal interviewed (BGR) confirmed that they have gender policies. Their gender policy emphasises 'equality' and sexual harassment. It does not address social relations of power but makes macro appeals to equality. Sexual orientation is also included. The principal says:

> *Well actually we tell them, listen if you make a comment like this or this to a girl it is regarded as sexual harassment* (Interview with BGR principal, 2000: 691-692)

and,

> *pupils know that regardless of whatever, their orientation or gender or race or whatever, everybody is equal* (interview with BGR principal, 2000, 695-696).

In the under-resourced schools, biggest gender issues identified centre around 'African culture'. The LBUR principal said that boys, in African culture, do not respect girls. The GBUR principal said that male teacher find it difficult to accept the authority of female teachers. It is stated as 'how things are' and that little can be done about it. All in all, in resourced and under-resourced schools, there are no policies, or other interventions, that address social relations of power and gender equality. Furthermore, gender is not understood as including matters of sexual orientation.

In conclusion, there are different macro influences on resourced and under-resourced schools. Under-resourced schools deal with inadequate resources, violent masculinities, struggles between student organisations, and a culture of learning and teaching. They also struggle, similar to resourced schools, with drugs

and parental involvement. Resourced schools make 'race' constructions and normalise gender inequalities. Under-resourced schools also normalise gender inequalities, this time for 'cultural' reasons. Furthermore, even if schools experience the same issues, the specificities differ.

4.5.There are varying intersections of 'race', gender and sexuality

Under point 2 (Methodology), it was stated as a limitation, that no questions were asked on inter-racial dating to the selected gay and lesbian respondents. Such questions could have elicited some of the respondents' deep seated' 'race' constructions.

One example of 'race' constructions is from the LWR respondent. She said:

> *It gives a start.....not accept them to be, well accept them. They still have this thing of umm, some of them.....and you can not expect them to be normal like the rest of us or whatever, and it will take time.....Black people, not only black people but because of racism and whatever, now suddenly it has swapped around and everyone expects them to be better, and be whatever, they can't, not now, maybe in two or three generations time, because they still have to get used to* (Interview with LWR, 1999: 332-338).

Here, the LWR construct the inferiority of 'the black' and the superiority of 'the white'. In a similar vein, the GWR principal says:

> *Ok so their parents say ok go to a school like Y (school's name) so that you get a better education. But there is no back up from home because they do not know any better* (Interview with GWR principal, 1999, 228-229).

In these two statements, 'the white' is constructed as rational, scientific and civilised. 'The black', on the other hand, is constructed as irrational, barbaric and rhythmic (*Fanon, 1986*). Further such examples are the GBR principal saying that black people are 'loud'. The LBR principal views black people as excellent athletes while the GWR principal thinks black learners are 'dirty'. The GWR respondent thinks that black boys are more 'spontaneous' while white boys are 'self-conscious'. The LWR jokes about how 'dirty' black people are and so on.

In all of these constructions, 'the white' splits its own irrationality and darkness from the self. It is projected onto 'the black. 'The black' is then feared and desired: feared because it is something in the self projected onto 'the other' but which can not be allowed in 'the self'. 'The white' desires 'the black' because that what is lost is seen in 'the black'. It is the reciprocal relations that Fanon (*1986*) speaks about. Colonialism established reciprocal relations allowing 'the white' to project un-integrated issues onto 'the black' and 'the black' suspending own self worth by accepting these projected qualities as 'own self'. It establishes identity, both for 'the white' and 'the black', through 'objective external criteria'.

Related, are the various comments made about the sexual prowess of 'the black man'. It was mentioned under point 4.4, that both the GBR and LWR principals construct black boys are more likely to sexually harass girls. For the 'black man' everything takes place on the genital level (*Fanon, 1986*). The same type of construction is made by one of the LBR boys interviewed. He said:

> *I have heard girls, white girls telling me that colored guys have bigger penises than the white guys and they satisfy them more* (Interview with LBR group of boys, 2000: 745-746).

These types of constructions are about the 'black man' having tremendous sexual powers. By implication, the 'white man' is 'sexually inferior'. At the same time and from a heterosexual reading, the 'white woman' desires the 'black man' but it is presented as fear. She, as a civilized, rational being can not allow these 'uncontained sexual forces' because it will destroy her 'essence'. There is thus a competition between the 'white man' and the 'black man' for the 'white woman'. On the surface, the 'sexually inferior' 'white man' is desired but there are unconscious desires for the 'black man'.

Especially middle class 'whites' emphasise sexual restraint. In the face of the 'sexual threat' of the 'black man', there is further reason for patriarchy and heterosexism. The 'white man' must protect the 'white woman' (*Rattansi in, Rattansi and Westwood, 1994*). Furthermore, the sexually powerful 'black man' represents repressed homosexuality to the 'white man'. Similar to earlier described notions of splitting own homosexuality from 'own masculinity', the 'black man' represents 'immense sexual abundant homosexuality' to the 'white man'.

These types of constructions also have implication to the 'black homosexual'. There are various examples in this study's data of the 'black homosexual' being 'a woman'. As was mentioned under point 4.1, black gay respondents have much stronger views, than the white gay respondent, on their homosexuality making them 'women'. The GBR respondent said:

> *Yes definitely, I do because it is like, I do not see myself, I am physically a man but I do not see myself in that light see.....I see myself as a woman in the physical body of a man* (Interview with GBR, 2000: 72-75).

In the words of the GBUR respondent:

> *I am gay, if I am gay, I am gay now, in my mind, in my heart, I should have been a woman* (Interview with GBUR, 1999: 202-203).

The two respondents place themselves outside of the meanings of the 'black man'. There are heterosexist assumptions in meanings of 'the black man' and because respondents are gay, they feel excluded. They then view themselves as 'women'. These exclusions are emotional for the 'black homosexual'. In the words of the GBR respondent,

> *that passion, you know, that something, I feel that I do not belong there* (Interview with GBR, 1999: 119-120)

and.

> *what I mean like, I feel like, seeing that I am against them or the opposite to them. So I feel that I do not belong there* (Interview with GBR, 1999: 126-127).

For the 'black homosexual', societal constructions on 'race', gender and sexual orientation intersect at this point. The macro environment of black gay respondents in this study, is also marked by constructions of gay men being 'women' (as was described under point 4.1). In under-resourced black communities, gay masculinities have thus not won space as a viable alternative to heterosexist masculinities (*Connell, 1992*). As one of the boys in the schools of the GBUR respondent said:

> *You can not exactly differentiate between a gay and a woman at times. For example if a gay is far away and you are coming especially at night, you can not see. Because when he talks, he acts like a girl, and it will be like she is a girl* (Interview with GBUR group of boys, 2000: 308-310).

One of the boys in the school of the LBUR respondent said:

> *There is a guy, a small child of my auntie, he is a boy. The way he behaves, he behave just like a girl, and the way that he talks, just a small child.*

When he grows up he just become a woman (Interview with LBUR group of boys, 2000: 296-298).

In conclusion, this study's data revealed many constructions of 'the black' and 'the black man'. These constructions contribute to macro and micro meanings of 'the black homosexual' as 'a woman'. In addition to constructions in Western societies of 'the homosexual' being excluded from 'the masculine', 'the homosexual' is also excluded from colonial constructions of 'the black man'.

CONCLUSION

On macro levels, South African schools and society are patriarchal, heterosexist and homophobic. In spite of this, gay and lesbian respondents in this study are empowered and have positive experiences of their schooling. They have common experiences but their identities are marked by differences, being multi layered and unique.

Within South African schools, sexual matters proliferate amongst learners. Formally, sexual matters are not dealt with. When it is, it is not relevant to learners' experiences nor does it address micro social relations of power and domination. There are no policies which protect gay and lesbian learners, or girls. There are also no policies aiming for 'sexual and gender equal relations'. There are also no links made between gender and sexual orientation. At most, there are general macro appeals to everyone being equal. Teacher composition and teacher interaction, with minor exceptions (and which are significant to gay and lesbian learners), are heterosexist and homophobic. Learner composition and learner interaction share international research findings of boy masculinities being constructed around being heterosexist, homophobic and misogynist. These hegemonic constructions of boyhood 'proves itself' through sex talk, acts of homophobia and misogyny, and it could be violent in doing so. In these constructions, how 'the other' is split into the unconscious is central. The only challenge to these notions of boyhood comes from girl and gay and lesbian learners.

In addition to quoted international findings on boy masculinities, economic status is an important element in heterosexist dating. The emphasis on economic status of the male partner by girls, further constructs patriarchy, heterosexism and it could reflect unconscious notions of being 'the slave'. It could also contribute to violence against women. There is also proof for constructions of 'the black man' in learner sex talk. Furthermore, the curriculum is heterosexist. Lastly, on the level of the school, pedagogical relations do not pay 'special attention' to gay and lesbian learners but there is no open and honest discussion of sexuality issues. Boys are also constructed as natural troublemakers and as active.

Gay and lesbian learner identities are thus constructed in relation to heterosexist, misogynist and homophobic masculinities and femininities. Such constructions are not challenged by policies, teacher composition and teacher interaction, the curriculum or pedagogical relations.

There are macro influences on schools. Under-resourced schools suffer from a lack of material resources, they struggle with establishing a culture of learning and teaching, and boys are extremely violent. Resourced schools deal with issues on 'race' and a normalising of gender inequalities. These macro influences have an impact on gay and lesbian respondents. As an example, the GBUR respondent dropped out of school. He experienced physical violence, from the boys in his school, because he is gay. His school also has a history of political violence and disruptions. On the other hand, the LWR respondent attends a very well resourced school that allows her 'her whole being'. She does art at school and has the

resources to do so, she has friends who share the same world view, she is acknowledged, the 'lesbian thing' is not that important, and she has never faced any disruptions of her schooling programme.

In relation to their schooling, gay and lesbian respondents are empowered. They negotiate their schooling environment in ways that oppose, subvert, ignore and internalise dominant constructions. They also deal with heterosexist and homophobic discourses in broader society. They had to negotiate Christian religious discourses of them being evil and sinners in order not to reject and condemn their sexuality. These learners had very different experiences regarding these discourses and they vary from receiving crucial needed support from the church to suicide attempts. Respondents also have experiences of psychological discourses abnormalising them and which they reject. They also reject biological discourses constructing them 'lacking something'. Among the respondents, there are gender differences on own gender identities. Lesbian respondents construct themselves as women whereas gay respondents construct themselves more in opposite gender terms. Among the gay respondents, 'race' and exposure to a 'masculine gay' culture are important variables for the degree to which they view themselves as 'not enough of a real man'. Furthermore, the majority of respondents oppose patriarchal discourses but within this, gay respondents are more willing to construct such discourses because of the advantages for them. Lastly, respondents oppose fundamentalist Christian discourses of women as evil.

All respondents have experiences of being 'the other' and of normalising judgments. They are called names, questioned, asked to justify themselves, face physical abuse, and alienation/rejection. They engage with dominant discourses, how these judge and place them, and position themselves where they do not see themselves as 'monsters', 'abnormal' and so on. But they do so in vastly different ways. Their experiences differ because they belong to different structural groups and because micro experiences are unique and complex. This study has, therefore, shown that with the sample and within the scope of this study, gay and lesbian learners have different positive images of themselves, which they actively use in their experiences at schools. Their schooling experiences, then, are positive despite their schooling, rather than because of it.

5. APPENDICES

5.1. Interview Schedules

5.1.1 Interview schedule with gay or lesbian respondent

AIM OF THE INTERVIEW WITH SELECTED GAY OR LESBIAN RESPONDENT

The aim of this interview is to get the own positionings of the selected gay and lesbian learners within certain discourses. These are discourses of 'the heterosexual' and 'the homosexual' on both a macro societal level as well as on the level of the school.

The questions are open ended. Answer will be probed but probes are not specified.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE WITH THE SELECTED GAY/LESBIAN RESPONDENT

I firstly want to thank you for agreeing to do the interview with me. As we have discussed before, I am completing a M-Ed degree at Wits University on experiences of certain gay and lesbian learners in Gauteng schools. I am gay and work for a gay and lesbian community organisation.

Whatever we say in the interview will remain confidential. You will sign a form of confidentiality and which it is said that no names will appear on any form. I would like you to read this form, and if it is in order to sign it.

There are no right or wrong answers to my questions. I am interested in what you think and feel around certain issues. I will ask you to expand and clarify a lot because I want to capture as much as possible of your experiences. In order to capture as much as possible I want to use a tape recorder; you must tell me if this is in order with you.

Do you have any questions?

SCHEDULE OF QUESTIONS

1. BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

1. Coding			
Resourced		Under-resourced	
Male		Female	
Black		White	

II. CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER AND SEXUAL PATTERNS WITHIN BROADER SOCIETY

1. Do you think that men are born to be physically stronger than women? Why do you say so?

2. Women give birth to children. Do they then have any special relation to these children? Why do you say so?

3. How do you feel about crying in public when you really want to?

4. There is a strong belief in society that if a man is gay he is not much of a man. It is thinking that he is a bit like a woman. What do you think?

5. Some religious interpretations portray women as 'evil'; as in the Biblical Fall where Eve seduced Adam. What do you think of such interpretations?

6. The new South African government tries to empower women. There are as an example much more women in parliament. Do you agree with this? Why do you say so?

7. Do you think that women have the same opportunities as men? Why is this so? And how do you feel about it?

8. Do you think that one is born to be heterosexual or homosexual?

9. Is it possible for gay and lesbians to be good parents through for example adopting children? Why do you say so?

10. Religion very often calls homosexuals 'evil' and 'sinners'. The belief is that man was made for women and vice versa. Do you agree with this and why do you say so?

11. Doctors and psychologists have tried to 'cure' homosexuals and make them 'normal'. Do you agree with this and why do you say so?

12. Homosexuality has been called `un-African`. What do you think of such statements?

13. Do you agree with gays and lesbians participating in the broader political liberation of the country? Why do you say so?

14. The new South African constitution, for the first time in the world, protects the rights of gays and lesbians. Do you agree with this and why do you say so?

15. How did you feel when you realised that you are gay or lesbian?

16. Gays and lesbian usually `come out` (tell others that they are gay or lesbian) to different people at different times. Have you `come out` to anyone? How did they react? How did you feel about these reactions and what did you do?

17. When you told other people that you are gay or lesbian, did they question you a lot? For example, did they ask you questions like what caused you to be like this? And did you have to justify yourself to statements such as you are a sinner. How did you feel?

18. It is common practise that there is a man and a woman in a relationship. Even in gay or lesbian relationships there tend to be a `man` and a `woman`. What do you think about this?

III. RE/PRODUCTION OF PATRIARCHY AND HETEROSEXISM WITHIN YOUR SCHOOL

A: GENERAL

1. Boys and girls usually spend a lot of time talking about who is dating whom, who is sexy, who they want to date etceteras. What are your experiences in this regard?

2. Are these matters (referred to in question 1) formally addressed in the classroom? For example, do you have any lessons on relationships? If so, what are these lessons about?

3. How do the majority of people within your school talk about gays and lesbians? Are you in anyway like this?

B: POLICY ISSUES

1. Are there any policies in your school that protects women? Why do you say so? How do you feel about this?

2. Are there any policies in your school that protects gays and lesbians? Why do you say so? How do you feel about this?

3. What type of discrimination do you think will be prioritised in your school?

C: TEACHER COMPOSITION AND TEACHER INTERACTION

1. Are there any gay/lesbian teachers in your school? Why do you say so? Are there any heterosexual teachers in your school? Why do you say so?

2. Do male teachers make better science and mathematics teachers? Why do you say so?

3. Do female teachers make better language and art teachers? Why do you say so?

4. Who makes better school principals, male or female teachers? Why do you say so?

D: LEARNER COMPOSITION AND LEARNER INTERACTION

1. Do boys talk about girls as if they (the boys) are in competition on who can date the 'best' and the most girls? Do the boys talk about their feelings? Why do you think this is so?

2. Lets say one of the other boys in the school has feelings for another boy. Will he talk about this? Why is this so? If a girl has feelings for another girl, will she talk about this? Why is this so?

3. Do you think that the girls in your school think that to have a boyfriend proofs being 'grown up and normal'? Why do you say so?

4. Do you feel different from other learners? Why do you say so?

5. Did you ever hope that your attraction to the same sex will change and wished that it was a passing phase? Why do you say so?

6. Have you told anyone in your school that you are gay or lesbian? What was their reaction? How did you feel?

7. Have you ever suffered homophobic abuse in your school? In other words, has anyone ever called you names or assaulted you because you are gay or lesbian?

8. Do you think that your schooling equips you well for your future?

9. Are there any differences between white and black learners in your school?

D: CURRICULUM

1. What do your textbooks teach you about being gay or lesbian? What does it teach you about being heterosexual?

2. Are boys better in subjects such as mathematics and science or woodwork and girls better in arts and home economics? Why do you say so?

E: PEDAGOGY

1. In the classroom, do you think that boys are the 'experts'?

2. Who makes the most trouble in class, the boys or the girls? Why do you say so?

3. Will you discuss gay and lesbian issues in your class? Why do you say so?

Do you have any questions?

Thank you.

5.1.2 Interview schedule with group of boys and group of girls

AIM OF THE GROUP INTERVIEW WITH A GROUP OF FIVE BOYS AND FIVE GIRLS FROM THE CLASS OF THE SELECTED GAY AND LESBIAN LEARNER

The aim of these interviews is to describe own positionings, of a group of five boys and a group of five girls from the class of the selected gay or lesbian learner. Positionings are probed regarding more general discourses of heterosexuality and homosexuality, as well as these discourses in the school. These positionings will be used to outline the practical situations facing the specific gay and lesbian learner; and in this way it also studies my outlined theory in corresponding practical situations.

The questions are open ended. Answer will be probed but probes are not specified.

I will ask for nominations of five boys and five girls to do a group interview on gender.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR A GROUP OF FIVE BOYS AND A GROUP OF FIVE GIRLS FROM THE CLASS OF THE SELECTED GAY/LESBIAN RESPONDENT

My name is Dawie Nel and I am completing a M-Ed degree at Wits University. I am researching certain aspects of gender and would like to do a group interview with yourself. Everything that will be said will remain confidential and I am interested in general themes.

I have already interviewed your principal and have done classroom and playground observations. If it is all right with you I want to tape record our conversation as this will afford me a fully account for what we say.

There are no right or wrong answers to my questions. I am interested in what you think and feel around certain issues. I will ask you to expand and clarify a lot because I want to capture as much as possible of your experiences.

Do you have any questions?

SCHEDULE OF QUESTIONS

I. BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

1. Coding			
Gay and lesbian respondent number			
Resourced		Under-resourced	
Male		Female	
Black		White	

II. CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER AND SEXUAL PATTERNS WITHIN BROADER SOCIETY

1. Do you think that men are born to be physically stronger than women? Why do you say so?

2. Women give birth to children. Do they then have any special relation to these children? Why do you say so?

3. Some religious interpretations portray women as 'evil'; as in the Biblical Fall where Eve seduced Adam. What do you think of such interpretations?

4. Will you cry in public when you really want to?

5. Would you hug someone of the same sex in public?

6. The new South African government tries to empower women. There are as an example much more women in parliament. Do you agree with this? Why do you say so?

7a. (for girls) Do you think that you have the same opportunities as men? Why is this so? And how do you feel about it?

7b. (for boys) Do you think that men and women have the same opportunites? Why is this so and how do you feel about it?

8. Do you think that one is born to be heterosexual or homosexual?

9. Doctors and psychologists have tried to 'cure' homosexuals and make them 'normal'. Do you agree with this and why do you say so?

11. The new South African constitution, for the first time in the world, protects the rights of gays and lesbians. Do you agree with this and why do you say so?

III. RE/PRODUCTION OF PATRIARCHY AND HETEROSEXISM WITHIN THE SCHOOL

1. Boys and girls usually spend a lot of time talking about who is dating whom, who is sexy, who they want to date etceteras. What is your experiences in this regard?

2. How are these matters handled in the classroom?

3. What do you think of gays?

4. What do you think of lesbians?

5. (for girls) How do boys usually talk about dating girls?

6. (for boys) What does it mean to be a boy?

7. Do you think that a boy will openly date another boy in this school? Do you think a girls will openly date another girls in this school? Why do you say so?

8. Do you think that your present school equips you well for your future?

9. Do you think the black and the white learners in the school are different from each other?

10. Do you have any questions?

Thank you for your time and effort.

5.1.3 Interview schedule with school principal

AIM OF THE INTERVIEW

The interview with the school principal aim to describe the gender policies, issues around gender and to obtain some background information of the school.

It will also provide limited data on teacher and learner composition.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE WITH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Firstly, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to do fieldwork within your school.

I am doing research, for my M-ED (by dissertation) purposes, on gender issues. The purpose of our interview are to obtain information on gender issues as well as some contextual background of the school. As all respondents in my fieldwork will remain confidential, I would like us to sign a form to this effect. I would like you to read through the form and if it is in order, to sign it.

Do you have any questions or comments?

SCHEDULE OF QUESTIONS

Gay or lesbian respondent number:

Resourced:	Under-resourced:

Interview number:

2. What is the race breakdown of teachers in the school?	
White	
Black	
Asian	
Coloured	

3. What is the race breakdown of learners within the school?	
White	
Black	
Asian	
Coloured	

4. What is the sex breakdown of teachers in the school?	
Male	
Female	

5. What is the sex breakdown of learners within the school?	
Male	
Female	

6. What is the sex breakdown, according to sex, of teachers in authority positions? (principal, deputy-principal, heads of departments)			
Male		Female	

7. I would like to know if you think the following conditions are adequate or inadequate in your school. You are also welcome to make any comments at any of these.

	Adequate	Inadequate	Comments
Chairs for learners			
Textbooks for learner			
Desks for learners			
State of school structures			
Overhead projectors in classrooms			

8. What are the biggest issues facing the school?

9. What is the nature of community support for the school?

10. How is the school coping with educational reforms?

8. Are there any policies regarding gender within your school? Why do you say so?

9. What would you say are the biggest issues, surrounding gender, which faces your school?

THANK YOU.

5.1.4 Classroom observation schedule

AIM OF THE STRUCTURED CLASSROOM OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

The aim of this schedule is to observe certain dimensions of pedagogical relations, learner-learner interaction, and teacher composition.

VARIABLES TO BE OBSERVED

Three specific definitions are given to the observation of pedagogical relations; the first being questions asked by the teacher. Four categories of questions will be observed namely factual recall; open-ended ideas (for example "How different do you think it would have been to be at school during apartheid?); classroom management which have the sub-categories of administrative assistance (for example asking for assistance in cleaning the blackboard) and 'establishing order' (for example "John, could you please keep quiet?"); and 'expert' assistance (only one question will be observed namely, for example, "Could you help Mary?"). I will include a fifth category- that of other questions- where I will note questions which do not fall within my specified four categories. I will note if these questions are directed to the gay or lesbian learner, the boys, a boy, to the girls, a girl, or the class as a whole.

The second definition, for the observation of pedagogical relations, is teacher responses to learner answers. My categories of responses are 1) asking learners to explain how they reach their answer and 2) an other category. I will note if responses are directed to the gay or lesbian learner, a boy or a girl's answer.

The third definition is statements made by the teacher. My categories for statements are 'establishing order' statements (for example "Keep quiet!"), 'reacting to learners' statements (for example "Mary, you seem puzzled"), or an other category. I will note if these statements are addressed to the gay or lesbian learner, the boys, a boy, the girls, a girl, or the class as a whole.

The first definition given to learner-learner interaction is who are allowed to enter the classroom first. The second definition is any learner-learner interaction observed, by myself, throughout the whole class; this will be done in an open-ended way.

The teacher composition which will be observed is the sex of the teacher in relation to the subject taught.

I will also observe the some aspects of the physical condition of the classroom.

I will also include a table of comments/remarks after every question in order to make additional comments or remarks. A tape recording of the whole class will be made to assist in the reliability of the observations.

OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

Gay/lesbian respondent code:

Class:	Date:	Time:

Amount of learners:								
Sex of learners:	Male:				Female:			
Race of learners:	White:		Black:		Asian:		Coloured:	
Sex of teacher:	Male:				Female:			

1. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF THE CLASSROOM

Enough chairs for learners	Yes	No
Enough textbooks for learners	Yes	No
Broken windows	Yes	No
Enough desks for learners	Yes	No
Overhead projector	Yes	No
Electricity	Yes	No

Comments/remarks:

2. ENTERING THE CLASSROOM

Sex breakdown of learner allowed to enter classroom first:	
Boys:	
Girls:	

Comments:

Learner/learner interaction:

3. DURING THE CLASS

3.1. Teacher questions:

Type of questions asked by teacher to learner according to learner sex:

	Factual	Open-ended	Classroom management Admin Order		Expert	Other
Gay or lesbian respondent:						
All the boys:						
A boy:						
All the girls:						
A girl:						
The class:						

Remarks/comments:

Learner/learner interaction:

3.2. Teacher responses to learner answers:

	Seen as expert:	Other:
Gay or lesbian respondent:		
Boys:		
Girls:		

Remarks/comments:

3.3. Statements made by teacher to learners according to learner sex:

	Establishing order:	Reacting to learners:	Other:
Gay or lesbian respondent			
All the boys:			
A boy:			
All the girls.			
A girl.			
The class:			

Remarks/comments:

5.1.5 Playground observation schedule

AIM OF THE STRUCTURED PLAYGROUND OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

The aim is to describe how learner interaction constructs 'activeness' of boys and 'passiveness' of girls on the playground. Activities will be observed during the longest break.

STRUCTURED SCHEDULE

Gay or lesbian respondent number:		
School:	Resourced	Under-resourced
Date and Time:		
Estimated amount of learners:		

I: ACTIVITIES OF THE GROUPINGS

Boys only groupings:	
Standing/sitting around	
Playing sports or other physical activity	
Other	
Girls only groupings:	
Standing/sitting around	
Playing sports or other physical activity	
Other	
Mixed sex groupings:	
Standing/sitting around	
Playing sport or other physical activity	
Other	

Remarks/comments:

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