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Black Men as Pink Consumers? A critical reading of race, sexuality and the construction of the Pink Economy in South African queer consumer media

by

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Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of the Arts (Media Studies)

in the Faculty of Humanities

University of the Witwatersrand

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Declaration

Student number: 0608698X

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Abstract

The notion of a Pink Economy has become a significant aspect of queer visual and consumer culture over the past two decades. This study investigates the media discourses of the Pink Economy in order to understand and contextualize their historical foundations, as well as their social implications within the queer body politic. This study focuses on post-apartheid queer consumer media in order to investigate the constructions of the Pink Economy and the queer consumer identities which are therein represented. Moreover, this study seeks to locate black queer male subjectivities within the queer media landscape, and investigates the extent to which they are represented as possessing consumer agency, or as legitimate participants within the media discourses of the Pink Economy. A corpus of post-apartheid queer media texts was constructed and organized thematically in accordance to the discourses of sexual identity politics, queer consumption and representations of racialized masculinities. Semi-structured participant interviews with the editors of successful contemporary queer media publications were also designed and incorporated within the corpus for analysis. This was done in order to provide contextual background as to the history of these publications and the editorial motivations behind certain representations which were found to be most salient and interesting. A qualitative discourse analysis was undertaken in order to explore the ways in which the media texts spoke to or problematized the research questions. The assimilationist ideologies which informed the homonormative discourses within these various media platforms were theorized and critiqued accordingly. The homonormative discourses of the Pink Economy were shown to be highly exclusionary in terms of the marginalization of black queer male consumption. This study, therefore, provides a cogent and insightful theory of the homonormative inflection of the discourses of the Pink Economy within post-apartheid queer consumer media.

Key terms: queer consumption, Pink Economy, Pink Rand, queer consumer media, sexual identity politics, representation, consumer-citizenship, visibility, “niche” marketing, advertising, DINKS, luxury, leisure, travel and tourism, homonormativity, assimilation, neoliberalism, commodification, hypersexuality, black masculinity, black sexuality, fetishization, stereotype, marginalization.

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Introduction: Background and aims of the study

Although sexual orientation has been included in the bill of rights in South Africa's constitution, many members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, queer, intersexed and asexual (LGBTQIA) population still face discrimination in their daily lives. While the South African constitution protects the basic human rights of all LGBTQIA citizens, such protection has not become manifest in the lived experiences of the majority of the queer body politic. Such discrimination often takes the form of homophobic attitudes, hate speech and violent attacks on the bodies and dignity of those citizens whose gender and sexual identities do not conform to the heteronormative dictates of the socio-cultural status quo. The discrimination of LGBTQIA citizens in post-apartheid South Africa does not only take the form of homophobia and bigotry from the heteronormative mainstream. Discrimination also takes place within the queer "community" itself, wherein the racist and repressive legacies of apartheid ideology still permeate the social and intimate relations between various LGBTQIA subjectivities. The most glaring examples of these exist within the interrelated spheres of queer consumption and media representations. The marginalization of black, and other non-white, queer subjectivities can be seen as a discursive process of discrimination. This is because the invisibilization and/or biased representations of non-white queer subjectivities contribute to the gender, class and racial fragmentations within the LGBTQIA body politic. The constructions of the Pink Economy within various queer consumer media prioritize and over-represent a white middle- to upper-class gay male minority within South Africa's queer body politic. These exclusionary and rather homogenizing discourses have borne (and continue to bear) dire consequences with regards to the socio-cultural and interracial relations within South Africa's queer "community". The aim of this study, therefore, is to examine the extent to which the discursive marginalization of a large non-white constituency within the LGBTQIA body politic occurs within post-apartheid South African queer consumer media.

This study will analyze and critique the discourses of the Pink Economy which are constructed in South African queer consumer media. By relying on several qualitative analytical approaches, the foci of this dissertation will be twofold: First, it shall be the task of this study to problematize the homogenizing discourses around which the ideas of the Pink Economy are constructed. Second, through a critical discourse analysis, this study seeks to

shore up and therefore problematize the processes through which black queer male consumption and consumer identities are marginalized and undermined within post-apartheid queer consumer media.

This study will also critique the representations of black masculinity in South African queer consume media. The discursive production and representation of black queer masculinities will be interrogated in order to highlight the discursive tensions inherent within media constructions of the Pink Economy as it has been propagated to queer consumers and media advertisers since the early 1990s. A key aspect of this study is to critique the racialization of queer consumer identities and practices which are prioritized within queer consumer media. It shall be shown that queer consumption and socio-political visibility can be limited insofar as they are based upon assimilationist politics through which queer subjectivity is subsumed within heteronomormative practices and ideologies. In the main, this study will analyze the various ways in which "ideal" gay consumers and practices are discursively produced, and thus sanitized in order to become marketable for the profit-making interests of both the nation-state and global capitalist institutions.

Queer consumer media in South Africa are a relatively new phenomenon whose beginnings can be traced back to 1985, with the publication one community newspaper titled *Link/Skakel*. The early 1990s proved to be a pivotal time during which the country underwent historical changes in terms of the socio-political climate preceding the first democratic elections in 1994. These structural changes in South African society provided an opportune context within which various LGBTQIA liberation movements could make strides in claiming the civil and human rights which they were denied under apartheid law. This pre-democratic era also proved to be fruitful in that it enabled the emergence and proliferation of a number of regional and national queer media publications. The majority of these queer media publications engendered and promulgated vociferous liberal rights discourses, calling for the inclusion of sexual orientation within section nine of the equality clause of the constitution. However, with the passage of time, the structural changes within South African society, and the ever-present influence from global consumer markets, things have changed. Contemporary post-apartheid queer consumer media are saturated with commercialized norms and values, espousing a material and consumer culture that is associated with the Pink Economy. This study will therefore analyze these media constructions of the Pink Economy in order to problematize the exclusionary and discriminatory ideologies upon which they are

based. This study seeks to interrogate how and why certain queer consumer identities and practices are privileged at the expense of others within various queer consumer media. Through the analysis of the media publications described below, this study seeks to examine the intersectional discourses of race, sexuality, and consumption as key sites wherein the fluidity and negotiation between identity, knowledge and power takes place in rather significant ways.

A brief outline of the queer media publications selected for this study follows thus:

Exit is a monthly newspaper that is published in tabloid form. Established in 1985 under the title *Link/Skakel,* it has changed ownership several times since then. It is the oldest queer media publication in South Africa, and is still distributed nationally to this day. It has a monthly print run of 25 000, and an estimated readership of 40 000 (LunchBox Media 2012). It is distributed through national retailers such as CNA and Exclusive Books. It is also distributed free of charge at gay bars, clubs, bath houses, and at several annual Lesbian and Gay Pride parade events throughout the country.

Gay Pages is a quarterly glossy gay consumer magazine that was launched in 1996. Founder and editor-in-chief Rubin van Niekerk (2012) describes the magazine as "the only South African gay magazine with a national distribution," and also one that is aimed at the "affluent, brand loyal gay consumer." (Gay Pages website 2012) It is still one of the leading queer consumer publications nation-wide. It is sold at all the leading retailers such as CNA and Exclusive Books. It has a print run of 10 000, and an estimated readership of 45 000 (LunchBox Media 2012).

Wrapped is a glossy gay consumer magazine that was launched in 2004. It was punted as South Africa's first lifestyle oriented glossy gay magazine. The target audience for *Wrapped* was gay male consumers who were "established in their careers, brand loyal and aspire to surround themselves with the best products available on the market." (Wrappedmag.blogspot.com 2008) While it was still in circulation the magazine enjoyed national distribution, and was host to a wide range of advertisers. The magazine folded in 2009.

Outright is a glossy gay consumer magazine that was launched in 1993. Its founding editor-in-chief, Madeleine Rose, described it as "South Africa's first serious gay magazine." (van Niekerk 1996) *Outright* was initially in circulation for four years. In its third year of publication, the magazine changed its circulation from monthly to alternate monthly. *Outright* had an approximate circulation of 8 500, and an estimated readership of 24 000 in the year 1996. In the year 2000 the magazine was re-launched under the same title, returning to its monthly circulation under new editorship and ownership. The re-launched magazine only lasted for two years thereafter, and has since folded.

Queerlife.co.za is a website aimed specifically at the gay male market. It was established in 2007, and focuses on lifestyle and news content for gay males. It hosts a number of various feature articles, blogs, fashion and sexual advice columns. It also has a sister website for lesbian-identified females *Queerlifegirls.co.za.* The website is owned and published independently by Sharon Knowles (personal communication 2013)

Mambaonline has been dubbed as "South Africa's largest and most sophisticated gay brand." (LunchBox Media 2012) The website features a number of news and lifestyle pages which are generated weekly. It hosts a popular free online dating service called the "Meetmarket." The website also has a sister website for lesbian-identified females *Mambagirl.com*. The website has an approximated 174 000 visitors per month (LunchBox Media 2012).

Research questions

The key research questions which have informed this study fall into two thematic categories, and follow thusly:

The Pink Economy

- How are the discourses of the Pink Economy constructed in post-apartheid queer consumer media? What role do they play in the constructions of "ideal" queer consumer identities and practices?

- How can a critical reading destabilize the assumptions underlying media representations of queer consumer identities and practices?

Black Masculinities

- What position(s) do black masculinities occupy within the constructions of the Pink Economy in South African queer consumer media?

- To what extent are the media representations of black masculinities founded upon colonial discourses regarding race, class, gender and sexual difference?

Overview of the chapters

The introductory chapter has outlined the background and aims of this study. It has highlighted the interdisciplinary underpinnings of this dissertation. It has located it firmly within the academic fields of Media Studies – which are inherently interdisciplinary fields of study within the Humanities. This introductory chapter has shown which media texts will be analysed and has explained the research question.

Chapters one, two and three will focus on the research design for this study. Chapter one will outline, explain and discuss the classical and contemporary literature on global and local queer media, the global and local Pink Economies, and the representations of black masculinities and sexuality within popular culture. Chapter two focusses on the theoretical and conceptual frameworks which inform the selection and analysis of queer consumer media texts in this study. Although this study relies on various theoretical tools from various fields of scholarship (namely Queer Theory, Critical Race and Feminist Theory, and Post-colonial Theory), their interrelations and usefulness will be explained and discussed herein. Chapter three provides a detailed explanation of the research methods which have been undertaken in the corpus construction of empirical data, as well as the frameworks through which the queer media texts were analyzed and theorized.

Chapter four provides an analysis of the Pink Economy as constructed and foregrounded in post-apartheid South African queer consumer media. This chapter elucidates the various discursive strategies, narratives and multimodal techniques through which the Pink Economy and "the gay lifestyle" are both constructed and disseminated to a "niche" market sector of queer consumers. Through a detailed analysis of a wide range of media texts, transcribed interviews and marketing data, this chapter provides a discussion of the political, economic and social contexts under which the Pink Economy has found its most fruitful manifestations in South Africa. This chapter will view these aggrandizing and coercive discourses along the interdependent strands of "niche" market visibility, economic empowerment and sexual identity politics. On the one hand, the Pink Economy is herein theorized from the perspective of queer media's intersection with consumer culture – wherein the idea of a "niche" group of (affluent gay and lesbian) consumers is propagated and naturalized in order to gain interest and financial backing from potential advertisers. On the other hand, the Pink Economy is read as the construction of a hyperreal world of leisure and luxury goods and services which supposedly signify individuated upward mobility within the context of late capitalism, as well as economic empowerment for a previously marginalized lesbian and gay "community". The media representations of the Pink Economy are understood and theorized in terms of the dialectic between objects and subjects. They are also understood and theorized as discursive spaces wherein the tensions between racialized, sexual and consumer identities are constructed and simultaneously negotiated. Read through the lens of Bourdieu's (1984) notion of "habitus", the representations of the Pink Economy and "the gay lifestyle" are

theorized as aspirational fields of discourse wherein certain dispositions, tastes, styles and practices (embodied through white gay masculinity) are valued over others.

Chapter five locates the Pink Economy within the transnational flows of neoliberal capitalist markets. It is thus contextualized through the discussion of neoliberalism and its effects within the post-apartheid nation-state. By giving an historical account of the post-apartheid political economy in South Africa, and reading various media texts against this background, it will be shown that the deregulation of global "free" markets also had its implications within the domain of sexual identity politics. Borrowing from Lisa Duggan's (2002) conception of homonormativity, this chapter theorizes the Pink Economy as a modality of queer consumption that is underpinned by assimilationist ideologies. This chapter will provide textual evidence of the subtle ways in which homonormative ideologies are subsumed within the assimilationist strategies of queer consumer media, corporate institutions, marketing companies and privileged (read white, gay, affluent) queer consumers. It shall be argued that the media constructions of the Pink Economy are inflected by homonormative political and economic agenda which seek to sanitize and "tame" queer sexualities and queer visibility to suit the profit-making interests of corporate capital and the homogenizing discourses of the nation-state.

Chapter six provides an analysis of the extent to which black queer masculinities are marginalized from media representations of the Pink Economy. This chapter is based on the tacit acknowledgement of the dearth of progressive representations of black queer masculinities in queer consumer media. As few as these may be, it is the main focus of this chapter to highlight the ways in which those few representations are constructed, and to provide a critique of the derogatory colonial ideologies upon which they are based. This chapter will problematize those seemingly progressive images and narratives of black queer consumption. In the light of this, it shall be shown that whiteness is reified and naturalized as the ideal modality of queer subjectivity and consumer identity. The blatant marginalization of black queer consumption will also be discussed in order to draw attention to the practices of exclusion and invisibilization within queer consumer media, the Pink Economy, and within the lesbian and gay "community", in general. These media representations will be interrogated from Post-colonial, Critical Race and Feminist theoretical perspectives in order shore up their historical foundations within colonial stereotype. It will be argued herein that such stereotypical representations are perpetuated through the power of the white gay male gaze. From such a perspective, therefore, it will be shown that the marginalization of black

queer consumer agency from the Pink Economy works in conjunction with the commodification of black male sexuality for the material and libidinal consumption of the idealized affluent white gay male consumer. The concluding chapter will draw attention to the contributions of this study, as well as its limitations.

Chapter 1

Critical debates about queer consumer media, the Pink Economy and the representations of black masculinities

The literature which informs the research, analysis and arguments within this study will be extrapolated in this chapter. Since this study falls within the intersectional nexus of the discourses of sexuality, race, consumption and representation, this chapter will flesh out the most current and influential debates concerning these issues. First, the literature which gives contextual and historical background into the South African LGBTQIA liberation movement will be given a brief overview. The literature on men's lifestyle magazines and the global and local queer media landscapes will be discussed. Thereafter, the literature on the global and local Pink Economy will be outlined and discussed. The theoretical debates surrounding the concept of "homonormativity" will be outlined and discussed thereafter. Finally, the literature on the representations and commodification of black masculinities and sexuality will be discussed.

1.1 LGBTQIA subjectivities, history and politics in South Africa

This section will provide some contextual background on the LGBTQIA liberation movement in South Africa. An overview of both the classic and contemporary literature will be provided in order to locate this study within the bourgeoning fields of South African media gender, lesbian and gay, and queer studies.

There is widespread consensus in studies concerning the history of the South African LGBTQIA liberation movement that the early 1980s until the mid-1990s proved to be an interesting era (Berman 1993; Croucher 2002; de Waal & Manion 2006; Epprecht 2001; Gevisser & Cameron 1995; Isaacs & McKendrick 1992). This was an era in which numerous South African LGBTQIA rights organisations were making their presence felt through vociferous political activism. This transitional period before South African democracy provided a fruitful socio-political climate in which the previous four decades of apartheid were being slowly dismantled through negotiations between several political authorities and

various stake holders. The Gay Association of South Africa (GASA) was established in Johannesburg in 1982, and by 1983 it had nine branches throughout the country (Gevisser & Cameron 1992; Isaacs & McKendrick 1992). By 1984 GASA was represented in the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) alongside 21 other countries. Shiela Croucher (2002: 317) asserts that the early LGBTQIA liberation movement in South Africa "was limited both in scope and impact, and was deeply divided by race." Due to its apolitical stance, GASA was not granted full membership since it was "not perceived as an anti-apartheid organization." (Isaacs & McKendrick 1992: 140) In the light of the fact that GASA had distanced itself from the plight of gay rights and anti-apartheid activist Simon Nkoli (who was imprisoned along with 21 other political activists in the famous Delmas trial), GASA had earned itself a negative reputation amongst other international LGBTQIA rights movements. During that time, Nkoli had become somewhat of a poster-boy for the international anti-apartheid and lesbian and gay rights struggles. Mark Gevisser (1995: 54) states that "the confluence of [Nkoli's] open homosexuality and his imprisonment as a soldier against apartheid made him immensely appealing to liberation-oriented around the world." Gevisser (1995: 56) further states that GASA's seemingly apathetic and racist stance was due, in part, because "Nkoli's [anti-apartheid] politics were intensely threatening to the organization's conservative white membership." As internal squabbles, accusations of racism and corruption, and international disrepute bore down on the well-being of the organisation, membership within GASA had effectively dwindled by the year 1986 (Epprecht 2001; Isaacs & McKendrick 1992). By the early 1990's the Gays and Lesbians of the Witwatersrand (GLOW) organisation had gained significant ground in terms of membership and political activism, and its progressive political stance enabled the organisation to initiate South Africa's first lesbian and gay pride march in October 1990 (Gevisser 1995; de Waal & Manion 2006).

The early 1990s proved to be a watershed period in terms of socio-political change in South Africa, especially as these changes related to the liberationist politics of various LGBTQIA movements (Croucher 2002; Epprecht 2001; Tucker 2009). On 2 February 1990, then President F.W. de Klerk announced in parliament that several anti-apartheid political organisations would be unbanned by the government. Many anti-apartheid organisations such as the African National Congress (ANC), the South African Communist Party (SACP), and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), (to name but a few) were unbanned by the National Party government that year. That same year Nelson Mandela was released after 27 years

imprisonment. In 1992, the Congress for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa) negotiations were taking place between representatives of various anti-apartheid organisations, the National Party and the private business sector – leading up to the first democratic national elections. Reid (2003: 17) states that "since political transformation in South Africa, beginning with the unbanning of political organisations and the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990, and culminating in the formal adoption of the new constitution in 1996, there has been an unprecedented increase in public discourse about sexuality, including homosexuality." In October 1990, the Gay and Lesbian Organisation of the Witwatersrand (GLOW) organised the first Gay Pride march in Africa, in the central business district of Johannesburg (Berman 1993; de Waal & Manion 2006).

However, with the growing constitutional and social recognition of LGBTQIA citizens' civil and human rights in South Africa, there has occurred an increasing onslaught of homophobic public hate speech and hate crimes carried out against various queer citizens, their bodies and their dignity. It seems that the inclusion of sexual orientation in section nine of the equality clause in the South African constitution (ratified in 1996), and the legalisation of same-sex marriage in 2008 are legislative policies which protect the civil and human rights of LGBTQIA citizens in theory – and less so in their actual, daily experiences. Essien and Aderinto (2006: 123) state that "during the 1990s, the subject of same-sex preference caught the attention of African leaders as some African homosexuals demanded official recognition." Such recognition had a heavy – if not dire – backlash because numerous African cultural, religious and political leaders have denounced same-sex desire and practices as "unAfrican", and as an instantiation of Western decadence and perversion (Amory 1997; Anderson 2007; Dlamini 2006; Epprecht 1998; Epprecht 2001; Essien & Aderinto 2006). Despite the long history and scholarly research on the existence and wide-spread social acceptance of same-sex desires and practices in pre-colonial and colonial African contexts (Elder 1995; Murray & Roscoe 1998; Ndatshe & Sibuyi 1993; Niehaus 2009), there is still a prevalence of homophobic rhetoric and violence within South African society and across its geographic borders. The derogatory, inflammatory and homophobic remarks by political leaders such as African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP) leader Kenneth Meshoe, members of the South African National House of Traditional Leaders, and the South Africa's former ambassador to Uganda, John Qwelane, all evidence some of the external challenges that the LGBTQIA rights movements in South Africa have had to face over the years. It is quite difficult, therefore, to discuss the history and trajectory of the South African LGBTQIA

liberation movement in strictly glowing terms without a thorough and contextual examination of those influences and dynamics by which it has been shaped and constituted – both locally and internationally.

1.2.1 The history and trajectory of queer consumer media in global and local contexts

The emergence of men's lifestyle media in the mid-1980s will be discussed herein. It will be shown that this emergent market had a significant impact on the arrival of the queer press within the global media landscape. The emergence of the South African queer press will be discussed thereafter in relation to the socio-political climate in South Africa during the late 1980's and early 1990s.

1.2.1.1 Changing masculinities, "new" men's markets, and the emergence of global queer media

The rise in men's lifestyle magazines has a significant interrelationship with the emergence of "new" masculinities, male consumer markets, as well as the development of global queer consumer media. The late 1980s witnessed an unprecedented loosening of transnational markets and the deregulation of global trade policies and embargoes (McChesney & Schiller 2003; Sinclair 2004; Tomlinson 2001). The results of which were that the opening up of global markets, the rapid growth of multinational global corporations and media institutions became some of the defining aspects of the globalization process (Appadurai 1990; Rantanen & Boyd- Barrett 2004). Such processes of globalization also had significant influences within the social and cultural realm – not least of which was the steady dominance of material and consumer culture.

It was within this economic and cultural context, along with the changes in men's socially dominant gender roles, wherein the commercial interest in young male consumers began to take hold (Benwell 2003; Boni 2002; Edwards 2003; Gill 2007; Mort 1996). Along with a wide range of consumer products and services (cars, clothing, décor, cosmetics, fitness products, etc.), media practitioners began to market men's lifestyle magazines – as commodities in themselves – to this "new", lucrative men's market. Patterson and Elliot (2002: 235) note that "the emergence of male lifestyle magazines coincided with…changes in

masculinity and provided the perfect opportunity for advertisers to take advantage of a largely untapped market." Media institutions and advertisers realized that once it was "successfully established, a men's magazine [market] could provide the anchor point for a huge variety of goods and service. It could present the vision of masculine consumer society, in much the same way that the women's press had long done for female readers." (Mort 1996: 18) During this period media producers, retailers and corporations began to hone in on male consumers' "alternative formulations of masculinity which [were] constantly [being] reworked and recycled." (Gill 2003: 38) There emerged an intimate relationship between those changing masculinities and the consumer market to the extent that this was reflected and reproduced within the "niche" market of men's lifestyle magazines (Benwell 2003; Edwards 2003; Gill 2003; Gill 2007).

In her analysis of the rise of men's glossy magazines during the 1990s in post-apartheid South Africa, Stella Viljoen (2008: 312) argues that "the ascendancy of certain types of masculinity is sustained through the creation of a masculine ideal." She conjectures that "the genre of men's lifestyle magazines…is fundamentally concerned with the commodification and simplification of masculinity to an aspirational type." The commodification of "ideal" or "archetypical" or hegemonic masculinity (Connell 1995) was, in part, a concerted effort by marketers, corporations and media institutions to isolate and therefore exploit a "new and niche" lifestyle market for the ends of profit-making. Viljoen (2012: 650) also observes that "images are, in and of themselves, important markers of what social change *might* look like in the popular imagination." (emphasis my own) It is possible to argue, therefore, that representations of masculinities within the men's lifestyle magazine genre rely on actual, embodied articulations of masculine subjectivity, while simultaneously constructing and reproducing certain "ideal" types of masculinity that are both palatable (for consumers and advertisers alike) and profitable. Iqani (2012: 160) also posits that "precisely because of the patriarchal power structures which shape the production of consumer media texts, gender is a key paradigm through which practices of looking have been conceptualized." The discourses within men's lifestyle magazines, therefore, do not just reproduce and/or prioritize certain consumer identities, practices and dominant masculinities. They also invite the readers' to perceive these constructed subject positions as "ideal". Duggan and McCreary (2004: 47) contend that men are "bombarded by advertisements that capitalize on their physical insecurities…[and that] these advertisements disseminate that men constantly need to improve themselves." Schroeder and Zwick (2004: 2) also state that "representations do not

merely ‘express’ masculinity, rather, they play a central role in forming conceptions of masculinity and help construct market segments such as the New Man, playboys, connoisseurs…”

In the light of the foregoing analysis of the literature on men’s lifestyle magazines, one can see the constructed and fragmentary foundations of the different articulations of masculinity within this “niche” media genre. More significantly, it is evident that those masculinities which are prioritized as “ideal” are not only subject to the caprices and contingencies of socio-cultural arrangements, but also those of market segmentation and commodification. The dialectic between the changing forms and articulations of masculinity from the mid-1980s onwards, and the psychographic market segmentation of those very same masculine forms, were exploited by advertisers and media institutions in order to create a “niche” space within the marketplace for (especially) gay affluent male consumers. These predominantly gay consumers were isolated and segmented through the development of a media sector that was specifically targeted at them. And, as such, it was within these different gay media publications that the constructions of a specific “gay lifestyle” could take place through the propagation of various quintessentially “gay” products and services. Some historical context of the global queer media landscape seems necessary at this point.

Global queer consumer media which specifically targeted lesbian women and gay men can be traced back to 1967 with the emergence of mainstream and profitable publications in the U.S. such as *Advocate, Out, On Our Backs* and *BLK* (Saucier & Caron 2008; Sender 2001). This is not claim that absolutely no media aimed at lesbian women and gay men existed prior to this date. Such a claim would indeed be an anachronism since mail-to-order pornographic magazines, videos, and other popular male erotica (of the *Tom of Finland* variety) were in circulation long before the late 1960s (Baker 1997).

Fred Fejes (2003: 214) states that

> in the early 1980s there was as yet no slick glossy publication that explicitly targeted gay men. Publications that did exist, such as the *Advocate* and local gay newspapers and magazines, did not have the high production quality required by national advertisers, particularly fashion advertisers, and their content…was too explicitly sexual for most mainstream advertisers.

It seems that the first two decades of the emergence of queer media were marked by a paucity of high production quality which could attract avid interest from mainstream corporate advertisers. This meant that these print media were not subject to the financial dictates of mainstream advertisers, and were thus relatively free to publish and distribute explicitly sexual content – within the bounds of the U.S. censorship laws, of course (Baker 1994; Fejes 2003). What makes global lesbian and gay consumer media from the early 1990s onwards particularly interesting, however, is the kind of psychographic market segmentation, niche marketing, and advertising which isolated lesbian women and gay men as unique and lucrative consumers of these various media titles (Badgett 1997; Chasin 2000; Escoffier 1997; Fejes 2003; Gluckman & Reed 1997; Haslop et al 1998; Hennesey 2000; O Dougherty 2010; Pallegrini 2002; Sender 2001; Sender 2003). Furthermore, the distinguishing feature of these consumer lifestyle media oriented specifically to lesbian and gay audiences was the kind and extent of mainstream corporate advertising (such as Absolut Vodka, Calvin Klein, AT&T and IKEA) which emerged therein during the late 1980s and early 1990s. This corporate interest in lesbian and gay consumers was, in part, due to the sexual liberalism which permeated the age of late modernity; and it was also due to the neoliberalism and deregulation of global trade markets which was so characteristic of the globalization process during the early 1990s (Appadurai 1990; Baker 1994; Hennessey 2000; McChesney & Schiller 2003).

Katherine Sender (2003: 331) argues that "the past thirty years have witnessed an exponential rise in attention to gay consumers, increased representations of gays and lesbians in mainstream and niche media, and the diversification of gay and lesbian media." With this kind of market attention towards gay and lesbian consumers, however, there has emerged a concomitant "sanitization" of queer consumer media to the extent that mainstream advertisers have refused any association with explicitly sexual content (Sender 2003). In turn, the heavy reliance upon mainstream advertisers has led to the queer consumer media's discursive construction and hierarchization of sexual "identities", consumer cultures and consumer styles. Fejes (2003: 214) states that "if gay media were serious about attracting mainstream advertising dollars, they first had to construct a statistical picture of the gay consumer."

The prevailing argument in the literature pertaining to global queer consumer media is that the image of the "sanitized" and ideal gay male consumer is often represented by the white, affluent, professional gay man belonging to an educated middle- or upper-class (Baker 2003; Binnie 1995; Duggan & McCreary 2004; Fejes 2003; Pallengrini 2002; Rohlinger 2002; Roy

2012; Saucier & Caron 2008; Sender 2001). First, this picture of the queer (particularly gay white affluent male) consumer had to be erotically suggestive, as opposed to explicitly or sexually vulgar. And second, this discursively constructed image of the "ideal" queer consumer had to be in line with the marketing and profit-making interests of advertisers, to the effect that "not only is much recent gay [and lesbian] visibility aimed at producing new and potentially lucrative markets, but as in most marketing strategies, money, not liberation, [has become] the bottom line." (Hennessey 2000: 31).

The foregoing discussion has sought to contextualize the political economy and the processes of globalization which have influenced the emergence of contemporary queer consumer media during the late twentieth century in the West. Yet what requires careful and contextual analysis – particularly for this present study – is the emergence of queer consumer media within non-Western localities. Such an analysis may shore up and problematize the homogenizing constructions of "ideal" white gay male consumer practices and "identities" within contemporary South African queer consumer media.

1.2.1.2 Queer media in a changing South Africa: The emergence of local queer consumer media

Queer consumer media are a relatively "new" phenomenon in the global South. The emergence of this particular media form can be traced back to the early1980s. Peter Jackson (2009: 373) states that "since the early 1980s, a wide range of Thai-language magazines, novels and other publications have catered to the local gay market." Through a close examination of the development of queer consumption and the emergence of gay magazines in Thailand during the early 1980's, Peter Jackson (2009: 370) puts forward the claim that "the material similarities among gay capitals in culturally distinct societies constitute a matrix from which similar queer cultures have emerged by local market-based processes of sex-cultural differentiation." In this regard, Jackson (2009) posits a dialectical relationship between Western economic and cultural forms, and the hybridization in which local agency maintains its economic, social and cultural significance. He argues, moreover, that "gay magazines are not merely products of a pre-existing gay identity but also affirmations and even incitements of identity." (Jackson 2009: 376) Charles Klein (1999) also locates the emergence of lesbian and gay oriented media in Brazil within the mid-1980s. The pervasiveness of globalized queer markets, consumer "identities" and practices (Altman

1997; Altman 2006; Klein 1999) is partly attributable to the contemporary proliferation of queer consumer media throughout the world. The foregoing discussion evidences the fact that a queer press (or any magazine market, for that matter) does not arise out of a vacuum; but, in fact, occurs within a context wherein both socio-economic conditions and visible queer identities work in tandem to create a "niche" lesbian and gay market. Such was the case in South Africa during the 1980s.

Sonnekus and van Eeden (2009: 83) state that "mainstream gay publishing has a relatively short history in South Africa, and locally produced queer media are still few and far between." The vicissitudes of South Africa's political, economic and socio-cultural climate after the demise of apartheid have all influenced the trajectory and contemporary status of queer consumer media. From the first print run of *Link/Skakel* (now *Exit*) in the mid-1980s, the queer media landscape has witnessed a multitude of changes in terms of ownership, marketing, content and publishing formats (Davidson & Nerio 1995). A number of print publications and internet websites, catering either to lesbian women or gay men, or both, have emerged since then – a few of which have enjoyed national distribution. Some regional publications also emerged here and there (*The Pink Toungue* and *Rush* – based in Cape Town, and *GaySA* – based in Johannesburg) but have since folded. While having to face the caprices of a "developing" economy, financial and human resources have proved to be constant challenges within this media sector. In this regard, the South African queer consumer media remain a niche market sector as opposed to other forms of mainstream media (Viljoen 2008).

Issaacs and McKendrick (1992: 138) state that "the development and nature of a formal gay movement in any society is influenced by the society's particular structure, and public and legal attitudes towards homosexuals and homosexual behaviour." In a similar vein, Leap (2002: 220) contends that "reading South African 'homosexuality' entirely in terms of...external influences is unwise, because it essentializes, and thereby, erases local understandings of same-sex identities and practices when it is those understandings – and their connections to apartheid – that need to be in the foreground of the analysis." While much of the political agenda, discourse and rhetoric echoed those of similar lesbian and gay rights movements in the West (Phillips 2000), the South African LGBTQIA rights movement took root and developed within a specific socio-political context. It was during the above-mentioned socio-political zeitgeist of transformation towards democracy that South African queer media gained significant ground.

As the South African socio-political climate was changing for its LGBTQIA citizens during the 1980s, so too was the media landscape which was specifically targeted at them. During the 1950s public and media representations of sexual dissidence, or what could be crudely described as homosexuality, was limited to child molesters and drag queens (Gevisser 1994: 18). During this time *Drum* magazine and the *Golden City Post* newspaper, amongst other mainstream media, were in the habit of printing sensational "exposés" of the "Moffie" drag culture in District Six, Cape Town. The 1966 Forest Town arrests also garnered sensational mainstream media hype. But these forms of (mis)representation amounted to nothing more than social paranoia over the supposedly "abhorrent" acts which "threatened" Calvanistic Christian family values in apartheid South Africa (Tucker 2009).

Link/Skakel was the first publication targeted predominantly at a queer audience. It began in the early 1980's as an informal newsletter that was circulated between GASA members throughout the country. According to Cameron and Gevisser (1994: 225), "as gay rights [were] tentatively placed on the broader political agenda, and as gays and lesbians [began] to be perceived as a potential political force, the need for independent gay publications [became] more and more important." Although *Link/Skakel* promulgated a vehemently gay rights agenda, the subject matter by and large reflected the concerns of the white, male, middle-class members of GASA. Effectively, *Link/Skakel* "remained primarily the mouthpiece of GASA's founders, and continued to reflect the white gay establishment's attitudes by steering clear of politics – perhaps because of self-censorship, perhaps because of lack of sympathy with the black liberations struggle." (Davidson & Nerio 1995: 227) With the change of ownership, *Link/Skakel* was relaunched as *Exit* newspaper in tabloid format in 1985. Davidson and Nerio (1995: 227) state that while "a token look was given to gay liberation, the AIDS situation, gay political interests and the decriminalisation of homosexuality…the bulk of the paper was taken up with bar and club round-ups, community news, hunk pictorials, and camp humour." Since *Exit* newspaper was launched, numerous local and national lesbian and gay magazines, newspapers and websites have mushroomed here and there – with the majority being located and published in the cosmopolitan centres of Johannesburg and Cape Town. And the Out in Africa gay and lesbian film festival has enjoyed tremendous success since its inception in 1994 (Talmor 2013). The political economy and the flow of capital in the contemporary South African queer media, however, still resembles its previous incarnation during the mid-1980s insofar as it can be seen as

propounding an affluent cisgendered homomasculine ideology "which ensures (and secures) the needs of white gay male desires." (Reddy 1998: 68).

Although broadcast media which specifically targets LGBTQIA audiences are virtually non-existent in this country, there have been a few television and radio programs which explore issues of sexual orientation, sexual health, LGBTQIA liberation politics and social justice. A number of gay and lesbian characters have been created and written into mainstream television shows and soap operas, but the level of sexual and gender diversity is herein limited to discourses which reify the simplistic binaries between hetero- and homosexuality. Popular music and dance culture in South Africa have (rather tentatively) embraced sexual dissidence with a few queer performance artists – such as kwaito dance trio Threesome, and Capetonian vocalist/performance artist Umlilo – emerging sporadically. But these are early days yet, and the growth and success of the queer broadcast media can only be predictions outside the scope of this study. Broadcast and popular media have been briefly referred to in order to place them within a more general context of South African queer media – in which the most successful instantiations have been in the form of print and new/multi-media.

The marginalizing discourses within queer consumer media are a neglected field of study within queer visual culture, lesbian and gay studies and queer theory. The questions of authorship, representation and agency are vital when it comes to the interrelations between representation, sexuality, race and consumption – particularly as they relate to queer consumer media. These tenuous and fluid interrelationships inform the discourses which are foregrounded within queer consumer media. This study, therefore, draws partly on the research conducted by Sonnekus and van Eeden (2008). In their study pertaining to the invisibilization of black masculinities within queer visual culture (namely within *Gay Pages*), Sonnekus and van Eeden (2009: 11) argue that "the manner in which the conditional and stereotypical representation of black men in queer visual culture is also commonly produced in a colonial vernacular." It is important, therefore, to bring to light the exclusionary and marginalizing short-comings of such representations within post-apartheid queer consumer media.

Leap (2002: 219) claims that "South African homosexuality has…been influenced by international media and other communication, by travel and tourism, and by forms of sexualized globalization…" We have here the suggestion of some globalized "gay community" which is connected by fast-paced permutations of products, services and various

discourses in the late modern capitalist context. Bell and Binnie (2002: 6) posit that in context of late capitalism "there is an inevitable marketization of rights; the citizen is made over as a particular kind of sovereign consumer." It is possible, therefore, to speak of the conjoined subject position of the consumer-citizen which has come to characterize various subjectivities in late capitalist postmodernity. But if we are to link queer consumer power and agency (as manifested by the Pink Economy) with globalized sexual citizenship (Bell and Binnie 2002), how can we theorize black queer consumer-citizenship when that subject position is continually marginalized and/or negated within the discourses of queer consumer media?

We have to be vigilant in analyzing those universalizing narratives which seek to represent "gay identity" as a homogenous set of unitary and stable characteristics and/or practices. It is important to examine not only those sexual subjectivities which are prioritized, but also those which are discursively silenced though the quiet violence of neglect. Sonnekus and van Eeden (2009: 83) posit that "the condensed 'version' of gay masculinity found in the gay press creates a one-sided notion of the gay community, based not on what gay men are like as a collective, but what they ideally *should* be or look like." (emphasis in original) Thus it is vital to investigate the homogenising narratives about queer subjectivity, sexuality and consumption since these are the very discourses through which the broader LGBTQIA body politic comes to be coerced and assimilated within the heteronormative regimes of power and capital.

1.3 Queer consumption and the Pink Economy: Debating global gay identities consumption practices, and their local instantiations

The literature detailing the "niche" market segmentation and construction of a global Pink Economy will be outlined in this section. The Marxist debates regarding the emergence of queer identities and consumption – in specific relation to capitalist forces – will first be discussed. The literature on the emergence of global gay identities will then be discussed. The literature on the global Pink Economy and queer consumption, after which, the emergence of the local Pink Economy will be discussed. An exegesis of the notion of Bourdieusian habitus will also be discussed in relation to queer consumption and the Pink Economy.

1.3.1 The emergence of Western queer consumption: Marxist historiography, class and the elision of diverse patterns of sexual dissidence

It may seem that the history of modern LGBTQIA identity politics had its genesis in the West during the late 1960s, but this is not the case. An enormous body of media representations and popular rhetoric stop short of providing a cogent account of queer sexual identity politics outside the Western world prior to the 1969 Stonewall riots in New York. It is as though this specific instance of collective revolt in the West, and the subsequent sexual liberation movements which it precipitated, is enough to tell the entire story of all LGBTQIA liberation movements throughout the modern world. We need to be careful of engendering a history and theory of the LGBTQIA body politic whose epistemic aetiology is solely located in the 1960s U.S. Jackson (2009: 365) posits that "we need to question accounts that position all modern non-Western queer cultures as after-effects of transformations assumed to have taken place first in the United States in the 1960s." A more nuanced theory of sexual identity politics lies in the awareness that these "are not simply imposed through an imperialistic cultural discourse or economic dominance [from the West], but…are actively assumed and proclaimed from below, by those marginalised in these hegemonic formations." (Phillips 2000: 2) The discourses of the importation of hegemonic Western models of sexual rights discourse, activism and identities into non-Western localities allows little room for theorizing and analysing the instances of local agency and context.

Even those accounts which locate the formation of queer "identities", movements and politics in the West pay very little attention to the social, cultural and economic milieu which allowed for the emergence of queer subcultures *prior to* the Stonewall riots. In his much quoted essay, "Capitalism and Gay Identity", John D'Emilio (1993) gives an historical account of the economic conditions under which men and women were able to express same-sex desire and gender nonconformity within the nineteenth century industrial era. He argues that the labour requirements and conditions of industrial capitalism altered the gender roles within homes in the Western world (D'Emilio 1993). Thus more men and women moved out of their feudal settings into cities, away from the omniscient glare of "traditional" sexual and gender roles and mores. This mass migration away from feudal/ "traditional" family arrangements into the industrialized cities thus provided the privacy and anonymity for men and women (who were so inclined) to express their same-sex desires and preferences in various ways. D'Emilio (1993: 470) argues:

> Only when individuals were able to make their living through wage labor [sic], instead of as parts of an interdependent family unit, was it possible for homosexual desire to coalesce into personal identity – an identity based on the ability to live outside of the heterosexual family and to construct a personal life based on attraction to one's own sex.

D'Emilio's (1993) historical account of the emergence of same-sex desire and dissident gender expression is by no means global (such a project would be virtually impossible). His exegesis can only provide a spring-board from which to begin to interrogate some of the conditions in which same-sex desires and practices emerged in the industrialized West.

In his article, "The Class-Inflected Nature of Gay Identity", Steven Valocchi (1999) provides an historical account of the emergence of same-sex practices and "identities" in the early twentieth century Western context. He argues that twentieth century behaviours, practices and "identities" were largely defined and constructed in accordance with middle-class interests to suit the capitalistic bent of the U.S. nation-state. Valocchi (1999), however, does not identify industrial capitalism as the sole root and cause of the emergence and proliferation of same-sex desires and practices. He argues (1999: 210) that

> the social [and economic] changes accompanying competitive capitalism did not create a homogenous gay community with a singular collective identity. Instead these changes interacted with pre-existing gender, racial, ethnic, and class differences and, as a result, gave rise to a proliferation of same-sex communities of desire.

Within this context of a changing social, cultural, economic and political order, psychiatrists in the Western world, particularly the U.S., were enabled to name and thus essentialize a wide range of sexually desires and practices as "homosexual", but only insofar as this taxonomic process of naming suited the ends of state power and the reproduction of the modern capitalist status quo. Valocchi (1999) examines the conditions within which the binary between "hetero/homosexuality" was developed and maintained within a specifically (white and privileged) middle-class sector of Western society. The result of which has been the homogenisation of Western conceptions of "homosexuality", and the concomitant marginalization of diverse patterns of sexual dissidence and gender non-conformity.

Rosemary Hennessy (2000: 4) asserts that "the history of sexual identity – in all the varied ways it has been culturally differentiated and lived – has been fundamentally, though never simply, affected by several aspects of capitalism: wage labour, commodity production and consumption." Hennessey's (2000) conception of the emergence of sexual identity politics and queer consumption is firmly located within the logic of late capitalism's omnipotence, and its uncanny ability to reproduce itself even within those discursive realms which operate outside of the social paradigm of heteronormativity. Hennessy (2000: 22) posits that "approaching the politics of sexuality from the vantage point of capitalism's continual construction of allowed and illegitimate needs offers a promising way out of the dead end of identity politics." This supposed "dead end" seems so absolute because she theorizes social relations as always already pervaded by late capitalism's exploitative demands and interests.

It seems that within the Marxist theories asserted by D'Emilio (1993), Valocchi (1999) and Hennessy (2000), the influences of industrial, modern and late capitalism can never be escaped since they fundamentally affects all aspects of social relations – not least of which is the realm of sexual identity politics. Such a review of the Marxist literature on queer sexuality, however, should not be taken as an implicit claim that sex and/or sexuality can only be understood within a framework that is inflected by economic and class relations. Such a review, in fact, serves to highlight the interrelations between the two paradigms of sexuality and class. This overview does not seek to locate these interrelations as central to gender and sexual relations within late capitalism. It is serves to highlight the multifaceted inflections of economic relations within the realm of sexuality. In her seminal essay, "Thinking Sex: Notes for a radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality", Gayle Rubin (1993: 149) puts forward the claim that "sexuality is constituted in society and history, not [exclusively] biologically ordained." In the light of this claim, then, it is possible to argue that sex and sexuality (and the identity politics which they give rise to) permeate the myriad discursive complexes of identification and socio-cultural relations. Rubin (1993: 155) further posits that "the relocation of homoeroticism into…quasi-ethnic, nucleated, sexually constituted communities is to some extent a consequence of the transfers of populations brought by industrialization." One can argue, therefore, that class relations and capitalist social structures have had a significant, though not singularly constitutive, role to play in the emergence of queer subcultures and their consumer practices and identities in the industrialized West.

Hennessy (2000: 31) states that "in the complex circuits of late capitalist consumption, the visibility of sexual identity is often a matter of commodification." But if global capitalism is to reproduce itself within and across a variety of discursive regimes – which it continually does – this process can only be possible through the elision and marginalization of various delegitimized subject positions. Inasmuch as sexuality and sexual identity politics have been influenced by the interests of the market and late capitalism, it is only certain modalities of dissident and queer sexuality which are incorporated within the conditional embrace of late capitalism and commodification. The effect of which is that "queerness" and queer consumption are discursively homogenized – so much so that the various articulations of same-sex desire, practices and identities begin to reify the interests of those authoritative and capitalist institutions from which they seek endorsement and/or sanction.

1.3.2 Theorizing the "Global Gay": Toward a critical account of globalization, queer subjectivity and local agency

Dennis Altman (1997: 419) observes that "gradually western lesbian/gay theorists and activists are beginning to perceive the problems of claiming a universal identity which developed out of certain [Western] historical specificities." Although it has by now been mooted that "homosexuality" – as it intersects with myriad other modes of identification – is a social construction (Butler 1990; Foucault 1976; Connell 1995; Jagose 1996; Kosofsky-Sedgwick 1990; Weeks 1985), few theorists have paid sufficient attention to the fact that that particular term emerged within a Western socio-cultural episteme during the late eighteenth century. It is important to question and problematize the universalising rhetoric which locates same-sex desire, behaviour and identification in Western modernity. This is because, first, such assumptions reify the (homophobic) discourses of same-sex desire, behaviour and identity as being of Western import, and being subsequently imposed upon non-Western subjects through the processes of colonisation (Anderson 2007; Dlamini 2006; Elder 1995; Epprecht 2001; Essien & Aderinto 2006; Graziano 2004; Livermon 2012). And second, those homogenizing discourses do very little to explain how the manifestations of same-sex desire, practices and identification are (and/or have been) embodied outside the West. In the introduction to their edited anthology, *Queer Globalizations: Citizenship and the afterlife of colonisation*, Cruz-Malavé and Manalansan (2002: 6) posit that:

> While globalization is presumed to offer multiple avenues of intercultural contact, these contacts are often constructed in globalizing discourses as following a unidirectional path in which the West, Western cultures, and the English language stand in as the 'origin' of cultural exchanges and non-Western societies occupy the discursive position of 'targets' of such exchanges.

The conception of these socio-cultural and economic contacts as unidirectional is problematic insofar as non-Western manifestations of queer sexuality are either marginalized or understood solely in Western terms. The implications of which prove to be dire not only at the rhetorical and epistemic level, but also at the level of representational praxis, queer visibility and consumption. The mainstream discourses of "global gay" citizenship are often predicated on the notions of upward-mobility, affluent consumption patterns and, predominantly, white homomasculine cisgendered "identity". But these discourses do not take stock of the fact that "transnational queer cultural patterns are emerging," and that "local forms of queer modernity have emerged from the agency of the members of each society." (Jackson 2009: 359)

In his research throughout different parts of South-East Asia, Altman (1997: 422) has sought to examine the "conceptualization of the sex/gender order that has no simple equivalent in the dominant language or social arrangements of western societies." An overarching theme in his analysis of different modalities of South-East Asian same-sex practices and "identities" has been that Western notions of "gay" or "homosexual" subjectivity have been interpreted, hybridized and creolized according to local cultures, tastes, sex/gender paradigms, languages and epistemologies. Altman's extensive research trajectory has not only illuminated contemporary lesbian and gay studies, but has rendered spurious those rather inept assumptions which would locate the genesis and history of sexual/gender dissidence exclusively in the West. The transnational movement and permutations of people, labour, language, discourse, commodities and capital bear different instantiations and effects across different geographical spaces and eras (Appadurai 1990). In turn, this will inevitably bring about diverse and locally specific subject formations, positions and identifications. Although "new" subjectivities and practices may bear similarities with others across spatio-temporal divisions, these similarities do not necessarily override local agency and contextual manifestations. As Tucker (2009: 38) maintains, "global cultural flows do not simply generate carbon copies of queer identities in new locations." Thus it is theoretically untenable to conceptualize local modalities of "gay" or "homosexual" subjectivitity according to

homogenous, Western understandings because these latter subject-positions and identifications have not emerged and/or developed in a uniform manner across the globe – least of all in Africa.

1.3.3 The Pink Economy and the Pink Rand: Marketing myths and biased samples in global and local markets

This section will provide definitions of the concepts of the Pink Economy and the Pink Rand, respectively, paying particular attention to their interrelations as regards the intersections of sexuality, consumer-citizenship, economic empowerment, visibility, race and class. It will be shown herein that the economic power (instantiated by the Pink Economy and the Pink Rand) which belies queer consumer agency are the strategic marketing techniques by which only a small sector of the queer body politic is exclusively targeted. It shall be shown, moreover, that such marketing myths regarding the Pink Economy are constructed in collusion with queer consumer media, in order to attract (and keep) readers/consumers, while simultaneously pandering to the interest of potential advertisers. Furthermore, it will be argued that the sample surveys upon which these myths are based function so as to systemically invisibilize other disempowered sectors of the queer body politic.

For the purposes of conceptual exactitude the terms "Pink Economy" and "Pink Rand" will be utilized in distinct yet inextricably co-constitutive senses. The "Pink Economy" refers to the consumerist and material culture which has become a characteristic feature of the LGBTQIA (read queer) body politic since the early 1990s. Chasin (2000: 151) reminds us that:

> indeed, gay and lesbian identity and community have been effectively consolidated through the market; in the 1990s, market mechanisms became perhaps the most accessible and the most effective mechanisms for many gay people in the process of individual identity formation and entrance into identity-group affiliation.

The Pink Economy, therefore, refers to the intersectional nexus wherein the contemporary queer body politic and the capitalist flow of global markets become intertwined in highly mediated ways (O Dougherty 2010). Such mediation is constituted by the mutual profit-making interrelations of the queer consumer media, transnational – as well as local –

commercial corporations, and advertising institutions (Keating & McLoughlin 2005). The Pink Economy, therefore, has come to be characterised by "hyper-commodification, as mainstream corporations target the homo[sexual] market niche with consumer goods and advertising." (Escoffier 1997: 124) And as Bell and Binnie (2000: 6) so aptly remind us:

> the commercial presence and power of gay men and lesbians – short-handed as the 'pink economy' – makes a strong foundation on which to base rights claims, given the marketized logic that links economic power to political power.

It is thus helpful to view the Pink Economy as being defined by large-scale global and local commercial business interests which have maximized (and consequently generated huge profits) through the propagation of discourses regarding queer citizenship and liberation as taking material form through conspicuous consumption and material culture.

On the other hand, the Pink Rand refers to the local form of spending power as queer consumer agency. The Pink Rand, then, can be seen as the South African instantiation of a globalized form of economic empowerment and visibility. Just like the Pink Dollar, the Pink Pound, the Pink Yen, or the Pink (Brazilian) Real, it is a contextual modality of queer economic power that is (inevitably) inflected by the local market economy, socio-political status quo and culture. Jon Binnie (1995: 187) states that "queer consumerism is indeed a powerful assertion of gay economic power." And therein lies the crux and impact of the Pink Rand: it is a form of agency, empowerment, visibility and citizenship which takes material form through (the privileged) access to commodities and services which are marketed to queer consumers in specific relation to their sexuality. Cruz-Malavé and Manalansan (2002: 1) argue that contemporary "queerness has become both an object of consumption, an object in which non-queers [in the marketing and corporate sectors] invest their passions and purchasing power, and an object through which queers constitute their identities in our contemporary consumer-oriented globalized world." The Pink Rand, therefore, is not only an economic modality of agentive queer consumer power and visibility, it has political implications as well in terms of citizenship, sexual identity politics and liberation. However, not all queer consumer-citizens possess the purchasing power and consumer agency that is signified by the Pink Rand. And since "mainstream and gay businesses alike engage in target marketing for the purposes of making a profit" (Chasin 2000: 165), it is important to interrogate which sectors of the queer body politic are marginalized and/or invisibilized through the (co-constitutive) processes of marketing and consumption.

The previous discussion on the emergence of global queer media described an interesting turn during the early 1990s when advertisers, marketers and commercial corporations began taking an interest in this "lucrative" media sector. This is because the queer consumers of these media were seen to be a "lucrative" market whose spending power could no longer be overlooked. As such, the popular ideas and surveys circulating around the affluence and indispensable spending power of queer consumers engendered the production of various discourses through which marketing, advertising, commercial and state institutions could exploit this market segment (for their own profit-making ends). As Lee Badgett (1994) has shown, these marketing surveys aimed at queer consumers do not reflect the various economic realities and disparities of all LGBTQIA consumer-citizens. O Dougherty (2010: 8) states that "marketers conflate the part with the whole and exaggerate the higher income group of this segmented market" in order to further their own interests in selling readers/consumers to potential advertisers. This minute sub-group of queer consumers have come to be known in popular culture and the marketing annals as the "DINKS" - Double Income No Kids - market. These are a group of consumer-citizens fictively constructed from data which "mistake the incomes of readers of high-end gay magazines for the incomes of all gay men and lesbians….these data are re-cited by gay newspapers and even some lesbian and gay rights organizations to show what good citizens we are and can't we have our rights too." (Pallegrini 2002: 138) This small sample group cannot be taken to represent the real economic circumstances of different LGBTQIA consumer-citizens from different socio-economic, cultural, employment and educational backgrounds. This supposedly affluent queer market whose spending power is now purported and exploited by retailers, corporations and advertisers is, in fact, a small group of affluent (mostly white gay male) participants in methodologically biased surveys (Pallegrini 2002: 138). Such is the myth about this lucrative sector of queer DINKS that is bandied about within queer consumer media and corporate advertising boardrooms throughout the globe.

The Pink Economy has certainly made headway in its manifestation within South African markets since the early 1990s. As such it is important to theorise its local inflections and trajectory in specific relation to the socio-political milieu within which it emerged. The idea of the liberating and agentive power of the Pink Rand has been taken for granted within South African queer consumer media since the early 1990s. Queer consumer media have posited this notion as being a self-evident and universal truth, and, therefore, one that marketers and audiences ought to pursue – or at least buy into. Although the notion of the

"Pink Economy" amounts to nothing more than a discursive construction, some scholars (Hennessy 2000; Kates 2002) argue that its material instantiations play a significant role with specific regards sexual identity politics, visibility and citizenship. Gay bars, clubs, restaurants and steam baths have (historically) played a significant role in the formation of gay "identity", solidarity, visibility and sexual identity politics (Haslop et al 1998:321). Thus it seems important that we conceive of these leisure venues as queer spaces wherein "identities" are explored, negotiated and forged through different consumption practices. This is not to say that such "identities" are negotiated, explored and become manifest only within the confines of these spaces. Sexual "identities" certainly find different articulations and manifestations in different spaces. But at this point, it is important to emphasize the interrelations between consumption, queer "identities" and the discourses of queer consumer media in the formation of a distinctive "gay lifestyle". Gay bars, restaurants and other specifically queer spaces (where commercial and social interactions take place) should, therefore, be seen as integral sites wherein the Pink Economy finds its most zealous embodiment and expression.

Although groups of South African queer people gathered around and organised themselves within several urban leisure spaces since the 1950s and 1960s, the idea of a lucrative niche market, distinguishable primarily by its sexuality, did not really take off until the early 1990s. According to Mark Gevisser (1994: 18), during the 1950s and 1960s "none of the bars were opened by people from within the gay community: the gay 'crowd' would decide upon a venue – usually the lounge-bar of a hotel – and colonise it. *Then, the management would see a lucrative and dependable clientele*." (emphasis my own) Leap (2002: 224) also notes that "hotel bars were already segregated by sex under South Africa's licensing laws, and several of these bars were known to be friendly, or at least tolerant, toward male clientele with same-sex interests."

The 1970s were a decade that saw an unprecedented boom in the South African economy (Gevisser 1994; Mbeki 2005), and this meant that white South Africans enjoyed the privilege of significant disposable incomes (while millions of non-white South Africans languished under economic and political disenfranchisement). Their access to disposable incomes meant that young, white, middle-class people could enjoy leisure activities such as clubbing – which, by the late 1970s, "became the vogue" (Gevisser 1994: 38) During this time, various gay clubs mushroomed throughout large cities such as Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and even smaller locales such as Pietersburg, Bloemfontein and Pretoria. While the white

middle-class gay men patronised hotels, clubs or discos throughout the urban cityscapes, their black counterparts could not enjoy the same leisure activities due to two major constraints. First, the Group Areas Act of 1950 and the Natives Act of 1952 ensured that non-white did not have access to the social and geographic mobility that was preserved for the white minority in South Africa, and thereby restricted non-white people's movements around the country to specific areas and times. The legislative enforcement of curfews within the inner-city and suburbs meant that the black lesbian and gay community could not legally go to these clubs, discos and other leisure venues after a certain time at night (Leap 2002; Tucker 2009; Visser 2001; Visser 2008a). These spaces were usually situated far from the townships in which the apartheid government had placed them, so transportation after dark also proved to be a hindrance. Second, the distribution of resources and wealth by the apartheid government systemically maintained a status quo in which the white minority reaped economic benefits to which the black majority had virtually no access. This meant that even if the government had allowed non-white lesbian women and gay men the freedom of movement to attend these night-time haunts, they could not afford the entry fee into these leisure spaces, and the various services therein provided, because of the low-income status in which they were trapped.

The shift in South Africa's political, economic and social status quo from an authoritarian to a democratic state allowed non-white citizens the freedom of movement, expression and association – rights that were kept from them since the dawn of Dutch and British colonial rule (Tucker 2009). These same rights were also extended to other minority groups, namely LGBTQIA citizens, by a constitution that has been hailed as one of the most progressive in the world. In turn, these changes resulted in the proliferation of queer visibility within South Africa's social milieu. Thus during the early 1990s more gay clubs and gay villages began to mushroom in cosmopolitan cities such as Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg (Tucker 2009; Visser 2001; Visser 2003).

Visser (2001: 85) states that "the tourism and leisure market is an important component of identity consumption." Thus, the ability to travel to and experience new, distant and exotic spaces is also constructed as an ideal mode of queer consumption. It can be seen as a means by which the queer consumer-citizen can experience other (global) articulations, interpretations and modalities of queer "identity" in different queer spaces. Furthermore, leisure time and money spent on travelling is constructed as an important method by which queer subjects can invest in the national and global Pink Economy, and thereby strengthen its

influence and legitimacy as queer consumer power within the global flows of capital. Binnie and Skeggs (2004: 43) state that "the global gay is incited to consume (places and bodies) through a range of travel guides and adverts in international pink papers and magazines." It is therefore evident that leisure travel and tourism are a significant markers of queer globality, cosmopolitanism and participation within global and local Pink Economies. Binnie (1995: 199) notes, however, that "there are clear limits to gay consumer power." Insofar as the Pink Economy and queer consumer power can be subsumed within the assimilationist strategies of capitalist markets, the supposed "power" of the Pink Rand is limited by and subject to the dictates of those markets. As has been shown above, it is only certain modalities of queer sexuality and consumption which gain sanction and legitimation within the Pink Economy, thus resulting in the marginalization of various other queer consumer identities, practices, and significant cultural forms.

The 2012 LunchBox Media (LBM) Consumer Profile survey sought to provide statistical data about LGBTQIA consumers for market researchers, advertisers, academics and media buyers. The survey was conducted on several online queer websites, asking South African participants a host of questions regarding their consumption practices, choices, desires and motivations. In a strategy not very different to the biased surveys such as those conducted by marketing companies such as Overlooked Opinions (Badgett 1997) , this 2012 Consumer Profile promulgates inaccurate data, thus making spurious generalisations about the power of the "Pink Rand" upon that basis. First, the fact that it was conducted on several online platforms already excludes numerous LGBTQIA consumers from poor and rural backgrounds who do not have access to the internet. It is true that the digital divide in South Africa is no longer as wide as it was a decade ago. It is true more people now have access to the internet and use their smartphones to interact on social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and Grindr. But the incremental growth and dispersal of internet usage cannot be taken as an indication of avid participation on gay websites and the surveys hosted therein. A survey based on a significantly small sample of gay website participants is in no way reflective of the reality of all LGBTQIA consumers throughout the population. A corollary of this methodological gap is that any analysis is therefore (strictly speaking) limited to that particular sample group of consumers.

Second, considering the disproportional distribution of resources, wealth, employment opportunities, poor educational backgrounds, and the low income status of many non-white, working-class (or unemployed) LGBTQIA citizens living in townships or rural areas

throughout South Africa, this data does not provide any useful information with regards to the majority group's consumer practices and "identities". The equally significant (and rather creative) consumer practices and "identities" that are forged within these neglected sectors are thus marginalized and invisibilized by such biased surveys which focus on white, gay, male, educated, upwardly-mobile, and affluent consumers. This focus on a minority group's consumer practices and "identities" cannot reveal anything realistic or salient with regards to the economic and consumer power of all LGBTQIA people. It really only serves in the interest of furthering the capitalistic ends of the small group of mostly white males (corporations, marketers, retailers and consumers) who continue to reap the rewards of systemic exploitation, and thus uphold their historically-based status of economic, class and racial privilege.

Pallegrini (2002: 138) asks the important question: "Is it simply a case of tolerance winning the day, or does it suggest that capitalism can accommodate gay identity without fundamentally undermining its structuring inequalities?" A definitive answer to this question would be tenuous at best. The economic landscape of the queer consumer market segmentation evidence some rather disproportionate representation of affluent white gay male consumers, and such social and discursive inequalities could engender a more thorough-going debate on the matter. Gluckman and Reed (1997: 3) state that "the profits to be reaped from treating gay men and lesbians as a trend-setting consumer group finally outweigh the financial risks of inflaming right-wing hate." They also posit, however, that "the most valuable target market – the one that is most conspicuous in the marketing literature – is white, white collar, and predominantly male." (Gluckman & Reed 1997: 4) From the debates discussed above, the economic significance and power of queer consumption is a wide-spread belief which has lucrative benefits within the marketing and corporate sectors. What is largely elided within these discourses is the disenfranchisement of those queer consumers who are not white, middle- to upper-class males.

Chasin (2000: 165) states "mainstream and gay businesses alike engage in target marketing for the purposes of making a profit." Keating and McLaughlin (2005: 148) view contemporary queer culture as a "lifestyle that uses the language and beliefs of the ideology of consumption." They assert, moreover, that "highlighting economic power [of the lesbian and gay sector], is to only show interest in those with the necessary economic resources and ignore other more diverse segments." The market segmentation of the lesbian and gay consumer market is not in itself a signification of liberal politics on the part of capitalist

corporations; it is, rather, a method of creating new markets for the creation of profit. The ultimate end, therefore, is not necessarily liberation but profit generation.

1.3.4 The Pink Economy, Bourdieusian habitus, and the taxonomy of taste and value

Olivier Roy (2012: 185) observes that "the dominant representation of the gay subject effectively contributes to the definition of what should be the valued gay subject." In this regard, the over-representation of affluent white gay male subjectivity and consumption in the media constructions of the Pink Economy contributes to what can be known about "gayness", so to speak. It is predominantly this latter modality of queer subjectivity which gains sanction and legitimation within the global capitalist markets, and thereby gains cultural capital and value. Timothy Edwards (2013: 13) posits that"homosexuality has largely been depicted as white and equated with a certain lifestyle." The conflation of affluent queer consumption with white gay male subjectivity is a discursive process that constructs queer sexual dissidence and consumption in ways that are in line with the interests of corporate capital. Han (2007: 54) states that "gay publications tout the affluence of the gay community when fighting for advertising dollars." And it is through these media constructions of a hierarchical system of consumer tastes, dispositions and values that queer consumer media gain the attentions of readers and advertisers alike. The Pink Economy and "the gay lifestyle" are discursive constructions which have gained significant traction within popular and media discourses. And, as such, these have relied on the construction of certain consumer dispositions, tastes and styles which can be best theorised through Bourdieu's (1984) notion of habitus.

Bourdieu's notion of habitus resists a rigid, concrete definition, and is not without its ambiguities (Brubaker 1993: 212). Bourdieu (1984) employs the concept of habitus in order to describe how "taste" is a manifestation of numerous structured and structural dispositions which govern the subject's social practices such as the choices of food, clothing, art and all other commodities and services. Bourdieu (1984: 106) claims that:

> Social class is not defined by a property…nor by a collection of properties (of sex, age, social origin, ethnic origin…income, educational level, etc.), nor even by a chain of properties strung out from a fundamental property (position in the

> relations of production) in a relation of cause and effect, conditioner and conditioned; but by the structure of relations between all the pertinent properties which gives its specific value to each of them and to the effects they exert on practices.

He posits that the structural determinations of social class (biological sex, age, gender , divisions of labour and capital, property, etc.) all work in concert to provide the subject with the tools to develop particular dispositions with regards to all social and consumption practices within that class. Zukin & Smith Maguire (2004: 174) observe that historically, "new retail stores, advertisements, popular magazines and daily magazines all brought consumers into contact with goods and tended to make the consumer a powerful role model." In this way, they argue, one is able to see how "consumers' desires for goods are socially constructed – partly through industry-fostered changes in cultural models and strategic practices of marketing." (Zukin & Smith Maguire 2004: 180) It is thus possible to argue that "taste", as Bourdieu (1984) conceives of it, is not an innate disposition or predilection towards certain commodities and services. It is the product or outcome of socially and structurally constructed interrelations of cultural, economic and discursive forces.

Within the complex structure of interrelated social and class subject positions, specific value is given to each of these properties and, in turn, the practices which come about in relation to them. The social position and consumer choices of the modern Parisian dandy, for example, were structured and valued quite differently from those of, say, his tailor or charwoman. It is not that all consumer choices are inherent for all subjects – these are acquired and developed over time. Burawoy (2012: 36) states that "the habitus generates practices that, like moves in a game, are regulated by the regularities of the social structure and in so doing they reproduce these structures." The disposition towards and taste for certain goods, for example, is thus regulated within a particular social and class structure, and the consumption of these goods therefore reproduces those regulatory structures within which such consumption occurs. The disposition towards certain tastes in food, clothing, the arts, sports and leisure activities, for example, is neither innate nor natural. This is the embodied disposition that is structures *within* certain social and class relations.

Craig Calhoun (2003: 276) states that "we are not born with a habitus. As the word suggests this is something we acquire through repetition, like a habit, and something we know in our

bodies, not just our minds." It seems, therefore, that the habitus is best thought of as an acquired set of dispositions which we incorporate into our daily practices, negotiations of "identity", and in our consumption choices. The crux of Bourdiuesian habitus, therefore, lies in this process of learnt consumer dispositions, practices and choices. The Pink Economy and "the gay lifestyle" – as media constructions of luxury, leisure activities, cosmopolitanism, style, and sophistication – require "that one has access to the right or appropriate cultural knowledge and dispositions." (Binnie & Skeggs 2004: 42) The Pink Economy, therefore, exemplifies the acquisition and expression of certain learnt tastes and styles through a process that is best understood through habitus. It is important, therefore, to look at how those queer consumer choices and tastes are *valued* and classified within a hierarchy that is structured along the lines of social class, race, gender, sexuality, physical ability and so forth.

Sender (2001: 75) posits that Bourdieu's theoretic application "offers us a way of looking at how consumer choices and tastes are structured in part by their position within the social hierarchy in embodied practices and lived environments." She also asserts that "the gay habitus constructed by and through marketing and gay publications is the most visible, and, arguably, most powerful version of 'gayness' for both gay-identified people and the mainstream." (Sender 2001: 75) The consumer identities and practices which are prioritized in the media discourses of the Pink Economy are constructed so as to seem natural – as an obvious part of "the gay lifestyle". But these are, in fact, acquired, learnt and legitimated dispositions which have gained cultural capital and value within a structural hierarchy that is constructed within various queer consumer media.

In a culturally diverse society like South Africa, such a hierarchical structure of taste, style and consumption can have the dire effects in terms of marginalizing (and invisibilizing) other queer consumers who are *not* white, male or affluent. Sexuality is inflected by class, race and gender dynamics in complex ways. This fact is often overlooked by marketing companies, advertisers and media institutions which have lucrative stakes in the over-representations of the affluent white gay male consumer. It is this constructed image of a singular and "ideal" white gay male consumer that contributes to the discursive marginalization of other LGBTQIA consumers who might be female, transsexual, intersexed, non-white, disabled, and do not have such staggeringly high incomes.

1.4 Homonormativity, the discursive reproduction of whiteness in queer consumer media, and the marginalization of black queer consumption.

This section will flesh out the debates surrounding the concept of homonormativity. The definition and analytical usefulness of this concept will herein be given. The interrelations between homonormativity, neoliberal "free" market capitalism and sexual identity politics will also be discussed. The literature on the local manifestations and discourses of homonormativity will then be laid out. A discussion on the commodification of certain LGBTQIA subjectivities, sexualities and bodies will follow thereafter. Finally, the literature on the racialization of queer consumption and the Pink Economy will be discussed.

1.4.1 Homonormativity, the Pink Economy and the depoliticization of queer sexual identity politics

An area within the fields of gender, lesbian and gay, and queer studies which has been under-theorized is the extent to which the media constructions of the Pink Economy rely on an assimilationist politics which characterise homonormative ideologies. Lisa Duggan's (2002) conception of heteronormativity is illuminating in that it is located within the homogenizing discourses and values of "free" capitalist markets and neoliberalism. In this way, Duggan's (2002) critique highlights the ways in which the discourses of sexuality in late modernity, and the concomitant constructions of the Pink Economy are assimilated within regulatory and hierarchical nexus of power and knowledge through which heteronormativity has been naturalized.

In order to understand the discursive operations by which the assimilationist discourses of queer sexualities takes place in the Pink Economy, one would have to situate them within the context of homonormativity. Ultimately, those queer sexualities which do gain legitimacy and sanction within the mainstream cultural body politic are those that can be constructed, packaged and marketed (to corporations and consumers alike), and are thus bound within the borders of the heteronormative episteme. Butler (1990: 17) claims that heterosexualization is "the cultural matrix through which gender identity has become intelligible [and] requires that certain kinds of 'identities' cannot 'exist' – that is, those in which gender does not follow from sex and those in which the practices of desire do not follow from either sex or gender." But knowledge, capital and power do not operate through such outright and explicit denial.

The discourses of knowledge and power are insinuated even within the realm of non-normative sexual dissidence such that the profit-making interests of capital do not seem so obvious and all-encompassing. Homonormativity, therefore, operates as a power/knowledge regime which seeks to contain, depoliticize and stratify queer sexualities and queer bodies within very fixed hierarchical boundaries.

In her famous quote, Lisa Duggan (2002: 179) describes homonormativity as:

> a politics that does not contest dominant heteronormative assumptions and institutions but upholds and sustains them while promising the possibility of a demobilized gay constituency and a privatized, depoliticized gay culture anchored in domesticity and consumption.

Homonormativity, then, can be understood as an ideological regime that does not necessarily seek to dismantle the naturalized dominance of heteronormativity. It operates in such a way as to endorse heteronormativity as natural and therefore dominant, while simultaneously asserting a fixed, sanitized and domesticated lesbian and gay "identity". In an attempt to gain wider social, economic, legal and political freedom and acceptance, homonormative ideologies endorse and recapitulate the values, norms and practices of those heteronormative institutions from which they seeks acceptance. This legally and culturally sanctioned normative mode of queer sexuality is inflected by politico-economic undertones – as it is a product of the nationalist surveillance and containment of queer and dissident sexualities.

Duggan (2002) situates homonormativity within the context of neoliberalism wherein all forms of citizenship are overdetermined by the demands of "free" markets and the various consumption practices which these bring about. "Neoliberalism," she argues, is "the brand name for the form of pro-corporate, 'free market', anti –'big government' rhetoric shaping U.S. policy and dominating international financial institutions since the early 1980s." (Duggan 2002: 177) Duggan (2002: 177) asserts that neoliberalism does indeed have a sexual dimension to it. This is also echoed in Jasbir Puar's (2006: 68) assertion that "the production of gay and queer bodies is crucial to the deployment of nationalism, insofar as these perverse bodies reiterate heterosexuality as the norm." This is also evidenced by the ghettoization of the Pink Economy as characterized by "niche" market frivolity (read the feminized undertones of the words "Pink Economy"), as somewhat distinct from the mainstream economy and heterosexualized commerce. Fejes (2003: 213) argues that "it seems the acceptance of lesbians and gay males as sexual/political subjects is predicated on their

acceptance and importance as consuming subjects." So homonormativity can be seen as an assimilationist strategy by which a small group of queer consumer-citizens and bodies are legitimated and rendered "tolerable" within the market economy and the national body politic.

Duggan's (2002) theoretic move of situating the concept of homonormativity within the context of neoliberalism is illuminating in its implications regarding queer citizenship and visibility. She argues that in their attempts to gain social and legal equity through advocacy for same-sex marriage and visibility within the U.S. army, lesbian women and gay men are co-opted into, and therefore endorse, assimilationist politics that suit the neoliberal and nationalist ends of (conservative) right-wing politics. Malanansan's (2005: 142) explication of the concept of homonormativity shows us that it is

> a chameleon-like ideology that purports to push for progressive causes such as rights to gay marriage and other 'activisms,' but at the same time it creates a depoliticizing effect on queer communities as it rhetorically remaps and recodes freedom and liberation in terms of privacy, domesticity and consumption. In other words, homonormativity anesthetizes queer communities into passively accepting alternative forms of inequality in return for domestic privacy and the freedom to consume.

Puar (2006: 72) posits that "while queer bodies may be disallowed, there is room for the absorption and management of homosexuality – temporally, historically, and spatially specific – when advantageous for…national interests." It is important to note that these restrictive homonormative discourses "accommodate" only lesbian and gay "identities" and bodies which reify a white, middle- to upper-class class, cisgendered, able-bodied subject position. This discursive process is the acquiescence to what Gayle Rubin (1993) has termed the "fallacy of misplaced scale" – in which modern Western societies appraise sexuality and sex acts according to a scale of hierarchal sexual value. Within this hierarchy, only those sex acts and sexualities which appear to be in line with procreative heterosexuality gain socio-cultural sanction. In relation to this hierarchical scale of sexual regulation, Foucault (1976: 45) posits that "people often say that modern society has attempted to reduce sexuality to the couple – the heterosexual and, insofar as possible, legitimate couple." All other forms of sexual dissidence are thus rendered irrelevant, invisible and/or intolerable – namely poor,

transgendered, intersexed, disabled and HIV positive subjects and bodies that are systemically pushed to the margins of social acceptability.

In such an instance of symbolic and cultural violence (through the marginalization and negation of dissident sexualities), the efficacy and vitality of a queer politics of difference is lost through the discursive strategies of assimilation and commodification. Within this neoliberal context, the "taming" and sanitization of queer liberationist politics engenders "a domesticated, *depoliticized privacy*. The democratic diversity of proliferating forms of sexual dissidence is rejected in favour of the naturalized variation of a fixed minority arrayed around a state-endorsed heterosexual primacy and prestige." (Duggan 2002: 190, emphasis my own)

Puar (2006: 71) also maintains that "it is certainly the case that within a national as well as transnational frame, some queers are better off than others." This has partly been ensured by the mainstreaming, commodification and marketing of homonormative "identities" – an insidious ideology which has systematically kept white cisgendered able-bodied middle and upper-class gay males in a place of considerable economic and social privilege, while simultaneously marginalizing all other modalities of queer subjectivity.

The global permutations of bodies, identities, practices and discourses have also made it possible for localized instantiations of homonormativity (however problematic) to become manifest. Oswin (2007a: 68) states that "the examination of homonormativity and its implication in the dynamics of recognition and redistribution is best conducted in context." It is therefore important to interrogate local, contextual forms of homonormativity in order to provide a thoroughgoing critique of its limitations, exclusions and overall injustice.

1.4.2 The neoliberal embrace: The assimilation of queer sexualities within the nation-state

Keating and McLoughlin (2005: 134) argue that "ideology helps place the way in which representations in the social world correspond to the ideological forces within a culture." The ideology within the specific spatio-temporal context of a given culture is thus often inflected within its myriad representational forms and discourses. It has been mentioned above that the changing South African political and social milieu in the early 1990s had significant effects in terms of the discourses foregrounded within the queer consumer media, and their representations of queer sexual identity politics. This evidences the extent to which queer

"identities" and bodies were (and still are) discursively assimilated within a neoliberal, nationalist agenda. It also evidences the extent to which queer consumer-citizens are enticed – through their participation within consumer markets – into colluding with the state's metanarratives of diversity on the (supposed) basis of non-discrimination.

Puar's (2006; 2013) construal of homonationalism is theoretically helpful at this point. Puar (2006: 72) states "homonationalism is both disciplined by the nation and its heteronormative underpinnings, and also effectively surveys and disciplines those sexually perverse bodies that fall outside its purview." The disciplining techniques by which power and nationalism are reproduced have their effects within the inherent tensions between the nation-state and sexual identity politics. Thus homonationalism can be conceived as

> an assemblage of geopolitical and historical forces, neoliberal interests in capitalist accumulation and both cultural and material, biopolitical state practices of population control, and affective investments in discourses of freedom, liberation and rights.
>
> (Puar 2013: 337)

Puar (2013) specifically deploys the concept of homonationalism in order to draw attention to the ways in which the U.S. government draws on discourses of progressive queer liberal rights discourse in order to justify its own territorializing tactics of expelling those "queer" bodies which were constructed as "bad" and/or "threatening" from the national body politic – i.e. Islamic citizens and immigrants. Such a framework, then, allows for a critique of the methods by which some queers are sanctioned and assimilated within the nation-state through the deployment of discourses regarding (amongst other things) patriotism, nation-building and "good" citizenship. As a critical framework, the concept of homonationalism problematizes the extent to which lesbian and gay liberal rights discourses engender the regulation and control of some "queer" bodies and nationalities, while simultaneously marginalizing others. Thus the homonationalist discourses are undergirded by homonormativity as conceived by Duggan (2002) insofar as they regulate, stratify and legitimate some "good" queer subjectivities, while side-lining those which are constructed as "bad".

The nationionalist and neoliberal embrace of queer sexuality, bodies and subjectivities are often coercive strategies whose ideological potency is drawn from various discursive regimes, and thus result in the promulgation of homonormativity as specifically regards sexual identity politics. As Berlant and Freeman (1992: 154) argue:

> The abstract, disembodied networks of electronic visual, aural, and textual communication, the nationalized systems of juridical activity and official public commentary, the state and the local political realms that are not at all simply microcosm of the national: All coexist with both the manifestly pleasuring or moneymaking embodiments of local, national and, global capitalism, and with other customary interactions of social life.

Through this amalgam of discursive forces, nation-states can (and, in fact, do) maximize on queer rights discourses and liberationist rhetoric in order to project progressive, cosmopolitan, multi-ethnic images of themselves. This is precisely what the Isreali state has done in order to project an image of democracy and inclusiveness about itself. Such a strategy has come to be known as "Pinkwashing." In a *New York Times* article, Sarah Schulman (2011) describes how the Tel Aviv tourism board started a campaign costing roughly $90 million (USD) in order to brand the city as a "lesbian- and gay-friendly" holiday destination. So it stands to reason that Pinkwashing is the promotion of lesbian and gay bodies, visibility and queer consumption by the state in order to attract potential leisure seekers and divert attention away from the tragedies of Isreali apartheid and settler colonialism (Puar 2013).

These inetrrelated processes of homonationalism and Pinkwashing provide illuminating critiques of neoliberal embrace from markets and the nation-state. The promotion of queer bodies, sexuality and liberal rights discourse is utilized by nation-states in order to project progressive and positive images of themselves, while the genocide and brutality carried out against other "bad"/queer bodies is elided. So it seems that branding strategies such as Pinkwashing are homonationalist and homonormative strategies by which various queer subjectivities are sanitized and assimilated within the national body politic. These assimilationist discourses of nation-building also occurred in South Africa – albeit for the ultimately different ends of rebranding it as the post-apartheid "Rainbow Nation."

During the South African transition period of the early 1990s, in which the National Party government slowly handed over the reins of power to the ANC, the latter organisation's lack of coherent economic policies was a cause for concern for the private sector and large

international corporations – which had considerable (and lucrative) investments in the newly developing nation. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund were likewise worried about the ANC's proffered strategies of nationalisation and redistribution of the state's resources. According to Taylor and Williams (2000: 36) "South Africa's major corporations, which had undergone only superficial alteration during the transition, and the associated business press were very effective in pressurising socialist elements within the ANC to conform to neoliberal principles." Through various methods of coercion, persuasion and outright discipline from media and business sectors, the ANC was pressured into revising their intended economic policies, and thus adopting neoliberal economic policies for national development. Through these and several other processes, the post-apartheid South African socio-cultural ideology has been centred on neoliberal principles and values - in which "free" market capitalism and privatisation are some of the driving forces of the economy. Peet (2005: 55) argues that the ruling ANC government has "propagated rightist political ideologies in the neoliberal guise of policies promising economic growth." And, by extension, Taylor and Williams (2000: 37) posit that the ANC's "adoption of neoliberal principles has exacerbated inequality and increased the concentration of wealth in the hands of the privileged few." The latter statement still rings true when one considers the massive inequality between the rich white minority and poor black majority in South Africa. Of particular interest for this study, however, are the interrelations of the South African neoliberal hegemonic order and the local instantiations of homonormativity.

The rebranding of South Africa as the "Rainbow Nation" during the early 1990s was a joint effort from several political parties, trade unions, the private sector, religious and civil organizations, and not least, several local LGBTQIA rights organisations (Croucher 2002). It was these latter organisations, such as the National Coalition of Gay and Lesbian Equality (NCGLE) and the Cape Town based Organisation of Lesbian and Gay Action (OLGA), which were at the forefront in lobbying for the equality clause in South Africa's constitution (De Waal & Manion 2006: Gevisser 1994; Oswin 2007b). Section nine of the equality clause in South Africa's Bill of Rights would ensure all LGBTQIA citizens in South Africa full human rights and equality before the law. After concerted lobbying from several lesbian and gay rights groups, the ANC eventually changed its conservative stance towards queer sexual identity politics, and thus included several queer activists in the negotiation processes which led to the drafting of South Africa's democratic constitution (de Waal & Manion 2006). Epprecht (2001: 1095) states that "it was in recognition of gays' and lesbians' contributions

to anti-apartheid struggle that in May 1992 ANC leaders first proposed the sexual orientation clause for South Africa's draft post-apartheid constitution." This evidences the significant role which the lesbian and gay liberation movements played in the construction and formation of the "Rainbow Nation".

Natalie Oswin (2007a) argues that the enshrinement of LGBTQIA rights within the constitution was a progressive, tactical move to remake South Africa into a "gay-friendly" nation-state. She claims that the NCGLE's lobbying for the inclusion of "sexual orientation" in the equality clause of the constitution "positioned South Africa as having an opportunity of re-entering the international arena at its forefront…The idea was that South Africa would emerge from international isolation not just as a modern nation but as an exemplary gay-friendly zone." (Oswin 2007a: 100) According to her, this piece of non-discriminatory constitutional legislation is tantamount to a "queering of the nation-state." Moreover, she reads the state's sanctioning of LGBTQIA rights as an opportunity to theoretically queer and therefore destabilize normative understandings of neoliberal capitalist orthodoxy as an ineluctable monolith.

Oswin's (2007a) position proves to be problematic on a number of levels – three of which warrant careful consideration. First, in her reading of the "queer post-apartheid nation," Oswin overestimates the "subversive" and/or counter-hegemonic motivations for the ANC-led government's legislation of queer citizenship and "identities". While it was both important and laudable to protect the basic human rights of all LGBTQIA citizens, it must be noted that this sanctioning of queer politics and "identities" by the ANC came at an opportune moment (during the early 1990s transitional period). This was a time when the ANC-led Government of National Unity sought to reconstitute the previous apartheid policies of discrimination and redress past injustices. In order to do this, the ANC strategically aligned itself with as several marginalized groups that faced oppression and discrimination under heinous apartheid laws – the LGBTQIA rights groups were among this motley crew of apartheid's victims. So the "subversive" or counter-hegemonic premises of this supposedly "queer state" seem dubious because of the ANC's strategy of appropriating queer subjectivities within its own agenda to further its political and economic ends (a detailed discussion of this discursive process shall be given in Chapter five). As argued by Cruz-Malavé and Manalansan (2002: 2), "queer sexualities and cultures have often been deployed…positively by nation-states in order to project an image of global modernness consistent with capitalist market exchange."

Second, Oswin (2007a: 103) states that "the embrace of homosexuality by the South African nation-state…was about embracing that threat [of homosexuality] so that it might in turn mitigate others." To be sure, homosexuality (amongst other dissident sexualities) was constructed as a "threat" to the family values and national stability under the Calvinistic values of the apartheid regime. From Oswin's reading then, the state's legitimation and sanctioning of homo- and other sexualities amounts to nothing other than the containment and subjugation of these forms of sexual dissidence. In his historic analysis of the various discursive techniques of power by which subjects are ordered along specific hierarchies of knowledgeability, Foucault (1976: 44) argues that:

> The machinery of power that focused on this whole alien strain [of sexuality] did not aim to suppress it, but to give it an analytical, visible and permanent reality: it was implanted in bodies, slipped in beneath modes of conduct, made into a principle of classification and intelligibility

In this way, queer sexualities, bodies and practices were neither obliterated nor denied, but systemically ordered and regulated in such a way as to make them intelligible and therefore containable to the extent that the hegemonic order could reproduce and spread itself along a variety of discursive regimes. This too was the discursive strategy employed by the post-apartheid nation-state. It is therefore problematic to conceive of such a legal and political strategy on the part of the ANC, and other stake holders in the national economy, as necessarily "progressive". Furthermore, the state's "embrace" has not mitigated other more immediate "threats" such as unemployment, poverty, the scourge of HIV/AIDS, gender-based violence, xenophobia and rampant corruption, to name but a few.

Third, Oswin (2007a; 2007b) also argues that the NCGLE's strategy for lobbying for the inclusion of "sexual orientation" in the equality clause was decidedly more persuasive and assimilationsit than confrontational. The coalition had to lobby in such as a way as to meet the terms and conditions of the Constitutonal Assembly in order to have their submissions taken seriously. One such strategy was to rely on the legal prowess of its white male executive membership, and it was only they who attended the Assembly's meetings while sitting quietly at the back. Livermon (2012: 303) states that "the inclusion of the equality clause was in the main a negotiation between a rather conservative white-male-led queer constituency and important black male leaders of the [ANC] liberation movement." Moreover, "the Coalition made a conscious choice not to mobilize a grassroots movement."

(Oswin 2007a: 96) This, therefore, precluded the majority of its non-white and non-male membership of the national LGBTQIA constituency from participating in these negotiations with the state. So it seems that Oswin's "gay-friendly 'queer' state" is not queer at all. It is neither "subversive" nor "progressive" in that it does not necessarily disrupt the nation-state's heteropatriachal foundations in which predominantly white cisgendered gay males enjoy its assimilationist embrace.

1.4.3 The racialization of the Pink Economy and the marginalizing discourses of homonormativity

The racialization of the Pink Economy in contemporary South Africa queer consumer media is inextricably linked to the historical stratifications and regulations of consumption under colonial and apartheid rule. Deborah Posel (2010: 160) states that during the eras of colonialism and apartheid "the desire and power to consume was racialized, at the same time as it was fundamental in the making of race." Iqani (2012b: 7) also states that "deprived for centuries of [the] material markers of 'the better life', South Africans comprising the oppressed racial categories remained marginalized onlookers of globalised consumer culture, deprived of both political rights and economic agency." So it is evident that consumption is always already racially marked.

The Pink Economy, therefore, is one such domain of consumption that is always already racialized. Several scholars within the field of gender, lesbian and gay, and queer studies have frequently noted to the disproportional over-representation of whiteness within queer consumer media, and the subsequent conflation of white affluence with the essentialized idea of "gayness" (Bérubé 2001; Chasin 2000; Fejes 2003; Fung 2005; Han 2007; Livermon 2012; Teunis 2007) The local instantiations of the Pink Economy also bear the marks of racialization insofar as queer consumer identities and practices are regulated (and often divided) along the definitive lines of race. Milani (in press: 15) states that queer consumption "is the manifestation of an ordered form of political engagement that…has specific historical provenance and particular social class undertones." Visser (2008: 415) states that "whilst black homosexual men and women might have a vague notion of the distantly located formal white gay male spaces, they, and the leisure geographies they generate, are themselves invisible to the white gay male cohorts. Interaction between different homosexual racial cohorts appears to be minimal." It is evident, then, that the legacies of apartheid have seeped

into the social and economic foundations of the South African Pink Economy. Tucker (2009: 39) argues that the legacy of privilege and power "means that many white queer men today…have not been able or willing to see beyond superficial renderings of a particular Western commodified queer culture towards wider social and political unity."

A discussion regarding the homonormative commodification of queer bodies and sexuality first begs a clarification of the term "commodification". In his formulation of "commodity fetishism", Karl Marx (1906) points out that as soon as any object or entity emerges on the market as a commodity, it is transformed into a thing which transcends material and objective sensuousness. This transformation, he argues, is brought about due to its significance as a product of human labour. Marx (1906: 83) argues that "the labour of the private individual [who produces the item] manifests itself as an element of the total labour of society only through the relations which the act of exchange establishes between the products, and, through their mediation, between the producers." Thus it is through the (already agreed-upon) process of mutual exchange that that product gains its value. "It is only by being exchanged," he continues "that the products of labour acquire a socially uniform objectivity as values, which is distinct from their sensuously varied objectivity as article of utility." (Marx 1906: 84)

In the introduction to his anthology, *The Social Life of Things*, Arjun Appadurai (1986: 3) states that "economic exchange creates value," and that "value is embedded in commodities that are exchanged." Appadurai (1986) sees in all objects and entities – "things" – a life history and trajectory wherein the potential to become a valuable commodity (through the unanimous process of exchange) is always possible. In this regard, "commoditization lies at the complex intersection of temporal, cultural and social factors." (Appadurai 1986: 15) Foucault's (1966: 207) formulation of commodification through exchange is also helpful here:

> what each person eats and drinks, what he needs in order to live, has no value as long as he does not relinquish it; and what he does not need is equally devoid of value as long as he does not employ it to acquire something he does need. In other words, in order that one thing can represent another in an exchange, they must both exist as bearers of value; and yet value exists only within the representation (actual or possible), that is, within the exchange or the exchangeability.

It is helpful to set aside the discussion of the various ways and contexts in which "value" can be seen as also arising from the "immaterial capital" of knowledge production and brand identity around a particular commodity (see Arvidsson 2007). The point here is that the process "commodification" is inextricably tied to social relations, subjectivity and identity formation. According to Ammariglio and Callari (1993: 192), "commodity fetishism is Marx's device to show just how economic relations influence subjectivity, ideology, discourse, politics, and so on and, most important, how economic relations are themselves 'articulated' and overdetermined outcomes of the combined effects of these 'superstructural' and other processes." From this perspective, then, the concepts of "commodification" and "commodity fetishism" are frameworks through which subject formation, the socio-economic relations between subjects and sexual identity politics can be better theorized.

Indeed the concept of "commodification" has a sexual dimension to it – to the extent that the commodification of queer bodies, practices and identities is often underscored by homonormative ideologies within various media representations. And it is important to note the way(s) in which the commodification of queer sexuality is gendered and racialized. Visser (2008: 1347) states that "formal gay space is shown to be wealthy, white, male leisure space…as a means of affirming their own identities…those white gay identities are impacted upon by increased gay and lesbian commodification – principally through queer tourism." Dereka Rushbrook (2002: 190) also states that "gays are more than merely one component of diversity and more than a commodity for direct consumption; they serve as markers of the cosmopolitan nature of the metropolis." In this way, it is possible to see the ways in which queer sexuality, liberal rights discourses and consumer-citizenship are used by state authorities and commercial corporations to construct and literally *sell* the images of progressiveness, diversity and cosmopolitan modernity. The process of queer commodification also goes a step further to the extent that certain queer bodies are used to sell certain commodities and services within the Pink Economy. As will be shown in the Chapter six, the black masculinities, sexuality and bodies are predominantly used within queer consumer media in order to sell certain products and services.

This study will therefore interrogate and critique the homonormative foundations of the constructions of the Pink Economy within post-apartheid queer media. This study will focus on media representations of queer consumer identities and practices as the discursive instantiations of the power of the Pink Economy, and will make an argument as to the limitations of such representations. This study will draw attention to the strategies and

techniques by which queer consumer identities and practices are assimilated within the broader interests of global (and local) corporate capital, and the nation-state, in order to reproduce the hegemonic white capitalist supremacist heteropatriachal status quo (hooks 1992). Furthermore, this study will highlight the ways in which black queer consumption is marginalized within the homonormative ideologies that are propounded by the Pink Economy. It will make the case that black queer subjectivity, black masculinities and black bodies only hold a minimal (and downright derogatory) place within the Pink Economy as commodified sexual objects whose sole purpose is to sate the desires of white gay men. In this regard, it will be argued that the commodification of the black male body/sexuality only serves to negate and marginalize black queer consumption while simultaneously reifying the discourses of homonomativity. The next chapter will outline the theoretical framework and conceptual scaffolding through which the corpus of queer media texts will be analysed in this study.

In this chapter I have provided an overview of the literature on queer media, "niche" market segmentation, the Pink Economy, homonormativity and the racialization of queer consumption. This overview, therefore, will enable for a cogent and contextual analysis of the local debates and representations of the Pink Economy. The next chapter will then provide a discussion of the theories which will inform the analysis of the queer consumer media texts in this study.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework

This chapter will outline the various theoretical perspectives which inform the analysis of queer media texts in this study. Media and cultural studies are interdisciplinary fields, and thus tend to draw on several traditions of scholarly inquiry and critique. In a similar fashion, this study of queer consumer media will engage in several different, yet significantly interrelated, theoretical fields in order to apply a cogent and thorough-going analysis of the corpus of chosen media texts. The scholarly fields of Queer Theory, Critical Race and Feminist Theory, and Post-colonial Theory will herein be discussed in specific relation to the discourses of race, queer consumption, representation and sexual identity politics.

2.1 Queering Homonormativity: Queer Theory's rebellious project, and the problematics of homonormativity

One of the chief preoccupations in this study of post-apartheid South African queer consumer media, and the Pink Economy, are the homonormative discourses which form the ideological basis of these constructions. As has been discussed in the previous chapter, homonormativity relates to "the ways in which particular forms of 'assimilated' homosexuality have themselves become normative and incorporated within the logic of heteronormativity." (Brown 2009: 1496) In this regard, homonormativity plays out as an ideology which depoliticizes, domesticates and normalizes queer sexualities (especially lesbian and gay subjectivities) within normative gender, sexual, racial and class roles. It is precisely those assimilationist and homonormative foundations of the Pink Economy – as constructed in queer consumer media – which this study seeks to problematize from a theoretically queer perspective. King (2009: 285) states that "socially endorsed [queer] visibility always produces new exclusions," and that "it tends to signify and enable assimilation into dominant norms, not resistance to them." This study will queer, and therefore problematize, the homonormative discourses surrounding the media constructions of the Pink Economy.

The term "queer" serves a two-fold purpose in this study: In the first instance, it highlights the fluidity of sexual and other "identities" which are the products of the discursive matrices of power and knowledge (Foucault 1976; 1994). Second the term "queer" is also used interchangeably (albeit carefully) with the acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transexual, Queer, Intersexed, Asexual (LGBTQIA) to delineate the various non-normative subject positions of sexual dissidence. According to Milani (2013: 16) "the term 'queers' has often been used in a lay connotation to refer to all those who do not see themselves as fitting into the heterosexual matrix of desire – those who would generally fall under the daunting acronym of LGBTQIA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transexual, Intersexual and Asexual)." The term "identity" is also herein used tentatively. It does not mark or point to a stable, unitary, and fixed subject position, but is used a conceptual gesture towards a complex set of meandering discourses and processes which are embodied by various subject positionalities.

According to Annamarie Jagose (1996: 74), a theoretically queer perspective is "a consequence of the constructionist problematizing of any allegedly universal term." In the light of its problematizing project, Queer Theory therefore challenges and seeks to destabilize the presuppositions about the fixity of *any* identity category which is deemed natural, fixed and immanent. Queer Theory therefore offers a destabilizing intervention with regards to the normative assumptions about the sexual and gender "identities", and those desires and practices which are socio-culturally mapped thereon. Milani (2013: 3) posits that "a queering enterprise seeks to highlight how some of the ties between sex, gender and sexuality are socially (re) produced as 'normal' and 'desirable'…while others are devalued as 'deviant' and 'unwanted' (usually same-sex desire)." Oswin (2007b: 95 – 96) observes that "queer's potential as a critical tool for engagement emerges from its use as an anti-essentialist mode of reading." To read sex, sexuality and gender (or any other "identity") from a queer perspective is to therefore eschew all essentialisms from that category. In its most useful form, then, Queer Theory serves as a rebellious critique against those unquestioned assumptions about the universality and/or fixity of "identity" categories (sexual, gender, or otherwise).

But it seems important to caution against too hasty and convenient a reliance on the subversive potential of the queer. Puar (2001: 176) states that invoking the queer is a "culturally relativistic move that must be countered by a carefully situated analysis of power." In *The History of Sexuality Vol. 1,* Michel Foucault (1976) provides a genealogical account of the different ways in which anatomy, sex and sexuality were used to regulate, organise, categorise and stratify subjectivity within a complex network of discourses in

Western Europe from the 17th to 19th Centuries. These discourses surrounding sex and sexuality were constructed and proliferated within various domains of religious, juridical, and scientific (biological) knowledge in order to reproduce and serve the ends of power; thus sexuality became a discursive tool that was utilized in the regulation of both knowledge and its gendered, sexualized subjects. The summation of all these various discourses on sex and sexuality culminated in the emergence of discursive machinery by which power reproduced and disseminated itself across space and time. Sexuality was thus "implanted in bodies, slipped in beneath modes of conduct, made into a principle of classification and intelligibility, established as a raison d'être and a natural order of disorder." (Foucault 1976: 44) Such an analysis of the discursive regimes of power allows us to conceptualize gender, sex and sexuality less as immanent identity categories, and more as socially constructed tools by which subjectivity is formed and regulated.

A theoretically queer intervention allows us to understand that sexual and gender categories are not necessarily autonomous systems of meaning and identification – but arise out of a dynamic matrix of discourses and other social forces. For example, the binary distinction between the sexual identity categories of hetero- and homosexuality come to dissolve when seen in this social constructivist light. Foucault (1976: 43) asserts that "homosexuality appeared as one of the forms of sexuality when it was transposed from the practice of sodomy onto a kind of interior androgyny, a hermaphrodism of the soul." Through the proliferation, institutionalization and pathologization of numerous sexual discourses, what had previously been common (either overlooked or clandestine) same-sex desires and practices became discursive tools through which knowledge about certain subjectivities could be stratified, disseminated and controlled.

Following in Foucault's (1976) constructivist legacy, Butler (1990: 7) makes these poignant observations:

> If the immutable character of sex is contested, perhaps this construct called 'sex' is as culturally constructed as gender; indeed, perhaps it was always already gender with the consequence that the distinction between sex and gender turns out be no distinction at all.

The "natural" and self-evident discourses of gender, sex and sexuality, hetero- and homosexuality, become less and less clear when seen through a rebellious, fluid, dynamic and *queer* lens. Silverchanz (2009: 7) argues that "if we were to accept a fluid notion of sexual

orientation, we can learn more about what lies in between the old binary system's two extremes [of hetero- and homosexuality]." Samuels (1999: 92) also posits that "the desire to conceptualize and articulate a plurality of sexual subjectivities, within a space uncircumscribed by the limitations of its own boundaries, is the impetus behind the creation of the term 'queer theory'."

In their most glaring manifestation, homonormative ideologies not only endorse assimilationist politics and integration within the context of neoliberal capitalist heteropatriarchy, but they simultaneously seek to "normalise" and domesticate queer sexuality along very rigid and definitive lines. Siedman (2002: 17) states that "as the 'normal gay' is integrated as a good citizen, other sexual outsiders may stand in for the homosexual as representing the 'bad' or dangerous sexual citizen." Butler (1994: 21) asserts that "normalizing the queer, would be, after all, its sad finish." Those homonormative politics, strategies and ideologies which posit the immanence, fixity and universality of sexual "identity" categories are not subversive but rather dangerous in their assimilationist stance. Tucker (2009: 16) states that that which is "queer" is "often framed as an endeavour to consciously and continually question regulative agendas that normalise within society and offer ruptures in discourse so as to allow power to coalesce in new and liberating forms." The normalisation of fixed lesbian or gay sexual identity categories is dangerous insofar as it perpetuates those marginalizing discourses by which certain sexual subjectivities are sanctioned, legitimated and controlled, while others are excluded and invisibilized. It is those simultaneously normalizing and marginalizing discourses of homonormativity which the "queer" can possibly call into question. Samuels (1999: 99) posits that the "queer" identifies "normalization, rather than simple intolerance, as the site of violence." And it is the systemic and discursive violence of marginalization within the homonormative discourses of the Pink Economy which this study seeks to highlight and critique.

According to Ian Barnard (1999: 200), "sexuality is always racially marked. As every racial marking is imbued with a specific sexuality." Sexuality and race are not "disparate constituents of subjectivity or axes of power, but rather sexuality [is] always-already racialized, and vice-versa." (Barnard 1999: 200) The black queer subject can therefore be conceived as an intersectional nexus of race, sex, gender, class and other social articulations of lived experiences of identification. All these articulations of subjectivity are interlocked and operate simultaneously in the subject's constitution. A thoroughgoing queer critique will, therefore, take all these, articulations into full account. It seeks to explicate the extent to

which all these other articulations are negated and erased within the homonormative ideologies. In an attempt to trace "the degree to which sexual tolerance and homosexuality itself have been so thoroughly whitened," (King, 2009: 282) this study will interrogate and theoretically queer those homonormative discourses within the media constructions of the Pink Economy.

If Queer Theory is to be useful in a critique of the homornormative foundations of media constructions of the Pink Economy, then such an approach has to be critical and self-reflexive. Dudley (2013: 192) observes that "despite the events of the last decades and the much improved circumstances of white LGBT [sic] persons, black LGBT [sic] persons still find it relatively more difficult to find a safe space where they can be more fully themselves." One such space is the discursive realm of queer consumer media wherein white gay male identities and consumption are over-represented – at the cost of the marginalization of other racial, class, gender and sexual subject positions. Han (2007: 61) also observes that within the queer visual landscape of queer media "men of colour are seen as lower on the gendered hierarchy within the gay community where white masculinity is valued over all other forms of masculinity." Husbands et al. (2013: 444) also detected that there is a "sense of marginalisation within the public realm of social relationships in the mainstream (White) gay community." So if Queer Theory is to bear any significantly interventionist and critical fruit – if it is to be truly rebellious, that is – it has to take into account the racial and class stratifications within the LGBTQIA polity, and be similarly reflexive of its own theoretic and methodological preoccupations.

2.2 Images of the Other: Critical race and Feminist Theories of colonial discourse and representation.

Critical race, feminist and post-colonial theories of representation form significant aspects of this study. Stuart Hall (1997: 3) posits that "we give things meaning by how we *represent* them - the words we use about them, the stories we tell about them, the images of them we produce." (emphasis in original) That which is known or perceived about the Other is inextricably tied to how they are represented. Hall (2003: 90) also states that "amongst other kinds of ideological labour, the media construct for us a definition of what *race* is, what

meanings the imagery of race carries, and what the problem of race is understood to be. They help us classify out the world in terms of the category of race." (emphasis in original)

Media representations, therefore, are closely tied to questions of ideology, which are, in turn, inextricably linked to questions of power. Hall (2003: 225) conceives of the politics of representation and difference as "the struggle around positionalities." The media constructions of the Pink Economy lie at the intersectional nexus wherein the discourses of race, class, sexuality and consumption are in constant flux. To be sure, "the portrayal of whiteness has been used to lend to the gay community an air of respectability in the eyes of law-makers…Another way in which the gay community has profited from the portrayal of whiteness is through the image of the affluent gay male." (Teunis 2007: 270) The normalising, assimilationist and homonormative ideologies of the Pink Economy do not only have implications in terms of the reification and over-representation of affluent white gay cisgendered homomasculine consumption, but they also have negative consequences in terms of the under-representation and the marginalization of non-white queer consumer practices and identities.

2.3 Critical Race Theory

In his influential essay, "The Concept of Race", W.E.B du Bois (1968: 133) makes the following conjecture about race: "perhaps it is wrong to speak of it all as a 'concept' rather than as a group of contradictory forces, facts and tendencies." Such a position throws a queer light on the concept of "race" to the extent that it is seen less as a biological *fact*, than a contextual and discursive modality of socio-cultural positionality. Haney-Lopez (2000: 168) argues that "race is not a determinant or a residue of some other social phenomenon, but rather stands on its own as an amalgamation of competing societal forces." From this social constructionist perspective, race – like gender, sex, sexuality and class – can be seen as the summation of various competing discursive regimes of subject formation. This is not to say that the social concept of race does not have "vigorous strength in the realm of social beliefs" (Haney-Lopez 2000: 172), for indeed it does. But the concept of "race" is useful only insofar as it is theorized from a social constructivist perspective to highlight its various discourses and meanings across various spatio-temporal contexts. That "race has significance" (Mills 1998: 44) is an important social reality that cannot be overlooked. But it is equally important to

understand "race" as a social construction that does not signify a "natural", self-evident truth, but one which is a product of various discourses which organize various subjectivities in different ways. Paul C. Taylor (2004: 13) states that "different cultures, in different places and times, have different conceptions of race." So it is possible, then, to refer to race not as a natural "truth", but as a social fact that bears different meanings within different social contexts and discursive regimes.

One such discursive realm lies within the queer media representations of the Pink Economy, wherein race plays a significant role. To speak of whiteness as a subject position that is privileged within the "the white episteme of queerness" (Puar 2001: 172) is to speak of its discursive prioritization – which is perpetuated at the unfortunate expense of others. Contrary to popular media representations, "queerness" cannot be reduced to the singular modality of middle- and upper-class white homomasculine subjectivity. One can argue, therefore, that homonormative constructions take the form of "a political strategy that reflects back the whiteness of the men who run powerful institutions to persuade them to take 'us' seriously, accept 'us,' and let 'us' in because 'we are just like you'." (Bérubé 2001: 241) Thus Critical Race Theory provides a useful framework to better understand the instability and contestations inherent in the social constructivist inflections of the concept of "race" – especially as it is situated at the intersectional nexus of class, consumption, queer sexuality and media representations.

2.4 Feminist Theory

One of the key themes in this study concerns the ways in which black male bodies and sexuality are constructed through colonial discourse and stereotype. bell hooks (1992: 2) argues that:

> There is a direct and abiding connection between the maintenance of white supremacist patriarchy…and the institutionalization via mass media of specific images, representations of race, of blackness that support and maintain oppression, exploitation and overall domination of all black people.

The exploitation and oppression to which hooks refers is quite insidious in its various discursive strategies. hooks (2004:79) maintains that in the white imagination, the black body signifies "the supersexed flesh" of colonial fantasy: the " 'hypermasculine black male sexuality' is feminized and tamed by a process of commodification that denies its agency and makes it serve the desires of others, especially white sexual lust." The overarching narratives and themes regarding black masculinity and sexuality within popular media are steeped in all sorts of stereotype and colonial discourse. It shall be the task of this dissertation to show how this plays out within post-apartheid queer consumer media.

In its naturalizing practices, "stereotyping reduces people to a few, simple, essential characteristics, which are represented as fixed by Nature." (Hall, 1997: 257) The colonial stereotype of the supersexual, hypermasculine stud – with his mythical penis – therefore erases all other complexities of black queer male subjectivity. Clarke & Thomas (2006: 9) state that "blackness does not just index race; it also indexes gender, class, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, labour, nationality, transnationality, and politics." Stereotypical discourses regarding black men's hypersexuality and genital endowment negate all other contingencies of race, gender, class and economics of which their subjectivities are constituted. In his defense of the critical value of feminism's contribution to studies on masculinity, Kopano Ratele (2013: 266) states that "black and African feminisms and women liberationists suggest that reductive characterisations of blackness as well as masculinity can imprison black men." Thus black masculinity and sexuality are often imprisoned within these derogatory stereotypes such that these are the predominant (mis)representations through which they are commonly understood.

In his book, *Welcome to the Jungle*, Kobena Mercer (1994: 176) argues:

> "the rigid and limited grid of representations through which black male subjects become publicly visible continues to reproduce certain *idées fixes*, ideological fictions and psychic fixations, about the nature of black sexuality and the 'otherness' it is constructed to embody."
>
> (emphasis in original)

It through such representational fixity that black masculinities and sexualities often feature in queer consumer media. In his discussion of contemporary queer media and queer visual culture, Vasu Reddy (1998: 68) comments that "black bodies are visibly absent, and when

included the images are not sensual but almost animalistic…Such a scheme portrays the image of the black male body as a super-sexual stud, reinforcing the myth of a black super-sexuality." In their interrogation of the racist sexualisation as a result and legacy of apartheid ideology, Ratele and Sheffer (2011: 34) state that "white anxieties are repeatedly generated in response to black men's bodies, which have been specifically demonized as mortal and sexual threats to white subjects. The insecurities are fixed on physiological features." It is not that such derogatory discourses regarding black masculinities and sexualities arise out of some "natural" and self-evident fact. These discourses, rather, are a result of the projection of white colonial fears and anxieties regarding what can be known about the colonized Other.

2.5 Post-colonial Theory

Stereotype operates through a simultaneous recognition and disavowal, as a form of projection and introjection (Bhabha 2004). It produces certain assumptions about the colonial subject, and posits them as pre-given and natural; while at the same time it denounces the other as degenerate and detestable as evidenced by these self-same assumptions (Bhabha 2004: 95). So it is also important to note the ways in which the black male body is both erased and neglected within queer consumer media, while it is simultaneously eroticized, fetishized and commodified. One of the main foci of this study, therefore, is to highlight the marginalizing discourses of homonormativity in relation to black queer masculinities, sexuality, and black queer consumption within the Pink Economy. It will be shown that homonormative constructions do not just prioritize a singular, fixed identity (read affluent white gay male), but that such discourses also contribute to the marginalization of black masculinities through the process of stereotypical and colonial representation. It will be argued, moreover, that such colonial stereotype serves to further marginalize black queer masculinities from the realm of consumption within the Pink Economy, such that black queer consumer identities and practices are negated and/or invisibilized.

This section has provided an outline of the conceptual lens through which the (mis)representations of black queer masculinities and sexuality will be analyzed in this study. It has been shown here that Critical Race and Feminist theories are significantly helpful in the critique of those pervasive (mis)representations of black masculinities within queer consumer media.

2.6 What You Lookin' At? The colonial and gay gazes, and the production of knowledge

This study will interrogate the stereotypical representations of the racialized "Other" in South African queer consumer media. It will be argued that the stereotypical representations which pervade these media – as regards black masculinities and sexuality – are characterized by the colonial gaze. The colonial gaze is structured around impulses of repulsion and desire – it seeks to denigrate while it simultaneously lavishes in its scopophilic "look" upon the colonized Other.

The colonial gaze is an instrument of power. It regulates, stratifies and organizes what can be known about the Other. Foucault (1977: 209) argues that the omniscient panoptic gaze "insidiously objectifies those on whom it is applied, rather than deploy the ostentatious signs of sovereignty." Panopticism therefore exemplifies the ultimate power of the gaze in its "disciplinary power to observe." (Foucault, 1977: 213) Similarly, the colonial gaze functions as one of the technologies of power by which subjects are regulated. Not only does the colonial gaze have the power to produce the "knowledge" by which the Other is understood, but it also fixes that Other rigidly within that epistemic construction (read: stereotype). Fanon (2008 [1952]: 87) describes the way in which the white colonizing gaze fixed him into all manner of stereotype:

> …already I am being dissected under white eyes, *the only real eyes*. I am fixed…I am laid bare. I feel, I see in those white faces that it is not a new man who has come in, but a new kind of man, a new genus. Why, it's a Negro! (emphasis added)

Laura Mulvey's (2000: 394) psychoanalytical conception of the gaze interrogates the extent to which the phallocentric male gaze is characterized by "taking other people as objects, subjecting them to a controlling and curious gaze." Just as the panoptic gaze of power regulates its subjects, so too does the male gaze regulate individuals' subjectivity by objectifying them. Mulvey (2000: 397) argues that "the determining male gaze projects its phantasy on to the female figure which is styled accordingly," Her argument can be extended to the objectification and commodification of the black male Other, and his body. Inasmuch as Mulvey's female figure is fixed and objectified by male fantasies, so too is the black male figure within queer consumer media.

Patterson and Elliot (2002: 237) put forward the claim that gaze can be inverted "when men are encouraged to look upon the same rather than the Other, when the male gaze is turned upon itself." This inversion of the male gaze proves to be problematic because it engenders a politics of power relations in which some males (those who are looked at) are placed in a subordinate, feminized position in relation to those who have the power and privilege to look upon them. Schroeder and Zwick (2004), however, argue that the gaze has been democratized and spread across various discursive fields. They argue that rather than setting up a binary framework of active (looker) and passive (he/she who is looked at), the power and privilege of the gaze has been extended to women and other non-hegemonic masculinities (i.e. queer masculinities). What these two perspectives have in common, however, is their acknowledgement that the male gaze is no longer an instantiation of domination and regulation of female body *only*.

Richard Dyer (1982: 66) posits that when men are the object of the gaze "the maintenance of power underpins further instabilities in the image of men as sexual spectacle, in terms of the active/passive nexus of looking." Thus when the male is the object of the gaze, such an instance often reproduces the common understandings and discourses of masculinity in "the emphasis on masculinity and the symbolic association of male power and the phallus." (Dyer 1982: 66) While this may very well be true, the salient fact is that "to gaze implies more than to look at – it signifies a psychological relationship of power and sexuality in which the gazer dominates the object of the gaze." (Schroeder and Zwick 2004: 30) Iqani (2012: 129) states that "the act of looking implies agency and the direction of the gaze: to look at a body is to actively engage with it visually, rather than simply to allow it to pass through the field of vision." Thus the commonality of these different gazes – colonial, panoptic, male, female, gay – lies in the relations of power and domination which they instantiate.

Wood (2004: 45) observes that "whereas feminists have fought passionately against the male gaze, many gay men are fighting passionately for it, striving to extend its reach, wishing to partake of its power." It is through the power of the gaze that some white gay men enjoy the privilege and power to gaze upon the sexualized bodies of black men. The concept of "the gaze" highlights the extent to which the colonial and gay gazes afford the white gay male the power to construct racist and damaging discourses about black queer bodies, sexuality and masculinity. Similarly it will be the task of this study to show how the power of these gazes

effectively negates and invisibilizes the black queer male's agency as consumer and active participant within the Pink Economy.

This chapter has outlined the theoretical underpinnings of this study. It has been shown how these theoretical frameworks will enable an insightful and critical analysis of the corpus of media texts within the proceeding chapters. Queer Theory has been shown to be a rebellious critical framework through which the notion of any fixed and immanent "identity" can be destabilized. A queer critique of the landscape of queer consumer media is illuminating in that it can problematize the homonormative discourses which are foregrounded and naturalized therein. Critical Race and Feminist Theories are fruitful insofar as they enable a critical and contextual framework through which to understand the significance of embodiedness and intersectionality within the various discursive complexes and networks of late capitalist modernity. It has also been shown herein that Post-colonial Theory is insightful in that it allows for a better understanding of the ambivalence of the colonial discourses of stereotype. The representations of black queer masculinities, sexuality and consumption can be insightfully analyzed through a critical framework that takes into account the historical patterns and trajectories by which colonial representations of the Other are inflected within contemporary discourses within the media representations of the Pink Economy.

Chapter 3

Methodology: Corpus Construction and Analytical Frameworks

This chapter will provide a detailed account of the research design undertaken for this dissertation. It will include a description of the empirical data collection in the corpus construction for this study. This section will also provide an outline of the analytical framework for the selection, analysis and interpretation of these media texts.

3.1 Data Collection

The data collection for this study took place in two phases. The first phase constituted collection and organization of a corpus of empirical data which related to the interconnections between consumption, sexuality, masculinity, race and class across several different post-apartheid queer media publications. This corpus of texts was comprised of both print and online South African queer consumer media. The print media texts from *Exit*, *Gay Pages*, *Outright* and *Wrapped* were isolated, photo-copied, printed and filed according to the chosen thematic categories described below. Online media texts from *Mambaonline* and *Queerlife.co.za* websites were also isolated and converted to PDF format, and filed electronically on the author's personal computer and external data storage devices. This phase of the data collection took place at the Gay and Lesbian Archives in Johannesburg, from June to December 2013. The second phase of data collection was the two face-to-face participant interviews with the editors of *Exit* newspaper and the *Mambaonline* website, and two email interviews with the editors of *Gay Pages* and *Queerlife.co.za* which were recorded and transcribed. These transcribed interviews were treated as empirical data, and were thus incorporated into the study's corpus of texts, and analyzed accordingly.

3.1.1 Corpus construction: South African queer consumer media texts

The corpus of media texts which was constructed for this study consists of editorial and advertising content, as well as interview data. These texts are interlinked in terms of the production and dissemination of various discourses within any media publication. As such, these texts were thematically organized and analyzed intertextually in order to highlight the systematic ways in which certain discourses are foregrounded within each publication and across the queer media landscape more generally. While the range of texts chosen for analysis within this study may be diverse, they were each chosen because of their significance in terms of the discourses of sexuality, sexual identity politics, race and consumption. The texts which were chosen for analysis in this study are by no means exhaustive; however, they are insightful in that they provide a clear indication of the overarching discourses of the Pink Economy within post-apartheid South African queer media.

The texts that were chosen for this study were indicative of the ways in which the discourses of homonormativity operate within post-apartheid queer consumer media. They each showed how the discourses of neoliberalism, "free" market capitalism, consumer culture and sexual identity politics intersect within the media representations of the Pink Economy. Moreover, they each provided the spring-board from which a cogent discussion regarding the marginalization of black queer consumer identities and practices could take place. The over-representation of affluent white gay male subjectivity and consumption could then be critiqued and problematized by showing how the latter subject position is privileged and foregrounded across various media publications. The chosen texts fit within the scope of the research question insofar as they contributed to the debates about the Pink Economy. These media texts were chosen over others which did not relate to the specific discourses of queer consumption within global and/or local contexts. These chosen media texts provided both historical and contemporary evidence of the homonormative ideologies which are so pervasive within queer consumer culture and sexual identity politics.

The corpus was constructed, in part, using editorial, advertising and personal communications with the producers/editors/owners of these media publications. First, each publication was chosen because of its large distribution and circulation figures. It could then be seen how the most successful publications foregrounded certain narratives and representations about the

Pink Economy within the queer consumer media landscape in post-apartheid South Africa. These publications were each isolated according to a specific time frame. Since *Exit, Outright* and *Wrapped* changed ownership, they have each followed sporadic dates and times of circulation. For example, *Exit* changed from a bi-monthly newspaper to a monthly after 1996 (and even then, circulation was rather capricious). *Outright* changed ownership in 2000, going from monthly distribution to alternate monthly, and then monthly again. *Wrapped* changed ownership in 2006, changing from monthly to sporadic, alternate monthly circulation. The sporadic circulation of these consumer publications informed the decision to choose the most significant and salient texts pertaining to the focus of this study within a 23 year period (1990-2013).

Six hours per week (between June and December 2013) were spent reading through each of these print and online publications. This process took place on site at the Gay and Lesbian Archives in Johannesburg. Other regional publications such as *Pink Tongue, Rush* and *Mused* were skimmed through, but these publications were not included in the corpus because they did not have the national reach and success as the key publications described above. The editorial and advertising data included in this study were then chosen in their specific relation to the key words which were formulated prior to the research process. These key words were:

Masculinity, lesbian and gay organizations, queer consumption, commodities, fashion, grooming, clubbing, restaurants, bars, gay tourism, race, black, sex, sexuality.

These chosen texts were then spread out and read through. Notes were made on them to see which representations and/or narratives were most pertinent in relation to the key words described above. The gathered texts were further analyzed in order to see how they answered or problematized the research questions outlined in the introductory chapter. Once all the editorial and advertising texts were gathered in their entirety, they were sorted according to a set of organizational patterns in relation to the following themes:

Representations of queer consumption: - *consumers, commodities, leisure, travel and tourism, fashion, grooming, fitness, décor, clubbing, restaurants, lesbian and gay pride marches.*

Discourses of sexuality: - *masculinity, erotica, pin-ups, pornography, bodies, identity politics, HIV/AIDS, sexual health, bath-houses, sex shops and toys.*

Discourses of race: - *black masculinities, black bodies, homosexuality in Africa, homophobia*

3.1.2 Participant interviews

The second phase of the data collection phase consisted of interviews with the editors/owners of some of the publications within this corpus. These interviews were incorporated within the corpus because these interviews are themselves textual products of social and economic organization. Hodge and Kress (2001:11) posit that "the structure of texts is in all aspects always an indicator of complexes of social factors at work." The content, aesthetics, editorial choices, processes of production, distribution and audience of any text are all implicated in the meanings produced by that text. The interviews with the editors of these publications sought to elucidate not only *how* these media texts were produced and disseminated, but also why certain discourses and representations were prioritized at the expense of others. The participant interviews took place once all the media texts were collected. These interviews took place in Johannesburg and through email communication between October and December 2013.

The interviewing process was limited (but not restricted) by two concerns. Locating the editors of *Outright* and *Wrapped* proved difficult in that the approaches made to them were not reciprocated at all. The second issue was that of time and geographical constraints. Several attempts were made to Gavin van Niekerk and Sharon Knowles for conducting both face-to-face and telephonic interviews. Their schedules, however, could not accommodate the time for these interviews. The author was, however, given responses through email interviews (See Appendix D). The same time and geographic constraints applied to the

correspondence with Donaval Steyl, the marketing publisher of LunchBox Media (which markets *Exit, Gay Pages* and *Mambaonline* respectively).

The participants with whom face-to-face interviews were successfully conducted are:

- Gavin Hayward:- Editor-in-chief of *Exit* newspaper
- Luiz de Barros:- Founder and editor of *Mambaonline*

The participants with whom email interviews were conducted are

- Rubin van Niekerk:- Founder and editor-in-chief of *Gay Pages*
- Sharon Knowles:- Founder and editor of *Queerlife.co.za*

3.1.3 Research ethics

These interview participants were given sufficient time to agree (with fully informed consent) to the interviews. The participants were duly informed of all the aspects of the research, and the questionnaires for the study were emailed to the participants before-hand. The participants were informed that the face-to-face interviews would be recorded strictly for academic research purposes. Face-to-face interviews were recorded by means of a dictophone. This data was stored electronically on the author's personal computer and external storage devices. All the interviews were then transcribed and analyzed thereafter (See Appendices A and B). These transcribed texts were included in the corpus, and analyzed intertextually alongside other articles, images, advertisements and web pages. The ethical considerations as per the suggestions of the Wits University's Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) were taken into account. All the participants' human and civil rights, and the integrity of the institutions which they represented, were fully protected during and after the interviewing process. There were no conflicts of interest throughout this phase of the data collection. The participants were given the opportunity to remain anonymous should they have felt the need to protect their privacy and dignity, and those of their respective media institutions. However, all the participants who were approached for the interviews consented to being named within the contents of this dissertation. It is also important to mention that

they are all public figures, and so they have been identified herein because of this reason as well.

3.2 Data Analysis

This section will outline the analytical tools which were utilized in the analysis of the corpus of media texts and interview data. The arguments outlined above in the literature review and theoretical framework evidences that media constructions of the Pink Economy and "ideal" queer consumption presuppose the notions of *exclusivity/inclusivity, visibility/marginalization, agency/passivity, subjecthood/objecthood*. These are the key conceptual binaries that were interrogated and problematized throughout the construction and analysis of the corpus of media texts and interview data.

3.2.1 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

An insightful way of reading a text is to consider not only what discourses are produced in it, but also *how* they are produced. Discourses are "socially constructed knowledges of (some aspect of) reality." (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001: 4) Moreover, "discourse" implies "the imbrication of speaking and writing in the exercise, reproduction and negotiation of power relations, and in ideological processes and ideological struggle." (Fairclough 2010: 129) The critique of any discourse must therefore take into full account the historical, cultural, economic and social factors which bring about its material instantiation. Discourses are rarely ever unitary, autonomous and self-contained forms of organized knowledge, and never come about arbitrarily. So it is important to describe and interrogate the social conditions which bring them about.

According to Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006: 14):

> we need to be able to 'read between the lines', in order to get a sense of what discursive/ideological position, what 'interest', may have given rise to a particular text, and maybe to glimpse at least at the possibility of an alternative view.

CDA "sets out to make visible through analysis, and to criticize, connections between properties of texts and social processes and relations (ideologies, power relations) which are generally not obvious to people who produce and interpret those texts" (Fairclough 2010: 131). CDA is an effective analytical tool in that it can alert the analyst to the ideological preoccupations of the broader, social narratives which are mediated through texts. Chouliaraki (2008: 691) reminds us that CDA is not a "one-size-fits-all" theoretical toolkit, but depends, rather, on the research question and the type of medium/media that are under analysis. It should, therefore, be seen as a research approach that is "context specific and historically sensitive" (2008: 691). So it is important to see how discourses interrelate and function cohesively or in contradistinction in foregrounding particular agenda, norms and ideologies.

3.2.2 Multimodality and Critical Visual Analysis

Meaning in a text is produced in part through its multimodality. In the light of this, texts such as print and online magazines and newspapers – and even verbal exchanges – can be read and analyzed as multimodal. It is important to see the empirical data analyzed in this study from a multimodal perspective because it is from this point of view that the different, yet interrelated, discourses may be discerned. It is precisely the "complexity" of that "interplay" of modes which were analyzed in the empirical data for this study. With this in mind, the author was enabled to glean and problematize the complex networks of discourses which are purported and foregrounded in the empirical data.

Schroder (2002: 5) asserts that "image interpretation is never complete, or closed. Interpretations are meant to be contested and debated. Visual consumption is an important, but by no means comprehensive approach to understanding consumers." The polysemy of the visual engenders both critical debate and open-ended interpretation. Therefore, critical visual analysis provides an insightful approach by which to analyse the various possibilities of meaning by which media consumers are simultaneously addressed and constructed. Schroeder (2006: 2) also states that "by connecting images to the cultural context of consumption, researchers gain a more thorough – yet never complete – understanding of how images embody and express cultural values and contradictions." The critical visual analysis

undertaken in this study was undergirded by the awareness of cultural and economic dynamics embedded within the meanings of these empirical data.

3.2.3 Social Semiotics

The 'sign' is a key notion in any traditional study of semiotics (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2006: 6). In this tradition, the sign is conceived as the pre-existing or ready-made conjunction of signifier and signified. Social semiotics, however, focuses on "the process of sign-making, in which the signifier (the form) and the signified (the meaning) are relatively independent of each other until they are brought together by the sign-maker in a newly made sign." (ibid 8) The process of sign-making, or the bringing together of signifier and signified, is never a neutral one. Barthes (1986: 195) argues that "the relation between thing signified and image signifying in analogical representation is not 'arbitrary' (as it is in language)." In fact, the process of relating a signifier to a signified is "a complex one, arising out of the cultural, social and psychological history of the sign-maker, and focused by the specific context in which the sign-maker produces the sign." (Barthes1986: 7) The process of sign-making entails the production of 'meaning'. Thus meaning takes a central role in social semiotics. This suggests that the meaning which is produced in a text depends, in part, on the context of its production. Hodge and Kress (1988: 8) argue that "a social semiotic account cannot proceed with a naïve text-context dichotomy, but rather, that context has to be theorized and understood as another set of texts." In order to analyze what a text says and/or does, it is important to highlight its socio-cultural impetus and implications – thus formulating a critique of how the text generates certain meanings within social relations. This is why social semiotics is a worthwhile framework that was utilized in the analysis of the chosen empirical data. It provided a way of interrogating and problematizing the social conditions and power relations in which certain modes of signification have become naturalized.

3.2.4 Intertextuality

Chouliaraki (2008: 690) states that "the technologies of mediation construe regimes of meaning, which represent the world in various degrees of connectivity to us". Meaning can be created through varying modes – written text, images, texture, gaze, gesture, posture, etc. Each mode of communication, therefore, not only bears meaning in relation to the world "out there", but also reveals something about the social, cultural and historical conditions of its production. The empirical data for this study were therefore read and analyzed intertextually. The written, visual and verbal (spoken) modes within the corpus were interpreted and analyzed in relation to one another. The written words, images and textures which are visible on the printed page and computer screen were analyzed in relation to what (and how) the producers say about the texts, and vice versa. The interview data were analyzed in conjunction with the editorial data in order to provide contextual and historical background regarding the media publications themselves, and also about the motivations behind certain editorial choices. Moreover, these interviews provided insight into the ideological preoccupations of the media producers. This intertextual analytical approach enabled for a better understanding of media texts as existing within the discursive complex of political, economic and cultural paradigms – not merely as autonomous, isolated phenomena.

This chapter has provided an explication of the research design by which the empirical data were sourced, located, organized and analyzed. The two-stage process of data collection was explained in detail. The specific choices behind the analysis of the selected media texts have been explained. The incorporation of relevant interview data was also explained and justified. The ethical considerations of this study were then oulined. The various – yet theoretically interlinked – analytical frameworks were discussed in order to explain how the empirical data was read, interrogated and theorized. The following three chapters will focus on the analysis of the empirical data. This data has been analyzed in specific relation to the literature, theoretical and analytical frameworks which have been discussed above.

Chapter 4

Media constructions of the Pink Economy: A hyperreal world of luxury, leisure and commodities

This chapter seeks to interrogate the dialectic between objects and subjects which inheres in the media constructions of the Pink Economy. This chapter will focus on the constructions of the Pink Economy as a hyperreal world of leisure, and luxury commodities and services. The media discourses of hyperconsumption, leisure and luxury will be analyzed in order to highlight the ways in which commodities are constructed as social semiotic signs which instantiate what is construed in popular culture as "the gay lifestyle". It will be shown herein how the queer media's incitement to consume these commodities and services constitutes the legitimation of certain queer consumer practices and identities. This chapter will also focus on the ways in which queer consumer identities are constructed within these media. It will be shown that the media discourses of the Pink Economy foreground affluent white gay males as the most "ideal" consumers, and thus set up hierarchies of cultural capital and value in terms of queer consumer practices and identities.

Two articles about the political and economic significance of queer consumption – as instantiated through the power of the Pink Rand – from the December 1994 issue of *Outright* and the June 2006 issue of *Wrapped* will be analyzed respectively. Timothy Trengrove-Jones' article appearing in the February 2012 issue of *Exit* newspaper about "the gay lifestyle" will also be critically analyzed in relation to its discussion about the Pink Economy. These texts have been grouped and analyzed thematically because they each espouse the positivist (sometimes ironic) media discourses of the Pink Economy. The articles about gay tourism in South Africa appearing in *Mambaonline* and *Queerlife.co.za* websites will also be analyzed in order to highlight the discourses of leisure and "globality" which are so pervasive in queer consumer media. A Mango Airlines advertisement which appears regularly on the *Mambaonline* website will also be analyzed. These articles and the advertisement provide evidence of the ways in which queer leisure travel and tourism are constructed as key sites of queer consumption which constitute significant elements of consumer practices within the Pink Economy. The media texts which foreground the discourses of luxury and sophistication as significant aspects of Pink Economy will also be thematically grouped together and

analyzed accordingly. Therefore, the advertisements for the *Outright* magazine, Absolut Vodka, Porsche, Mercedes Benz, Cartier, and the Azzaro and Marc Jacobs colognes (appearing in *Ouright*, *Gay Pages* and *Wrapped* respectively) will each be analyzed in turn. The transcribed interviews with the producers of these publications will also be interspersed within the relevant sections of this chapter in order to provide contextual background as to the editorial and ideological motivations behind some of the discourses and representations within these media texts.

4.1 The Pink Economy: constructions of "the gay lifestyle," and the power of queer consumption

Not all queers possess the economic privilege and spending power that is signified by the Pink Rand. However, since "mainstream and gay businesses alike engage in target marketing for the purposes of making a profit" (Chasin 2000: 165), it is important to interrogate the discourses by which the Pink Economy is posited as lucrative, desirable and thus empowering in relation to queer consumption and sexual identity politics.

An article titled "The Power of the Pink Rand" appears as the lead story in the December 1994 issue of *Outright* magazine. The authors, Madeleine Rose and David Ross Patient, argue that "for the majority of the business community in South Africa, the buying power of the world's largest minorities [the LGBTQIA sector] is as yet unknown." (Rose and Patient 1994: 6) This article provides an exegesis of how unique and potentially lucrative it would be for marketers to target a queer audience. The article begins by providing an example of Absolut Vodka's international success that is attributable to predominantly queer consumption of the premium vodka. The authors state that "Absolut has become the world's largest selling premium vodka, with annual sales of over 4-million cases. And a vast majority of that has been on the back of the gay and lesbian communities worldwide." (Rose and Patient 1994: 6) The authors go on to lament, however, that most marketers "still do not realise the immense power and potential of gay spending power," and that these marketers do not use "openly gay images in mass-market advertising." (Rose & Patient 1994: 6). The authors conclude by stating: "As a gay and lesbian community, that is all we want. Not Special Rights, but Equal Rights, Equal Respect based on our buying potential." (Rose & Patient 1994: 10)

This article takes for granted that queer consumers can and will generate huge profits for advertisers – as was evidenced by the 514-billion US dollars that queer consumers spent on consumer goods, services and leisure in the previous year. The statistics from surveys done by (U.S. based) Overlooked Opinions and the (South African) Human and Sciences Research Council are herein listed, showing "high" average incomes within same-sex households.

The models used to illustrate this article are all white, and all fit the "ideal" gay male consumer profile (Saucier & Caron 2008; Sonnekus & van Eeden 2011; Wood 2004). The first image, covering an entire page, depicts a young, white model with an athletic physique. He is simulating a surfing posture on a large coin. His well-tanned body is superimposed on a swirling array of golden coins in the background which give off the effect of ocean waves in motion. This image suggests that this "ideal" gay consumer is surfing/swimming in an infinite ocean of money. On the following page (Rose & Patient 1994: 8), a white female model's body is also superimposed on an array of golden coins in the background. She is wearing an elegant black evening dress and draped in golden jewellery. Her arms are upheld as she smiles, looking upward. A shower of coins and jewellery rains down on her (thanks to photoshop). On the last page of the article (Rose & Patient 1994: 10), the white model lies with his eyes shut and facing upward as he smiles, bejewelled, with coins sprinkled around him. It is as though he has been caught in a moment of dreamy financial bliss on a bed of money. This article is figuratively drenched in showers, oceans and beds of money (Dollar and Pound signs around here and there, for extra effect). Taken together, these images give the article an effect of financial excess and abundance.

All this computer-generated imagery brings a tawdry and inauthentic atmosphere to the article. The staging of the models' poses and the (over)abundance of financial motifs construct the idea that a profusion of financial gain awaits those who pay attention the queer "niche" markets. Moreover, what this article seems to be propagating are not facts and arguments about "the power of pink money," but the *idea* of a lucrative "Pink Economy" and its local manifestation as signified through the power of the "Pink Rand". It is also rather interesting that the authors state their demands for "equal respect as consumers" (Rose & Patient 1994: 10) amongst other forms of civil and citizen rights. In the light of this statement, therefore, one can argue that within queer material and consumer culture, the right to consume is placed upon an equal footing as other civil liberties. Citizenship and empowerment are seemingly articulated through consumption.

The June 2006 issue of *Wrapped* magazine features an article titled "Hey Pink Spender" that is written by one China Daily. The premises of this article are quite interesting in that they are dual and mutually reinforcing. On the one hand, the article foregrounds the lucrative economic potential of the queer market (the "Pink Rand") which has yet to be exploited by marketers and advertisers. And on the other hand, the article aims to promote *Wrapped* as the premium magazine wherein retailers, entrepreneurs, corporations can gain maximum advertising and exposure within this "niche" queer market. In the first instance, this article is based on the assumption that queer sector is a "niche market, [that is] renowned for its above-average brand loyalty and discretionary spending power." (Daily 2006: 84) Daily goes on to claim that "the gay consumer has a large disposable income," and asserts "the *fact* that most, *if not all*, gay couples have a double income." (Daily June 2006: 85, emphasis my own) Daily (June 2006: 86) continues:

> A magazine is, in essence, a business with its readers' best interests at heart…So marketers take note: *Wrapped* offers you the perfect opportunity to be one of the first to tap into the extremely lucrative market of the pink rand…There is a chance of massive profit and brand awareness from the 'pink club'

It has been mentioned previously that the supposedly large disposable income of LGBTQIA consumers is more of a marketing fiction than an empirical fact (Badgett 1997; Pallegrini 2002). The popular myths about affluent lesbian and gay DINKS and their massive spending power, which has hitherto been ignored and/or untapped by retailers, service providers and advertisers, underpins the claims made in this article. The discourses of neglect and ignorance on the part of advertisers is herein being utilized in the service of a) drawing their attention to economic opportunities provided by this lacuna, and b) providing a platform for the magazine to brand itself as space wherein this neglect can be redressed whilst maximising the attentions and "brand-loyalty" of its gay readership to the fullest.

This article evidences the claim that marketing and advertising are the life-blood of South African queer consumer media. To drive this point home even further, this article is placed next to an advertisement for the magazine itself with the words, "Come out and show your support," and "Expose yourself in *Wrapped*…Gain maximum exposure for your business or product in the gay and lesbian market!" (Daily 2006:87) Such emphasis and repetition are classical marketing strategies utilized by the magazine to establish its brand, not with its "readers' best interests at heart", but for its own profit-making ends.

The notion of a lucrative Pink Economy presupposes the expression and embodiment of a distinctive "lifestyle" marked by the conspicuous consumption of luxury commodities and leisure services. "Luxury", "exclusivity" and "status" are therefore *de rigueur* in the discursive constructions of "*the* gay lifestyle". In an op-ed article titled "Gay for Life, and in style", Tim Trengrove-Jones (2012: 9) provides a cogent exposition of the idea of "*the* gay lifestyle" throughout various popular and media discourses. Trengrove-Jones (2012: 9) observes that "'*the* gay lifestyle' implies there is some readily identifiable, widely known lifestyle that attaches itself, or is embodied by 'the gays'." (Trengrove-Jones 2012: 9), Although there are no ready-to-hand criterial explanations of what it would take to be part of the Pink Economy and "*the* gay lifestyle", it is ironically constructed as a singular, homogenous modality of queer spending power. Trengrove-Jones (2012: 9) posits that the unmistakable criterion of "*the* gay lifestyle" is that "it seems to be something that one *buys*." (Trengrove-Jones 2012: 9, emphasis my own) Expensive cars, modern bespoke decor, designer fashion brands, and even designer hairstyles, are some of the semiotic signs and markers of membership within the Pink Economy. "The distinctive trace of 'the gay lifestyle,'" he says, "is that it costs." (Trengrove-Jones 2012: 9). And a perfunctory glance at its construction within queer consumer media clearly shows that it costs *a lot*.

It seems that the discourses of the Pink Economy within gay consumer media are constructed by educated middle-to upper-class white gay males for the economic and libidinal benefit of other white gay males in the same class position. Founder and editor-in-chief of *Gay Pages*, Rubin van Niekerk (2013), stated that:

> our focus remains on gay men who like to support gay owned businesses and who are mostly self-employed or hope to develop their entrepreneurial skills…Our primary focus is to produce a world-class magazine, *while being a liberationist publication has to be subservient.*
>
> (personal communication 2013, emphasis my own)

The unequivocal mandate to target an economically privileged market clearly indicates that *Gay Pages* is not a publication for gay men who fall outside a specific tax bracket. In a similar tone, Luiz de Barros (2013), founder and editor of *Mambaonline*, stated that:

> the [web]site is marketed to marketers, that's where that "DINKS" thing comes in…we see ourselves on international models. And it's easier, sometimes, to talk to advertisers in those ways
>
> (personal communication 2013)

It is evident from the statements made by the editors of two of the most successful gay media publications that their focus is not on political liberal rights discourses. And neither does their target market consist of consumers who fall beneath the 8 – 10 Living Standards Measure (LSM) bracket. If we are to read these statements as metonymic instantiations of the market-driven foci of the South African queer consumer media (it is my contention that we certainly can), then we can argue that these media do not cater to the interest of *all* South African queer consumers. These editors' statements mirror the profit-driven market segmentation of the queer DINKS as evidenced in the articles described above. The queer media's tacit intention of targeting queer consumers with supposedly large disposable incomes is reflected in the articles by Rose and Patient (1994) and China Daily (2006). This is done by constructing the Pink Economy and "the gay lifestyle" as empowering modalities of queer consumer-citizenship.

As has been shown in studies of queer consumption and the Pink Economy (Badgett 1997; Binnie 1995; Fejes 2003; Gluckman & Reed 1997; Pallegrini 2002), only a small minority of LGBTQIA subjects (mostly white gay men) fall into the "DINKS" category. It is also clear from de Barros' assertion that editorial content in queer media is constructed in accordance with specific dictums from advertisers. The editor of *Queerlife.co.za*, Sharon Knowles (2013), stated in an interview that "if brands wanted to have gay people spend their money on their product they would need to see the community as a niche market and market accordingly." The media discourses of the Pink Economy seemingly pander to the discursive norms which are set out by the captains of advertising capital. In an interview, Gavin Hayward (2013) stated that since *Exit* is, first and foremost, a commercial venture, it had to pay for itself: "So [*Exit*] relied very heavily on income from the clubs' advertising." (personal communication 5 October 2013) Hayward's statement proves true when one looks at the enormous editorial space dedicated to advertisers in queer consumer media. It seems that the media constructions of the Pink Economy fall in strict accordance with the dictates of the markets even though they propagate the notions of empowerment and claims to citizenship as manifested by the Pink Rand. As evidenced in the article by China Daily (2006), this is a

discursive strategy utilized by media publications and marketers to gain the financial backing from potential advertisers.

4.2 Leisure: lesbian and gay travel and tourism, and the construction of "global gay" identity

It seems that participation within the Pink Economy and "the gay lifestyle" also comes with a proclivity towards leisure travel and tourism. The following section will show how travel and tourism are foregrounded in queer consumer media as key leisure activities for queer consumers within the Pink Economy. The ways in which the state, service providers and queer media all have interconnected financial interests in the propagation of gay travel and tourism will herein be discussed. It will be shown, moreover, that the discourses by which this marketing strategy is deployed serves to invisibilize ethnic, racial and class difference within and around designated queer spaces.

Cape Town is popularly known as the gay capital on the African continent. It has also been hailed as one of the top gay tourist destinations in the world (*Mambaonline* October 2013), attracting scores of gay men worldwide for its beautiful landscape and progressive, liberal queer culture (Visser 2001; Tucker 2009). The development of a visible and vibrant urban gay village, De Waterkant, has contributed to tourist attraction and vibrant queer consumer practices and identities within the city. It is estimated that 10 – 15 per cent of all of Cape Town's tourism comes from the international (and local) LGBTQIA sector (*Queerlife.co.za* September 2013). In 2013 the City of Cape Town won its bid to host the International Gay and Lesbian Travel Association's 33rd annual global networking conference in 2016 for gay-friendly accommodation owners, service providers, tour operators, events and queer tourists (*Mambaonline* October 2013). The annual Gay Pride parade and the lively Mother City Queer Project (MCQP) events are also significant queer tourist attractions for the city. The scores of queer tourists who visit Cape Town each year contributed tremendously to the city's economy – so much so that the municipality and the Cape Town Tourism board have begun to see this as a "niche market that requires specific attention." (Tucker 2009: 54) In turn, the City of Cape Town has incorporated the growth in queer tourism into its marketing strategy, targeting queer tourists throughout the globe.

In an article titled "South Africa – Gay Tourism Hotspot", the *Queerlife.co.za* website (September 2013) also offers prospective travellers a wide range of experiences in Cape Town – from shopping, fine dining, five-star hotel accommodation, clubbing/bar hopping and nudist beaches. The website describes the way in which "cloud-covered Table Mountain plunges into sandy, Speedo-rich Clifton", how "gabled Cape Dutch-style buildings tussle with glass-and-steel condos in the city bowl", the way in which the Mount Grace hotel's "luxury and sublime class drip all over a private quay", and how the Hot House (a popular men's-only bath house) offers the queer tourist the opportunity to lose himself "in a full-moon maze of hot 'n' slippery friskiness." (*Queerlife.co.za* September 2013) This is a marketing strategy to offer travellers an eclectic mix of historic sight-seeing and cosmopolitan trendiness. By juxtaposing sub-cultural slang with the discourses of diversity and inclusivity, this article aims to attract a clientele that has a keen eye for excitement, vibrancy and discerning taste in terms of their consumer practices.

In keeping with its "gay Mecca of the African continent" title, Cape Town is also marketed as a cosmopolitan queer space which offers tourists some international flare. It is not just marketed as a unique "African" city with its multi-ethnic, multi-lingual culture, but also as a queer space that can compete with the best in the world. A *Mambaonline* January 2010 restaurant review titled "Eat: Beafcakes" describes the Beefcakes eatery as "a very welcome additional to Cape Town's gay nightlife and easy-dining scene." Beefcakes, an American-style burger-cum-cabaret bar with a 1950s theme, is herein constructed as an example of the importation of Western consumer practices within a local context. The article states that since it opened its doors in 2009, the restaurant has become a highly successful "gay village institution" (*Mambaonline* January 2010). Three years later, the owners opened a sister branch in Johannesburg. While sticking to its 1950s retro theme, the new Johannesburg branch offers patrons the opportunity to "Shop till [they] drop" (*Mambaonline* January 2010) at the in-house store, where they can buy feather boas, masks, hats, "Beefcakes" branded t-shirts, postcards and wine-coolers. This restaurant review endorses a Western form of cosmopolitanism for which queer tourists/consumers have an apparent proclivity. Although this specific establishment does not embody the ideals of luxury and status, its easy-going style highlights the fun and vibrancy which are used as marketing tools for potential cosmopolitan queer tourists with an international flare. The result of this kind of marketing technique is that it not only entices consumers through the use of a wide range of international commodities (drag shows, muscular waiters, large sumptuous American-style

hamburgers, French fries, milkshakes, floats, etc.), but it also seeks to make them feel comfortable in a familiar, local, and liberal queer space.

Moving away from the marketing of Cape Town for a moment, Johannesburg is another city that been marketed as a "world-class" city. As the economic hub of the country, Johannesburg has also been branded as a cosmopolitan space that can compete with others in developed countries. Unlike Cape Town, The City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Council has not made specific efforts to market or incorporate "the gay lifestyle" as a part of its multi-ethnic and cosmopolitan palate. Thus it has not been marketed as a *queer space* per se. Its cosmopolitanism, modernity, liberalism and potent business dynamism, however, are part of its "gay-friendly" cultural ethos that is posited to potential queer tourists. While there is no distinct "gay village" or precinct as such, there are several gay (or gay-friendly) commercial venues. There is a gay hiking club, several gay Christian churches, and many other businesses that cater to the needs and desires of local and international queer consumers. In a *Queelife.co.za* op-ed article titled "About Gay Life in Johannesburg" (November 2013), one Robin Richards opines: "It seems that queers have dispersed into fragmented private spaces in Joburg [*sic*]. But this is not acceptable, because in top gay cities around the world there is a very visible and civically active gay community." (Richards 2013) The gist of Richards' (2013) op-ed article is that it is important for the "gay community" to rally together in order to gain financial and civic support from the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Council "if Joburg [sic] is truly to become the smart, tech-savvy and networked city with a good quality life for all." (Richards 2013) Not only does this article highlight the fragmentary nature of the "gay community" in Johannesburg, but it also highlights the writers' and the City of Johannesburg's need to keep up with other developed countries in terms of cosmopolitanism and queer consumer culture. Richards (2013) complains that "there is no gay precinct like Liberty Avenue (as in [the television series] Queer as Folk) and there is no establishment and permanent institution such as a Gay and Lesbian Centre. These kinds of centres in many of the top gay-friendly cities around the world (Vancouve, Los Angeles, Tel Aviv, etc.)."

This op-ed article calls for a form of "gay-friendly" cosmopolitanism that is manifested through the endorsement and sanctioning of queer visibility and consumption by both the municipality and corporate capitalist institutions. Richards (2013) reads the state-sanctioned visibility of queer consumer-citizens as a form of transnational modernity and cosmopolitan globality. Seemingly, queer consumption and the power of the Pink Rand will supposedly give Johannesburg some kind of international flare. But, as will be shown in the next chapter,

the neoliberal embrace of queer consumer-citizens by the nation-state and capitalist corporations is not necessarily an indication of progressive, liberal politics.

Dereka Rushbrook (2002: 188) asserts that "over the past decade queer space has functioned increasingly as one of these ethnic spaces in consumer culture, serving as a marker of cosmopolitanism, tolerance and diversity for the urban tourist." Binnie and Skeggs (2004) posit that cosmopolitanism is an important and constitutive aspect of consumption as signalling legitimate participation within the Pink Economy. Rushbrook (2002: 191) further argues that "most localities market themselves as 'gay-friendly' spaces rather than as explicitly queer spaces, as places in which gays can mingle, shop, dine, and enjoy traditional tourist sights." In this regard, these two online articles about Cape Town and Johannesburg each offer local and international tourists a smörgâsbord of sights, sounds, tastes and trends that are distinctive of international cosmopolitanism and the quintessential "gay lifestyle".

These two online articles and the Beefcakes restaurant review are organised, structured and designed in such a way as to cater to the specific desires and needs of the queer tourist. Even cruising for anonymous sexual encounters is offered up as one of the many leisure activities on offer (*Queerlife.co.za* September 2013). In this regard, the prospective tourist is enticed with numerous commodities and services, and a sense of familiarity by a host of commercial institutions (travel agencies, bnb's, clubs, retail stores, restaurants, cruising bars and steam baths) which all have vested economic interests in targeting queer tourists as a niche market.

Luiz de Barros (2013), editor of *Mambaonline*, stated that "if you talk to [queer consumers] in a language they connect with, and you talk to them in a way that acknowledges them and their existence, they are more likely to be interested in your product or your brand if it appeals to them." (personal communication 2013) This strategy of connecting with potential queer consumers in a way which appeals to them is precisely one utilized by Mango Airlines in their advertisements regularly featured on the *Mambaonline* (November 2013) website. The advertisement features an image of two white males on a beach, caught in a seemingly loving embrace. Their backs are turned to the camera as they face each other (both their smiles are visible in profile) – the azure ripples on the calm ocean are as serene as their apparent affection for one another. The words, "Visit South Africa. Why not today?", accompany this image. What we have here is not an elaborate exposition of South Africa as a "liberal and accepting" social space for all LGBTQIA people, but a mere suggestion of the serenity and happiness on offer for queer tourist couples. The casual tone of the phrase "Why

not today?" suggests the relative ease and laid-back feel that such an excursion would entail. Both the image and language in this advertisement create an atmosphere of calm, serenity, familiarity and acceptance; all of which the leisure-seeking tourist will delight in since it speaks directly to him, acknowledges his queer sexuality, and offers him a pleasurable experience all in one go.

Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006: 14) state that Critical Discourse Analysis "seeks to show how language is used to convey power and status in contemporary social interaction." In this advertisement, the capitalist power of the market (as instantiated by the Mango Airlines company) uses suggestive, casual language – "Visit South Africa. Why Not?" – in order to entice the potential queer traveller. This kind of advertisement evidences Schroeder's (2002: 16) observation that "firms attach meaning to the product [or service] through a sense of power and personality, and then attempts to connect this to identity [sic] of the person who perceives the ad." In the light of this marketing technique of what I shall call "consumer identification", the Mango Airlines corporation attempts to identify with, and therefore profit from, potential queer clients by subtly endorsing their sexuality and sexual orientation.



Figure 1: Mango Airlines banner advertisement (*Mambaonline* November 2013). Image reproduced with kind permission from Mambaonline

On the one hand, the constructions of the Pink Economy serve the profit-making interests of various commercial, media and state institutions by enticing queer tourists/consumers with the discourses of fun, liberalism, social acceptance, diversity and cosmopolitan modernity. On the other hand, these constructions offer potential queer tourists and consumers the means by which they can mark their local and global citizenship, and buy into "the gay lifestyle," by travelling to international destinations that are marketed as "gay-friendly." In the light of the

economic and political significance of the Pink Rand, "consumer citizens voice their politics through their spending." (Bell & Binnie 2000: 6) However, the construction of the Pink Economy, especially with regards to the marketing of Cape Town as the "gay Mecca of Africa", is inflected by numerous racial, gender and class divisions and inequalities. In all the photographic images accompanying the above-mentioned *Mambaonline* (October 2103) and *Queerlife.co.za* (September 2013) articles about Cape Town's gay tourism, and the Mango Airlines advertisements (*Mambaonline* November 2013), there is not a single image of a non-white gay male tourist/consumer. All the tourists, party-goers, revellers – i.e. consumers – depicted in these images are white males. This observation therefore renders the claims of Cape Town's supposed multi-ethnic diversity quite spurious.

In his discussion of Amsterdam's and London's Soho gay villages, Binnie (1995: 186) states that "not all gay men are affluent consumers." This assertion is no less true within a South African context where a large majority of the queer population do not have access to the economic, financial, educational and social privilege that is enjoyed by the affluent white gay male minority. The racial and class differences of Cape Town's queer population are still not accounted for within these media representations. The supposedly massive spending power of queer consumers amounts to nothing more than a marketing fiction. Inasmuch as a small (predominantly white, affluent, gay, male) sector of the queer population can actually participate financially and buy into this constructed Pink Economy, the media texts discussed above evidence the blatant discursive invisibilization of non-white queer consumer "identities" and practices. Bell and Binnie (2000: 6) assert that "the myth of the pink economy serves to deny both economic inequalities between sexual citizens and the economic limitations (in terms, for example, of employment opportunities) that act as a further limit to the enactment of sexual citizenship." As a form of social action, economic empowerment and the negotiation of consumer-citizenship, the potential power of the Pink Rand is flawed by the marginalization of non-white queer subjectivities and their consumer practices.

The "whitening" of queer leisure spaces and consumption reveals some insidious institutional and discursive preoccupations by constructing white, gay male, middle and upper-class subjectivity as the singularly legitimate and ideal consumer identity. Such is a process that naturalizes (through over-representation) white gay middle and upper-class men as "the target of niche marketing in the new regime of postmodern capitalism, and…circulate [them] as a global image of gay identity." (Rushbrook 2002: 195) These limitations of the South African

Pink Rand show that it is more of a discursive construction than an actual demographic representation. These tensions are central to the discourses of non-white queer visibility and citizenship in Cape Town, and South Africa more generally (Tucker 2009; Visser 2001; 2008a).

It has been argued in this section that the media discourses regarding queer consumption and leisure travel and tourism within the Pink Economy contribute to the popular notions of "global gay" subjectivity. It has been argued that the "queering" of leisure spaces and holiday destinations is a discursive strategy by which the nation-state, corporate institutions and marketers entice potential queer tourists for their own profit-making ends. It has also been argued that these notions of the "global gay" jet-setting tourist are not universal, but are predominantly embodied by a minute sector of affluent white gay male subjectivities and their consumer practices. It has been shown, moreover, that the media constructions of queer leisure spaces privileges and foregrounds whiteness, while simultaneously invisibilizing other non-white queer consumer-citizens.

4.3 The media constructions of a hyperreal world of luxury commodities and "ideal" consumer identities

This section will outline the constructions of "ideal" queer consumption practices and identities. The analysis of various media texts will highlight the discourses by which certain modalities of queer consumer subjectivity are foregrounded in specific relation to the consumption of luxury goods and services. In this way, the object/subject dialectic between the consumption of commodities and the negotiation between identities will be elucidated. Luxury is an integral motif when it comes to the "niche" marketing for queer consumers. The following section will interrogate the representations of luxury in order to see what role this trope plays within the media discourses of the Pink Economy. It will be argued herein that only specific and exclusive forms of queer consumption and "identity" seem to qualify as being luxurious, marketable and therefore desirable. By focussing on the way in which a specific range of commodities are elevated in their status, desirability and elegance, it will be argued that they serve as the signifiers of ideal queer consumption and legitimate participation within the Pink Economy.

It has been shown in the preceding discussions that a queer magazine, newspaper or website is fundamentally a *business* (Baker 1994; O Dougherty 2003). Everything that is contained therein functions in the service of its profit-making interests and sustainability (Kates 1999). So, as with all commodities, queer consumer media must be marketed in such a way as to set themselves apart from other media titles within the market. Everything that they do – from editorial content to marketing strategies – is therefore aimed at establishing a sense of uniqueness and distinction from their competitors.

For example, after it had been relaunched from a bi-monthly to a monthly in 2000, *Outright* magazine sought to bring something new in its content and marketing strategy. In this effort, the magazine changed its sub-heading from "SA's only lifestyle magazine for the gay and lesbian community," to the more cryptic sub-heading "Style and substance". The May 2000 issue of *Outright* magazine featured an advertisement which shows this clearly. The advertisement states:

> There are men who like…fast cars, cool clothes, penthouses, men's magazines and women.
>
> Then there are men who buy…quality cars, designer fashion, loft apartments, Outright and (who like) men.
>
> (*Outright* May 2000: 3)

This advertisement evidences the extent to which South African queer consumer media (like all other queer media throughout the world) strive to set themselves apart from their competitors. This advertisement does this by transposing the focus and sense of distinction from itself onto its audience and their aspirations. By distinguishing between fast and quality cars, cool clothes and designer fashion, (heterosexual?) men's magazines and *Outright*, for example, not only does the magazine distinguish itself apart from others, but also elevates its own status, as well as the status of its potential readers. It also locates the magazine within a specific set of luxury commodities which the discerning and "stylish" gay consumer ought to *buy* (such as quality cars, designer fashion and loft apartments, and more especially, *Outright* magazine) if he wants to distinguish himself from others who simply "like" the lesser, more mundane commodities. The photographic image for this advertisement is also interesting in that it features two white models leaning against a glistening Rolls Royce vehicle. The models pose in the background while the vehicle's unmistakeable front design shines in the

foreground. In seamless conjunction with the written text, the image serves to illustrate the style, sophistication and luxury which the magazine embodies.

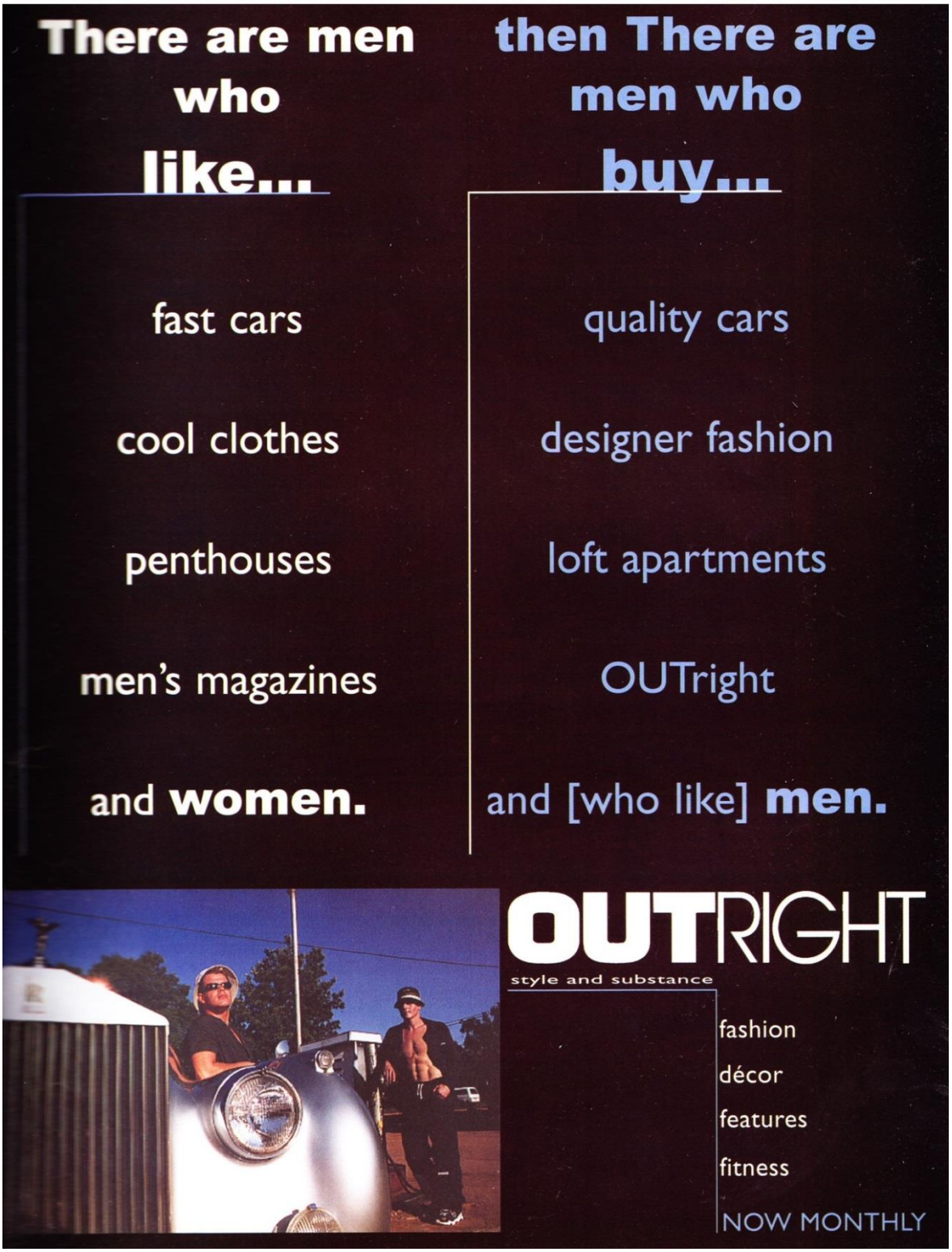


Figure 2: Outright Advertisement (*Outright* May 2000: 3). Image reproduced with kind permission from GALA, Johannesburg

Schroeder (2002: 14) states that "advertising creates a dream world of images where anything seems possible…It's cultivation of images is designed with one thing in mind: purchase." So this advertisement conjures a dream-scape wherein the purchase of this particular commodity (the actual copy of *Outright* magazine), and the commodities and services represented therein, signifies a certain level of sophistication and style on the part of the reader/consumer – the consumption of these commodities thereby signifies entry into and legitimacy within "the gay lifestyle". The taste for the luxury commodities enumerated in this advertisement are collectively cultivated and structured by a habitus (Bourdieu 1986) which is part and parcel of an elite class position within the Pink Economy. Moreover, the specific choice of models in this advertisement serves to illustrate the ideal audience/consumers who "should" buy this magazine and the commodities featured therein. In essence, this advertisement offers the affluent white gay male consumer the opportunity to use their Pink Rands in order to literally buy their way into the Pink Economy.

The advertisement analysed above is part of the marketing/branding campaign for the revamped *Outright* magazine in the year 2000. But branding and marketing had been central to the magazine's survival and ethos from its inception. The November 1994 cover of the magazine is an interesting study in the correlations between brand marketing and the emergence of queer media in the early 1990s. The cover features a full bottle of Absolut Vodka with the words "Absolut Perfection" printed beneath it. The bottle stands in the foreground on a metallic black surface with a brilliant halo of white light around it – this contrasts the indigo colour of the image's background. The clean, clear sheen of the image printed on the glossy cover echoes the glass bottles aesthetic feel. There are no other words around or near this image beside the standard magazine title, sub-heading, and the magazine's price. This image serves a dual purpose as the magazine's cover and as an advertisement for Absolut Vodka.

In her study of different covers of consumer magazines, Iqani (2012: 57) states that glossiness "communicates ideas of luxury and leisure," and that "glossiness is a characteristic of certain material resources…that symbolize special status, divinity and desirability." (Iqani 2012: 96) This uncluttered Absolut Vodka image announces the arrival of imported premium vodka on the South African market without revealing too much information about the product. Schroeder (2002: 7) observes that "if we agree that products are marketed via visual images, then we need to think carefully about what this implies economically, managerially,

psychologically, and politically." The reticence and elusiveness of this advertisement proves ingenious when placed in historical context.

Before the 1990s, Absolut Vodka was a rather nondescript product on the global market (Baker 1994). It was practically unknown to consumers outside of Sweden. However, the company took a huge risk in being one of the first few corporations to target the gay press in the US and Western Europe for its marketing campaigns (Baker 1997: 12). This proved to be a highly successful and financially lucrative gamble on the company's part. Queer consumers identified with the brand on a number of levels, but mostly because it targeted them specifically in the queer press. It is important to note, therefore, that the brand's enormous global success was first initiated by the queer press and queer consumers. (This assertion has also been made in the December 1994 article in *Outright* discussed in earlier.) In turn, it must be noted that the early 1990s was a period in which international sanctions against the apartheid government were lifted, and the South African economy was opened up to global markets (Mbeki 2005: 64). As the multifarious and complex processes of globalization were spreading their transnational tentacles during the early 1990s, several corporations, media institutions and nation-states maximised on the neoliberalism and loosening of "free" global markets. This opened up a significant market for international corporations and retailers. Evidently, one of these was the Absolut Vodka company. Absolut's arrival and branding strategy within the South African queer media and consumer market was thus opportune.

The Absolut Vodka magazine cover (*Outright* November 1994), therefore, speaks volumes without saying much. The dark indigo background is juxtaposed with the sharp bright halo around the Absolut Vodka bottle to announce the arrival of a new product. The dark background suggests the relative obscurity and anonymity from which this commodity emerges in resplendent, shining glory. The halo also suggests an element of religious transcendence – quite reminiscent of the art historical iconography of the Renaissance era in which Saints and other religious figures were almost always depicted and hypostasized through the use of halos. The vodka bottle (as emblematic of the Absolut brand) is stylistically elevated from a mere earthly commodity to the transcendent status of ambrosia. Although the use of linguistic or poetic techniques is minimal, the glossiness of the image adds an element of elegance and allure to its aesthetic. Iqani (2002: 100) argues that "glossiness exploits the powerful subtleties of texture and light to create a sense of luxury, seductive sensuality and desirability." The stylistic technique of glossiness works in conjunction with the material fact of the brand's novelty within the socio-economic context.

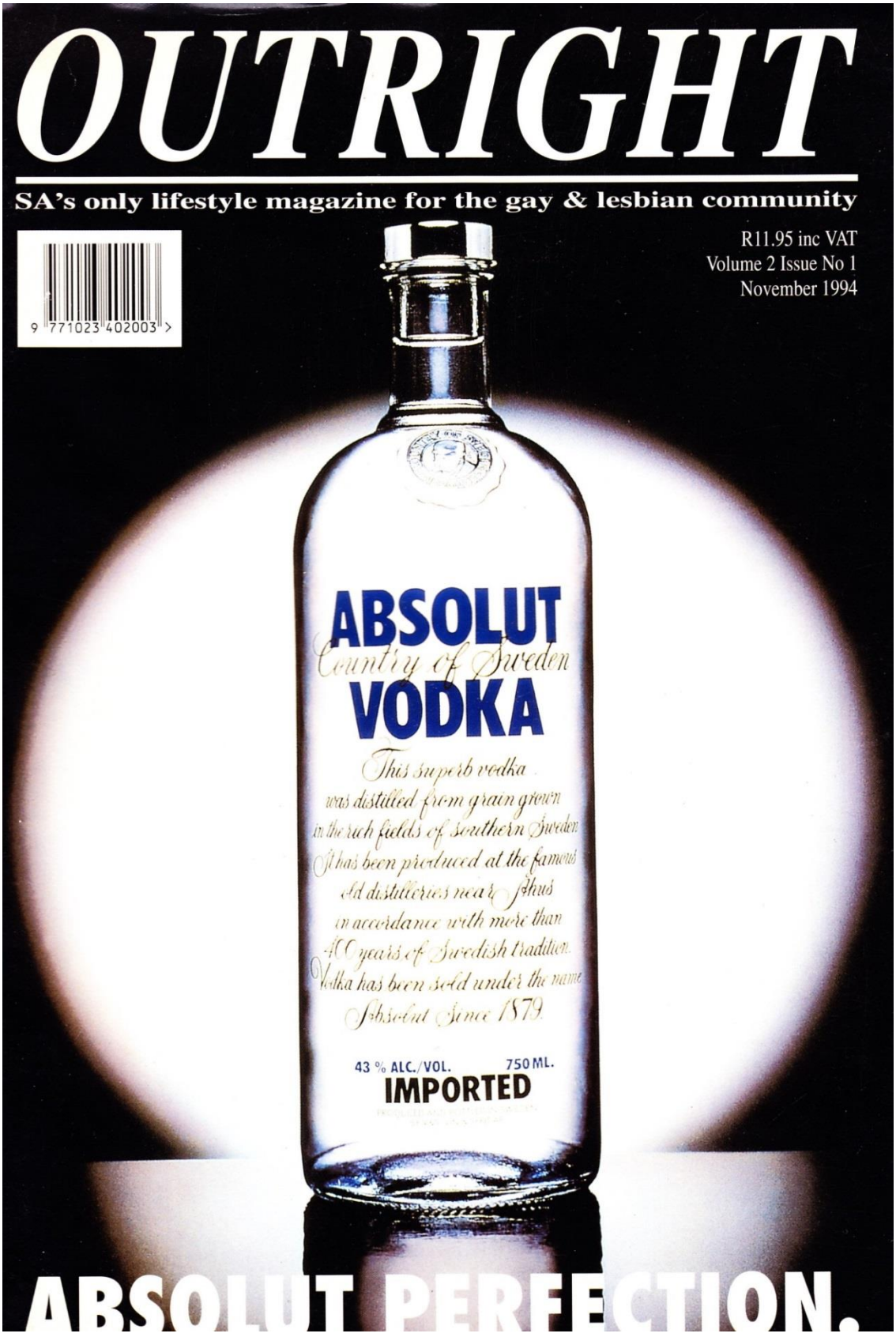


Figure 3: Absolut Vodka cover (*Outright* November 1994). Image reproduced with kind permission from GALA, Johannesburg.

A two page advertisement for the Porsche sports car brand appears in the first two pages of the 2011/2012 Special Holiday edition of *Gay Pages.* The advertisement depicts two slick Porsche cars bathing in the waning light of dusk. The two cars – the one, a metallic silver 911 Carrera model, and the other, a dark blue Carrera S model – overlook a serene lake surrounded by a low-lying mountain range. The rolling clouds move slowly over the horizon atop the mountain range, while slivers of brilliant light illuminate the cars' perfect exteriors. The cars sit in the foreground on a smooth tar road as they complement each other and the still body of water. The calm landscape in the background highlights the silent peacefulness of the entire scene. These two cars, it seems, have taken anthropomorphic qualities as they stand in for two humans, possibly a couple, in their quiet "contemplation" overlooking the beauty of this landscape. The caption to this image reads: "The incomparable 48 year history of the 911 reaches a new high." (*Gay Pages* Holiday Edition 2011/2012: 1-2) These words complement the elevated angle from which this photographic image is taken such that we can imagine the brand's 48 year historical climb to reach this level and status. The classical Porsche 911 Carrera, it seems, has reached the apex of luxury and perfection – and it doesn't get any better that this.



Figure 4: Porsche Advertisement (*Gay Pages* 2011/2012 Special Holiday Edition: 2). Image reproduced with kind permission from GALA, Johannesburg.

An advertisement for the Mercedes-Benz CLS model is featured in the 2012/2013 Special Holiday edition of *Gay Pages.* The car stands alone in the foreground and is situated in what looks like an empty parking lot or warehouse. Sharp daggers of brilliant light enter through the glass windows in the background. The light is poured onto the metallic silver cars' exterior making it look as though it is straight from the assembly line. The use of light here also adds a transcendental, immaculate touch to the image of this car. The printed words accompanying this image read: "You have the corner office, your name on the building and an IWC on your wrist." (*Gay Pages* Holiday Edition 2012/2013: 33) While this image encapsulates the elegance, luxury and style that have come to embody the Mercedes-Benz brand, its relation to the printed words is quite illuminating. In this advertisement, we have an instance where the commodity (the Mercedes Benz vehicle) is marketed as a perfect complement to a whole set of other commodities which the anonymous consumer has already acquired. Through the poetic technique of apostrophic address, the anonymous consumer is lauded for his material accomplishments – the corner office, the company with his name on the building and the IWC on his wrist. But, there is seemingly one commodity missing in this package without which he cannot achieve perfect completion and status: the Mercedes Benz car.

Iqani (2012: 107) posits that "the juxtaposition of desirable commodities with desirable bodies/personalities functions as a kind of visual description." In both the advertisements for the Porsche (*Gay Pages* Holiday Edition 2011/2012) and Mercedes Benz (*Gay Pages* Holiday Edition 2012/2013) vehicles, however, there are no human bodies to disturb these scenes which are so reminiscent of the classical art historical movements of landscape and portraiture. The effect of these deliberate omissions of human bodies is that the luxury commodities signify or come to stand in for the ideal consumers. On the one hand, the Porsche advertisement (*Gay Pages* Holiday Edition 2011/2012) replaces the ideal consumer couple overlooking a romantic landscape. The cars therefore signify the human qualities of romance, success and achievement. On the other hand, the Mercedes Benz (*Gay Pages* Holiday Edition 2012/2013) substitutes the car for the ideal consumer such that the vehicle comes to signify career success and material acquisition. Iqani (2012: 106) observes that "images of cars are excellent examples of the ways in which commodities are portrayed as brand-new and fresh from the production line, perfect and beautifully lit, ready for (imagined) ownership by the reader." The use of light and the glossy paper on which these advertisements are printed contribute to the ideas of perfection and transcendence. The idea

of transcendence can be metonymically extended to Baudrillard's (1998) notion of consumption as a transcendental process through which one is enabled to commune and connect with higher elements. Through the process of consumption, either at a holy feast or in a shopping mall, one is paradoxically enabled to escape the alienation concomitant to living in a capitalist society (Baudrillard 1998). From this perspective, the consumption of luxury goods and services can be seen as a way of elevating oneself to a higher, metaphysical and transcendental state. In the light of the foregoing statements, these luxury cars are represented as prime signifiers of distinction and status, such that "status...haunts the environment of [luxury] objects." (Baudrillard 1998: 60)

In his article "The Value of the Brand," Adam Arvidsson (2007) argues that the value of a particular commodity does not lie solely in its production or use value. Its "value", he argues, relies on a complex of interrelated cultural and economic processes which inhere in the knowledge and stylistic consumption of that particular commodity. Thus branding – as a form of knowledge production and marketing – is a source of valuable information and a relational entity (Arvidsson 2007: 9). So the value of the Porsche and Mercedes Benz vehicles does not simply lie in their production or use value. Their respective values, as *brands*, lie in the knowledge, cultural capital and social status which they supposedly bestow upon the potential consumer. Moreover, this brand value is relational in the sense that it is part of a wide range of other commodities and symbols which signify a certain luxurious and successful lifestyle – the IWC wristwatch, the company, the tailored suit, etc.

These two advertisements are targeted at *Gay Pages'* ideal reader/consumer who is a high achiever, fiercely entrepreneurial and very affluent. Although they are by no means representative of the magazine's entire visual landscape, they are significantly illustrative of some of the overarching discourses of the Pink Economy which are foregrounded in the magazine. These advertisements also evidence the subject/object dialectic between commodities and ideal consumers which is constructed within queer consumer media. Similar to the structuring framework of Bourdieusian habitus (1984), this dialectic between commodities and consumer identities sets up discourses by which certain consumer practices and tastes become indicative of class status and position.

The 2009 issue 19 of *Wrapped* magazine dedicated a two page spread for a Cartier wristwatch advertorial titled "Time for change". An enormous diamond encrusted watch (approximately 7.6 carats) glistens in the foreground taking up almost the entire right page of the advertorial. The words "gay style" are elegantly printed in cursive beneath this image. The grey background is reminiscent of a velvet jewellery box (presumably the one in which the watch came). The advertorial states:

> Are you are aware of the wristwatch some else's wearing…If they're wearing a Cartier timepiece, watch them closely…a Cartier is timeless and a statement of style and poise; often understated and always supremely elegant.
>
> (*Wrapped* 2009: 12)

Unlike the two previous advertisements, this one says it all. The Cartier watch is described as a marker of style and elegance; and the words "gay style" suggest that the gay consumer who seeks to be noticed as having these qualities should buy one. Schroeder (2002: 30) posits that "ads hail the viewer by promoting a personal connection between viewer and sign…Only a few brands and products puncture our awareness and match our lifestyle goals, psychic longing, or bank account." This advertisement matches the lifestyle goals and aspirations of the potential (and ideal) queer consumer through the use of suggestive poetic techniques which intertwine desire, sexuality and style. The advertisement states that one should pay attention to someone else's wristwatch – especially "if you are considering employing [them] or taking them home with you" (*Wrapped* 2009: 12). In this case, the addressee is image-conscious and very brand loyal. This assertion is evidenced by the words: "get one to put on your own wrist, and boyo: you'll be so glad you did!" (*Wrapped* 2009: 12)

The effect of this advertisement is that it presents a normative ideal to the potential consumer. Not only does it *suggest* that the potential consumer should buy one for himself (and be glad that he did!), but it also encourages him to pick out these markers of style and elegance in other men as well – in order to choose them as suitable candidates for employment or sexual encounters. Arvidsson (2007: 9) states "brands are examples of social interaction made into capital." In this regard, the Cartier brand is transformed into a symbol of style, (sexual) competence and desirability within an interpersonal context. Through the rhetorical technique of apostrophic address, this advertisement states that the Cartier wristwatch indeed instantiates style and elegance, and that the consumer is *guaranteed* to be the perfect

employee or sexual partner. (So much the worse for those candidates who cannot afford to buy one.)

Again, we have here a structuring dialectic between the consumption of a commodity and the formation of identities in relation to the consuming subject. Like the structuring analytic of habitus (Bourdieu 1984), the interrelationship between the potential consumer and the Cartier commodity sets up a taxonomic framework within which the consumer's choice and taste are signified by and simultaneously signify an elite and affluent class position. Schroeder (2002: 21) asserts that "advertising delivers instructions on how to live a good prosperous life." This Cartier advertisement offers clear and direct "instructions" to the potential gay consumer on what sort of person he "should" have in his bed and employ – a fellow consumer of Cartier jewellery. The Cartier commodity in this advertisement signifies the discerning style and sophistication of the gay consumer, which, in turn, signify proper induction into "the gay lifestyle."

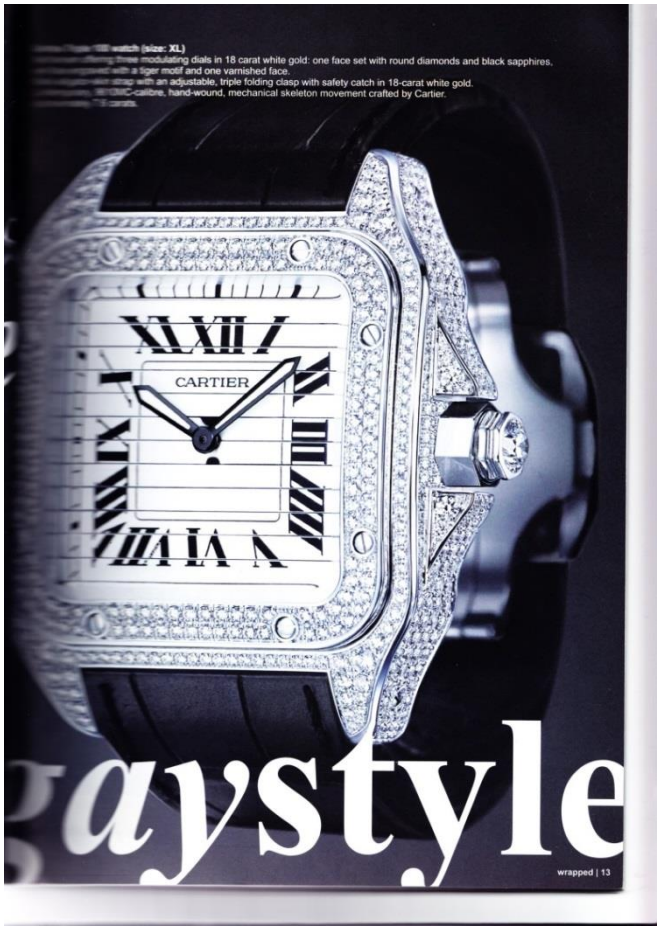


Figure 5: Cartier advertorial (*Wrapped* 2009: 12 – 13). Image reproduced with kind permission from GALA, Johannesburg.

The August 2000 edition of *Outright* features an advertisement for the Azzaro "Chrome" cologne. Its photographic image depicts three figures leaning affectionately on one another. An elderly white man in the background leans into and smiles upon a middle-aged white male who occupies the central space in this advertisement. His gaze is directed at the camera. In turn, the middle-aged central figure cradles the sleeping head of a young white boy. One could surmise that this is an inter-generational group of fathers and sons who are caught in a moment of paternal affection. Each of the models wears a white shirt. The central figure's sapphire eyes are a stark contrast within this atmosphere of calm, peaceful intimacy. A photographic image of the cologne bottle is placed in the bottom right corner of page – tilted in slight profile. The words, "Reflections of Men," (*Outright* August 2000: 9) hover above the bottle. This advertisement foregrounds the discourses of procreative (heterosexual) masculinity. As the elderly patriarch lowers his eyes, smiling upon his son and grandson, he sees his own reflection and legacy, and the continuation thereof. The cologne bottle's chromatic surface and the word "reflections" also work in tandem to suggest self-reflection and introspection on the part of the consumer. This image, therefore, conjures up the values of fatherhood, responsibility, dignity and maturity as embodied within heterosexist white middle-class masculinity.

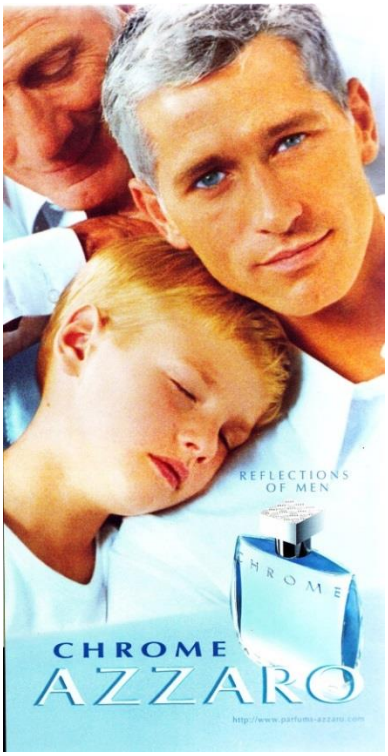


Figure 6: Azzaro Chrome Advert *(Outright* 2000: 9). Image reproduced with kind permission from GALA, Johannesburg

An advertisement for the "Bang Bang" cologne from the Marc Jacobs brand appears in the Winter 2011 issue of *Gay Pages* magazine. The full page advertisement features a photographic portrait of the steel blue bottle of cologne in the centre. The printed text hovering above the bottle reads: "The new fragrance for men." (*Gay Pages* Holiday Edition 2012/2013: 19) The brand name, Marc Jacobs, and the name of this particular fragrance, "Bang Bang", are printed in bold type beneath the image of the bottle. Only the bottle takes centre stage in this image. Beneath this apparent dearth of visual information, however, there are numerous discourses relating to masculinity, consumption and "the gay lifestyle". First, the fragrance bears the name of an onomatopoeic exclamation, "Bang Bang", and this requires some explication. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006: 9) posit that "all linguistic form is used in a mediated, non-arbitrary manner in the expression of meaning." From this assertion we can see that the use of such an exclamatory term – "Bang Bang" – in the branding of the cologne is not arbitrary. We are told that this is "the fragrance for men," and this information works in conjunction with the brand name "Bang Bang". This suggests that the cologne has arrived onto the consumer market with an exclamatory "Bang". Moreover, the brand's name works in conjunction with the design of the bottle. The bottle's design is not slick, smooth, and angular as is the case with most fragrances. It seems to be cracked, folded in upon itself, and resembles the image of broken glass. The awkward design of the bottle seems to be the after effect of some sort of physical, violent and aggressive impact or "Bang".

Perfume and cologne were historically only found in the boudoirs and dressing rooms of the Western elite ruling classes. Thus an aura of luxury, exclusivity and elegance still pervades the marketing of these commodities. Fragrances, like fashion items, were popularly conceived as belonging within the feminine or feminized domain, and have been historically advertised as such (Williamson 1986). But with the proliferation of men's images within the visual landscape of late modernity (Benwell 2003; Saucier & Caron 2008 2002; Gill 2003; Gill 2007; Mort 1996; Patterson & Elliot; Viljoen 2008; Viljoen 2012), more fragrances are now being marketed to men through highly masculinist discourses.

Judith Williamson (1986) argues that pictorial advertising functions through the logic of differentiation. According to Williamson (1986) the advertised image succeeds through the process of differentiation from other products. This image, therefore, gains significance through a system of differences, and attains meaning in relation to what it is *not*. Williamson (1986) utilises the concept of "differentiation" to highlight the relational foundation of signs and signifieds. Thus, the significance and meaning of an image within an advertisement

depends largely on the transference of some other sign system outside of that representational schema. Williamson (1986: 25) argues that "since perfumes can have no particular significance…the function of differentiation rests totally on making connection with an image drawn from outside the ad world." Through promises of adding a distinctive and signature scent to the wearer's bodily person, cologne can be seen to elevate a man's style and status. In the light of this, "we are asked to transfer meaning from the identity of the people in the ad – their image, lifestyle, and physical appearance – and the ad's visual style, onto the product." (Schroeder 2005: 7) Through this process of transference of meaning, the commodity – cologne – comes to signify a certain quality in relation to its wearer, and his lifestyle.



Figure 7: Marc Jacobs "Bang Bang" cologne advertisement. (*Gay Pages* Special Holiday Edition 2012/2013: 19). Image reproduced with kind permission from GALA, Johannesburg.

In both the cologne advertisements described above, the associative meanings are not explicit within the text, and thus require the reader to transfer them from the social realm (Williamson 1986). For example, in the Azzaro Chrome advertisement (*Outright* August 2000: 9), the reader is led to infer that "Reflections of men" and the socio-cultural constructs of "manhood" have a direct interrelation within the semiotic realm of the text. This caption and the photographic image work in tandem to signify the positive aspects of procreative masculinity. The reader is therefore led to make the associative connections between the cultural discourses about "manhood", and the photographic image of the central figures and the bottle of cologne. In the "Bang Bang" advertisement (*Gay Pages* Holiday Edition 2012/2013: 19), the readers' prior knowledge and associations regarding fragile glass surfaces and the effects of physical impact enable them to make sense of this somewhat inscrutable image. Not only can we infer that this "new fragrance for men" (*Gay Pages* Holiday Edition 2012/2013: 19) has arrived onto the commercial scene with a figurative "Bang", but we can also extend this onomatopoeic expression to our socially constructed associations regarding physicality, action, strength and masculinity.

Williamson (1986: 30) asserts that "images, ideas or feelings, then, become attached to certain products, by being transferred from signs out of other signs (things or people with 'images') *to* the products, rather than originating in them." (emphasis in original) In popular discourse masculinity is often connoted by ideas of physical strength, action, labour, etc. (Connell 1995; Connell 2003; Dyer 1982). The socio-cultural associations regarding masculinity and physicality are transferred onto the respective images of the fragrance bottles in order to give the whole sign systems their meaning. Hodge and Kress (1988: 66) state that "the gender of the reader is decisive…because it is crucial to the meaning of the semiotic transaction." So it is possible to surmise that the reader who identifies with or has some sort of investment in those notions of hegemonic masculinity (Connell 1995), can create meaning out of the affection and intergenerational legacies in the Azzaro Chrome advertisement(*Outright* August 2000: 99), and strength, physicality and aggression that is encapsulated with the words "Bang Bang" (*Gay Pages* Holiday Edition 2012/2013: 19). As Schroeder and Zwick (2004: 27) so aptly remind us, "advertising representations create mechanisms that simultaneously reinforce and (partly) conceal traditional notions of gender relations, that is, ad imagery often makes gender roles seem transparent." In this regard, both these cologne advertisements promulgate the discourses about a certain kind of masculinity

that is characterised by, on the one hand, procreative and responsible masculinity, and on the other, hardness, physical strength, and aggression.

Although the discourses of hegemonic masculinity (Connell 1995) within both these advertisements do not seem to be in conjunction with the general constructions of homomasculinity within the Pink Economy, they do, in fact, fit in with "the gay lifestyle." As will be shown in the next chapter, the discourses of cisgendered homomasculinity are largely formulated around assimilationist strategies with heteronormative ideals and values. The regulatory discourses through which sexual dissidence (and the queer consumer practices thereof) are largely incorporated into the market through strategies of assimilation and domestication, such that "the gay lifestyle", for example, is marketable only insofar as it adheres to the dictates and heteronormative values of global capitalist institutions (Chasin 2000; Hennessey 2000; Sender 2003). The historical and popular notions of commerce and economic activity have been located within the domain of the masculine. And hence the feminisation and characterization of queer economic activity, consumer identities and practices as "pink" appears to be quite problematic. We cannot disregard the fact that late capitalism is an historical context founded upon white imperialist heterosexist capitalist patriarchy(hooks 1992), which is a form of hegemonic masculinity (Connell 1995) that has gained widespread legitimation and social sanction across a wide spectrum of discursive arenas. The feminised notion of a Pink Economy, therefore, does not disturb nor problematize the predominantly heteronormative and heterosexist flows of global capital (which are predominantly at the bidding of white males), and thus serves to ghettoize it to only a small, privileged sector of society for the ultimate ends of profit. Advertisements such as those described above therefore shore up the Pink Economy's underlying alliances with the hegemonic and heteronormative order through which heteronormative masculinity has been systemically regulated and reproduced.

Sender (2001: 75) states that "there is no single gay habitus". In other words, there is no single structural and structured disposition towards certain consumer practices, choices and tastes. However, the texts discussed in this chapter seem to posit that there is. In a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and culturally diverse country like as South Africa, such a taxonomy or hierarchy of taste, style and consumer practices will have the dire effects of marginalizing (and invisibilizing) other queer consumers who are not white, male or affluent. According to Bell and Binnie (2000: 100) "gay men must not be stereotyped as uniformly affluent, nor should lesbians be represented as uniformly poor." Sexuality is inflected by class, race and

gender dynamics in complex ways, which the prevailing media constructions of the affluent gay consumer in the Pink Economy marginalize. This assertion is often overlooked by marketing companies, advertisers and media institutions who continue to propagate the myth of an affluent white gay male consumer with a disproportionately high income. It is this constructed image of a singular and "ideal" white gay male consumer that contributes to the discursive marginalization of other LGBTQIA consumers who might be female, non-white, disabled, and do not have such staggeringly high incomes.

Any claims to civil and constitutional rights for LGBTQIA people are inevitably intertwined with certain postulations about citizenship, its different meanings, manifestations and concomitant responsibilities (Epprecht 2001). Queer consumption and leisure (as instantiated by various discourses) are significant markers of that very citizenship to which various queer subjects lay claim (Bell & Binnie 2000; Phillips 2000). The nuanced representation of diverse consumption practices and leisure activities can give us noteworthy insights into the different subjectivities and citizenship of various LGBTQIA people in contemporary South Africa. It is important to pay attention to a wide range of queer consumer practices and lifestyles because this will engender more insightful representations of queer consumption within what has constructed as the Pink Economy.

It has been argued in this chapter that the dialectic between consuming subject and commodities and services is significant in terms of the negotiation and formation of identities in late "free" market capitalism and queer consumer culture. This chapter has shown that the Pink Economy and its concomitant "gay lifestyle" are constructed as highly lucrative and profitable realms of queer consumption. The discourses which are foregrounded in these media representations posit that queer consumer power and socio-political empowerment go hand in hand. The analysis of various media texts has revealed the Pink Economy as the construction of a hyperreal world of leisure, luxury and hyperconsumption. The commodities and services proffered to potential queer consumers within these texts have been interrogated as signifiers of economic empowerment and legitimate, agentive participation within the Pink Economy. It has also been argued that the Pink Economy is constructed as a domain of consumption which privileges affluent white gay men as "ideal" consumers. Furthermore, it has been argued that the Pink Economy and "the gay lifestyle" are highly exclusionary and marginalizing realms of queer consumption, wherein disadvantaged and non-white queer citizen-consumers are not represented as having agency and legitimacy as equal participants therein.

Chapter 5

The Assimilation of Queer Sexuality: Homonormativity and its problematics

This chapter will show that the constructions of the Pink Economy are founded upon assimilationist strategies by which queer consumer-citizens are regulated and ordered within broader networks of knowledge, power and the global flows of capital. This chapter seeks to provide a detailed analysis and exegesis of discursive techniques by which homonormative assimilationist ideologies became manifest in the media constructions of the Pink Economy. It shall be shown that the assimilation of queer sexualities within the status quo of heteronormativity functions primarily in the service of reproducing and maintaining hegemonic regimes of power and knowledge.

This chapter will first analyze a front-page article from *Exit* newspaper about the first South African lesbian and gay pride march that was held in Johannesburg on Saturday 13 October 1990. Two covers from *Outright* magazine (November 1993 and August 1994, respectively) will be analyzed in this chapter as well. And ANC advert appearing in the March 1994 issue of *Outright* magazine will also be analyzed herein. These media texts will be analyzed in relation to their thematic concerns. These texts provide evidence for the neoliberal embrace of the nation-state during the 1990s. These texts also evidence the constructions of the post-apartheid "Rainbow Nation" branding strategies which also permeated the queer media landscape during the early 1990s. As such, these texts reflect the discourses of a multi-ethnic, inclusive and democratic state wherein the social acceptance of sexual and gender diversity are seen as part and parcel of the nation-building project. A features article from the winter 2013 edition of *Gay Pages* titled "Las Vegas Welcomes Gay Visitors" will then be analyzed along with an August 1994 article by the editor of *Outright* magazine titled "Gay Life in South Africa". Following which, an article from the 2012/2013 Special Holiday Edition of *Gay Pages* titled "World's Top Nude gay Beaches" will be analyzed. These articles were chosen in that they each evidence the commodification of queer sexuality as a result of the neoliberal embrace by the nation-state and capitalist corporations. In the light of this, the media texts chosen for analysis within this chapter collectively highlight the ways in which assimilationist politics and ideologies influence the homonormative media representations of the Pink Economy and queer consumption. It will be argued, moreover, that the

homonormative discourses which form the basis of these media constructions of the Pink Economy are highly exclusive and marginalizing to the extent that they invisibilize black queer identities and consumption.

5.1 Queer sexuality and queer media in a changing South Africa: sexual identity politics and the constructions of the "Rainbow Nation"

This section will outline and discuss the media representations which fostered the values of a new and inclusive post-apartheid South Africa, and contributed to the rebranding of the "Rainbow Nation." The analysis of these media texts will highlight the ways in which the rebranding of the "Rainbow Nation" had its implications within sexual identity politics and the LGBTQIA movement. It will be shown, moreover, that these discursive processes had significant neoliberal underpinnings. It will be shown herein that the mainstream nationalist narratives, and the branding of the "Rainbow Nation", also seeped into the discourses of queer consumer media, thus engendering assimilationist ideologies within the media representations of the Pink Economy and queer consumption.

The front page of the October/November 1990 issue of *Exit* hailed the first Gay Pride march in Johannesburg as "a roaring success!" A photograph of a GLOW member holding the organisation's banner is strategically placed next to the newspaper's title. Above the title is a purple triangle with an upwardly-raised masculine fist (a sign of strength and unity in the anti-apartheid struggle). The words "Gays and Lesbians Against Apartheid" appear in bold type inside the triangle. The juxtaposition of these images – the paper's title, the pink triangle, the photograph and the words "roaring success!" – function as *Exit's* endorsement of GLOW's efforts in organising the Gay Pride march. The fact that the photograph of a white member of GLOW is placed in very close proximity to the purple triangle suggests a different stance than that taken by GASA (which had been internationally vilified for its tacit apolitical stance towards anti-apartheid activism). The lead article is titled "Out of the closet and into the streets." (*Exit* October/November 1990: 1) The author states that the Gay Pride march was "exciting, exhilarating, frightening…[but] not one marcher left the march…[they] were united as never before." (*Exit* October/November 1990: 1) The article states that the first Johannesburg Gay Pride was attended by over 800 people. They had come from vastly different backgrounds – from the different townships throughout Johannesburg, the northern

suburbs, and even the surrounding areas of Witbank and the Vaal. All this diversity is captured in the article's accompanying photograph, wherein different people from different racial and gender categories are holding hands, marching in unison. The article also details how GLOW had worked with several other civil rights groups, incorporating other struggles into their own, in order to advance their agenda. These included the Township AIDS Project, People Opposing Women Abuse (POWA) and Johannesburg Community Health Care (*Exit* October/November 1990: 1).

This article exemplifies the socio-political milieu of the transitional period in South Africa during the early 1990s. It was also published at a crucial time when the South African LGBTQIA movement was gaining momentum and making significant political strides (Gevisser & Cameron 1995; McKendrick & Isaacs 1992). Gayle Rubin (1993: 149-150) rightly asserts that "once sex [and sexuality are] understood in terms of social analysis and historical understanding, a more realistic politics of sex becomes possible." Such were the "realistic" sexual politics engendered by GLOW in its queer activism during the early 1990s. By acknowledging the various socio-cultural backgrounds from which its members came, GLOW was able to forge ahead in organizing Africa's first gay pride march. This article indicates the staunchly political beginnings of the LGBTQIA movement in post-apartheid South Africa (de Waal & Manion 2006), as well as evidencing the multi-cultural and inclusive auspices under which this event was held. This article, therefore, shows how the first lesbian and gay pride march embodied the values and ideologies of a new, inclusive and democratic South Africa. Edwin Cameron (2006) fondly recalls the event:

> We marched that day not for gay and lesbian equality only, but because a society that aspires to respect human rights cannot disrespect people because of sexual orientation…So we marched to assert the spirit of hope that imbued 1990, and we marched to demand our rights as full, proud, productive participants in a fully equal society.
>
> (cited in De Waal & Manion 2006: 5)

This article echoes and celebrates the spirit of the new post-apartheid South Africa. Within this liberal context, scores of LGBTQIA subjects could stake their rightful claims to citizenship, visibility and basic human rights. This was a time when the pervasive values of

nation-building, social equality, multi-ethnicity and democracy were in wide cultural circulation – even within the queer liberal rights discourses.

The front cover of *Outright*'s first issue in November 1993 is a perfect study in South Africa's rebranding strategy as multiracial and inclusive "Rainbow Nation". It hosts a photograph of six models lying on white tiles, facing upwards, in circular formation. This photograph is taken from a bird's eye-view. Each smiling model clasps the hands of the model on either side, forming a sort of rudimentary star. The models are all wearing blue denim jeans and t-shirts with "Outright" printed on the chest. The t-shirts are blue, green, red and yellow, respectively (reminiscent of the national South African flag). Moreover, the gender and racial diversity in this configuration is both stark and interesting: there is one black female, one white female, one coloured male and three white males.

Editor-in-chief, Madeleine Rose (1996) stated in an interview that *Outright* was a "serious" lifestyle magazine. The fully-clothed models on the cover photograph illustrate the magazine's supposed pre-occupation with "real" issues which affect the LGBTQIA "community" – as opposed to suggestive or nude images which would connote salacious, erotic and depoliticized content (Sender 2003; Fejes 2003). The printed text on the cover also serves an important function in this regard: The words, "The logics of Confidentiality in Aids"; "A Jewish perspective on homosexuality"; "A leading investment advisor talks about changes to the latest tax and investment laws", all give snap-shots of the "serious" content which this magazine offers to the potential reader. The glossy texture of this cover also plays a vital role here. While *Exit* newspaper was (and still is) printed on duller, cheaper paper in tabloid form, *Outright* was printed on glossy paper. One may argue that while the glossiness of this cover certainly gives it an air of luxury and expensiveness (Iqani 2012a), a sense of "seriousness" is also interpolated onto this cover.

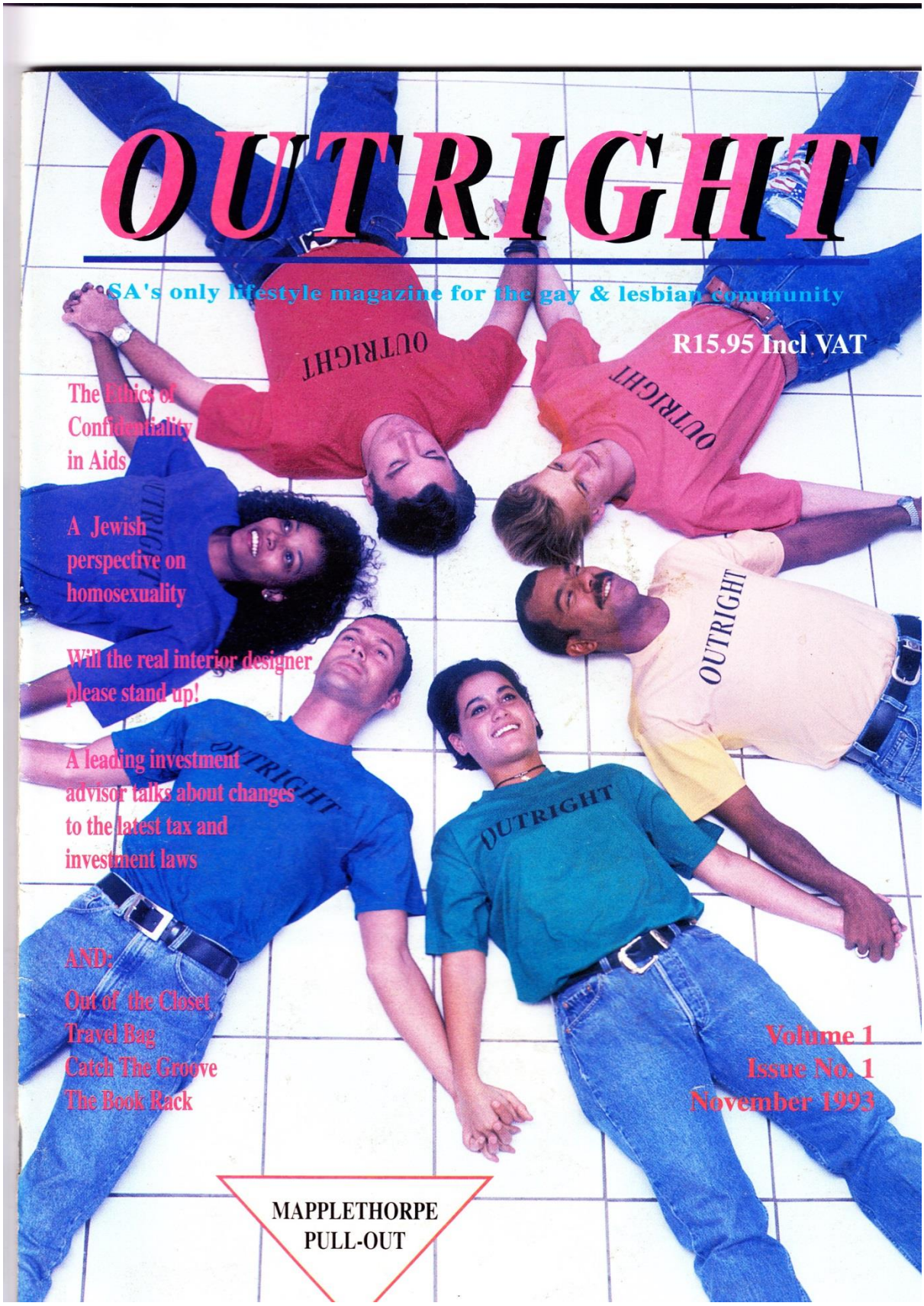


Figure 8: First *Outright* Cover (*Outright* November 1993). Image reproduced with kind permission from GALA, Johannesburg.

Hodge and Kress (1988: 11) posit that "the structure of texts is in all aspects always an indicator of complexes of social factors at work." Considering the above-mentioned structural changes in the political arrangements of the nation-state, including the fact that South Africa would soon become a democratic state in May of the following year (1994), it becomes easier to read this text as an implicit reification of the "Rainbow Nation" ideal. Promises and hopes of rebirth and renewal are written clearly across the smiling faces of the models who each look upward towards a "brighter future" that would be heralded by an all-inclusive, non-discriminatory constitution. Such a critical visual analysis of this image suggests that through unity, it would be possible for South African society to rebuild and cleanse itself from a tragic past, and thus move happily into a democratic future. Not only does this image endorse the "Rainbow Nation" ideology that was so pervasive during the early 1990s, but it makes a profound statement with regards to *Outright's* ideological stance, as a media institution, within South Africa's burgeoning queer media landscape. In this photograph, there is a sense of an all-inclusive lesbian and gay "community" – in spite or because of the racial and gender diversity of the models. All race, gender and class tensions and inequalities are nullified in this image. Seemingly all the models are on an equal racial, gendered and class footing – further articulating the "Rainbow Nation's" promises of a better economic future for all its citizens.

The cover of the ninth issue of *Outright* in August 1994 is also quite interesting on a number of discursive levels. It features a photographic image of two male models – one white, the other black – standing upright, in an intimate embrace. Their stern gazes are directed straight at the camera. Unlike the cover described above, these models are nude. A large South African flag is strategically draped over both their bodies. However, the arrangement of these nude models is neither salacious nor erotic, and thus does not detract from the "serious" atmosphere of the cover. The background to this image is stark white, and thus serves to "de-centre the subjects, de-contextualize them, and help to undefine the portrait." (Schroeder 2002: 9) The models embrace each other standing very closely to each other, but not in an overly sexual manner. Their upright posture, stern facial expressions and their focussed gazes back at the camera gives this image its "serious" air.

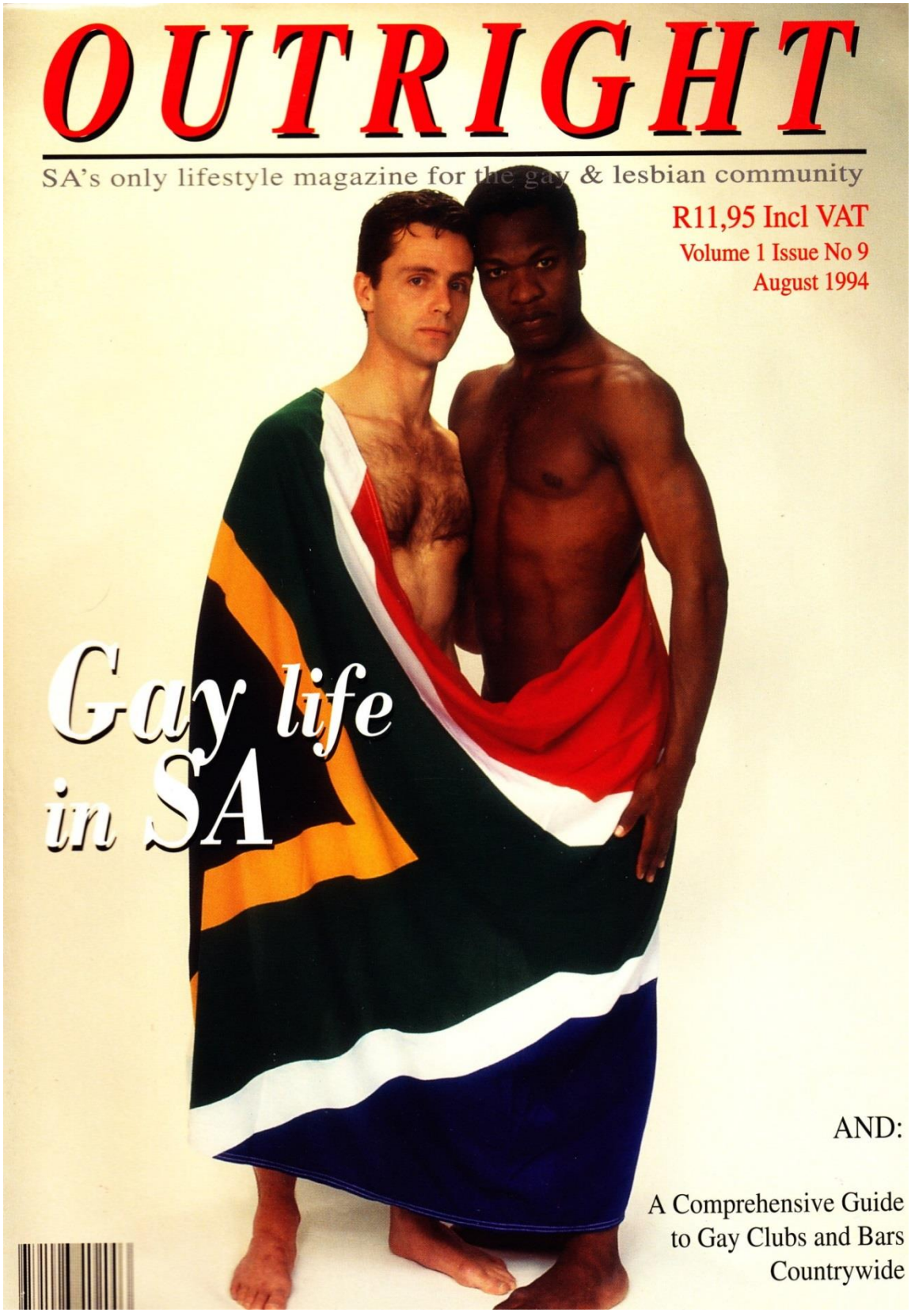


Figure 9: Outright Cover image (*Outright* August 1994). Image reproduced with kind permission from GALA, Johannesburg.

The first democratic elections in South Africa were held on 27 April 1994. And on 9 May 1994 the ruling party, the ANC, chose Nelson Mandela as the country's first black president. These, and many other, socio-political changes in South African history are subtlety interpolated into the visual rhetoric of this cover photograph. This image seeks to represent South Africa's multiracial, all-inclusive, non-discriminatory and democratic society. The nudity of the multiracial models (presumably a romantic couple) signifies the literal *birth* of a new society cleansed of its apartheid past. They are literally clothed in a new democratic and multi-racial ideology that is represented by the large national flag. The models' stern facial expressions also seem to echo the "serious" tone of the magazine and a "serious" determination to rebuild a new nation. Again we have an image which signifies the magazine's ideological standpoint. As a "serious lifestyle magazine for the gay and lesbian community" (*Outright* November 1993), *Outright* seemingly creates its brand identity as a publication that stands for the values of the new "Rainbow Nation".

Hodge and Kress (1988: 6) describe discourse as "the social process in which texts are embedded." By extension, Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001: 25) argue that discourse takes place through a multiplicity of practices, representations and modes, "of which lived human social action is [but] one." The media text, however, is itself reflective of the discursive milieu or context in which it is produced and/or embedded (Gill 2003; Mort 1996). So the media text and the material world it constructs are mutually reinforcing aspects of discourse. The media texts which have been analyzed above can be read as a collection of semiotic modes working in tandem to represent a particular aspect of the lived, experiential world – and which are simultaneously embedded within it.

From the latter images, one can glean the discursive construction and promulgation of an inclusive, multi-ethnic "Rainbow Nation". The close proximity of the bodies on these two covers signifies the restructuring of the new South African society in ways that are antipodal to those that were entrenched by the Anti-Sodomy (1976), Immorality (1950) and Group Areas Acts (1950) of the apartheid regime. The visual display of the multi-ethnic group in the first magazine cover (*Outright* November 1993), and the physical embrace of the two models in the second (*Outright* August 1994), seem to call for all South African citizens to "embrace" each other in an effort to rebuild a "Rainbow Nation" – regardless of race, gender, sexuality or class.

With reference to the opportune political climate which the South African transition period provided, Croucher (2002: 324) states that "the availability of an anti-apartheid master frame…helped to galvanise gays and lesbians and to legitimate their demands in the eyes of politicians and society as a whole." Talmor (2013: 383) also states that "the post-apartheid state [was] defined by an ideology of inclusion that encircled gay people as part of the Rainbow Nation." These observations allow one to develop the claim that the nationalist discourses of the "Rainbow Nation" had a significant impact within the realm of sexual identity politics and (as shown above) within the queer media landscape.

The ANC's effort to align itself with the LGBTQIA liberation movement is clearly indicated in an advertisement in the March 1994 issue of *Outright* titled: "It would be HILDA if it wasn't for OLGA." (*Outright* March 1994: 13) The advertisement features a black and white photographic image of (supposedly) the first lesbian and gay pride march. A tall white (presumably gay) male holds hands with a black (presumably lesbian) female in the foreground. Marching in the background are scores of marchers holding up placards and signs stating that "Lesbian and Gay Rights Are Human Rights" (*Outright* March 1994: 13), and so forth. The black and white hue of the photograph slightly augments the historicity to the main message of the advertisement – whereas a colour photograph would give it a more contemporaneous quality. This image of multi-racial and multi-gendered protesters marching forward in "solidarity" also lends political credibility to the written text's claim about equality and a "better life for all" that will be entrenched by an ANC led government.

This advertisement is interesting, first, because it is part of the 1994 election campaign in which the ANC branded itself a non-racial political party that catered to the social, economic, political and civil interests of *all* South African citizens. Second, this advertisement attests to the significance of discourses of gender and sexuality in the processes of restructuring and rebranding of South Africa as a new "Rainbow Nation". An interesting element of this advertisement is its use of familiar, direct and apostrophic address to a queer audience. The bold type-face immediately draws the reader into the text by incorporating gay subcultural lingo with which the audience is (presumably) familiar. The word "Hilda" is a colloquial term that, loosely translated, means ugly or hideous. The term emerged as part of the South African gay and lesbian subcultural lingo, Gayle, during the middle of the twentieth century among urban English and Afrikaans speaking gay men (Cameron and Gevisser 1995). This headline states that had it not been for the efforts of OLGA (and other LGBTQIA rights organisations) in lobbying for full protection and equality before the law, the socio-political

climate in South Africa for queer citizens would, literally, be ugly. In this advertisement, the ANC is clearly marketing itself as a non-racial, non-discriminatory political party promising "a better life for all".

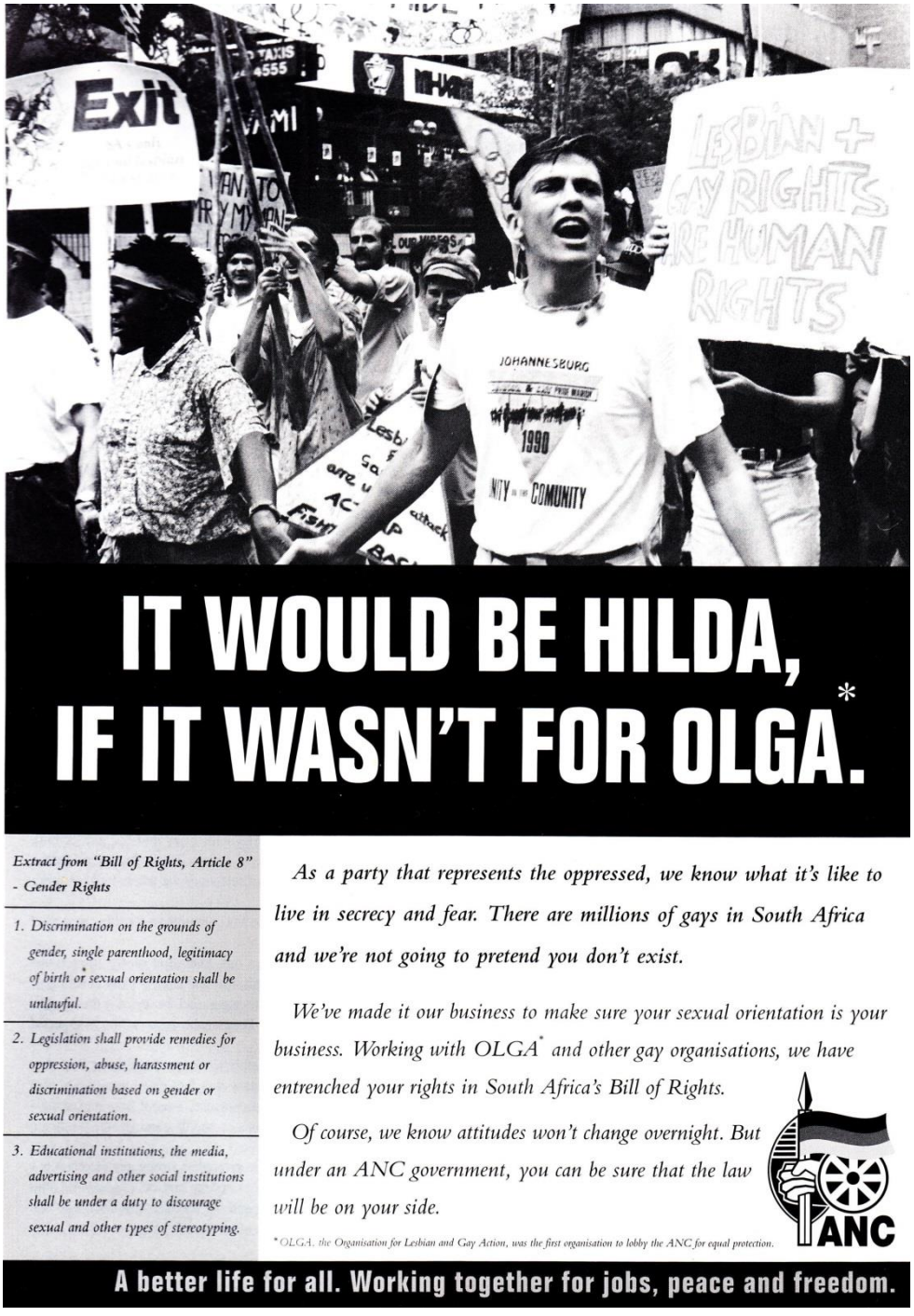


Figure 10: ANC advertisement (*Outright* March 1994: 13). Image reproduced with kind permission from GALA, Johannesburg.

The advertisement reads:

> As a party that represents the oppressed, we know what it's like to live in secrecy and fear. There are millions of gays in South Africa and we're not going to pretend you don't exist. We've made it our business to make sure that your sexual orientation is your business…we have entrenched your rights in South Africa's Bill of Rights…under the ANC government, you can be sure that the law will be on your side.
>
> (*Outright* March 1994: 13)

By using a familiar lingo and tone with which the audience is supposed to relate, this advertisement announces the ANC's empathy and solicitude for the rights of all South African minority groups, including sexual minority groups. The words, "we know what it's like to live in fear and secrecy," highlight the ANC's own history as a liberation movement which had to go underground when it was banned by the apartheid government. In this way, the ANC equates and aligns its own struggles as an anti-apartheid liberation movement with the struggles of the LGBTQIA liberation movement.

However, this advertisement functions as a branding and marketing strategy. As Schroeder (2002: 39) aptly reminds us, "marketing campaigns…are not just managerial – they are *ideological* as well…They disguise and supress inequalities, irrationalities, and contradictions." (emphasis my own). This advertisement functions in such a way as to garner support from potential LGBTQIA voters by literally *selling* the ANC's ideology to the queer audience. This marketing strategy, moreover, is augmented by the placement of the ANC's iconic logo at the bottom right corner of the page. The use of historical tropes and visual motif serves as a technique by which the ANC brands itself as a "progressive" political movement that serves the interests of all citizens. Without having to explicitly articulate the ANC's history, policies and mandates, this advertisement simply targets its intended queer audience/consumers by shoring up the discourses of a shared oppression under the apartheid regime. It would be easy to read this advertisement simply as the ANC's endorsement, support and/or celebration of sexual minorities within the post-apartheid context of democracy, diversity, multi-ethnicity and social equality. But such a reading would be perfunctory at best. This advertisement evidences the discursive assimilation of queer sexualities within the ANC's neoliberal ideologies (Oswin 2007b; Peet 2002; Taylor & Williams 2000) in order to gain potential votes.

In order to portray itself as an organisation that endorses the human rights and freedoms of all South African citizens, the ANC incorporates queer liberal rights discourses within the ambit of its own political interests. It must be remembered that this is just one advertisement amongst many others during the ANC's 1994 presidential election campaign. Although an intertextual analysis of *all* these advertisements for that campaign (as they related to each other for a specific political campaign at a given time) would undoubtedly be relevant and interesting, such an extensive project would not necessarily serve the analytical tasks set out for this particular dissertation. However, once this particular advertisement is read within the nation-building context of the post-apartheid "Rainbow Nation", its assimilationist agenda becomes clearer.

It is a significant fact that this advertisement appeared in such a prominent lesbian and gay magazine (*Outright*) just before the first democratic elections of 1994. By targeting a "niche" audience of queer readers/consumers with a message that is specifically tailored to their linguistic tastes and in their supposed political interests, this advertisement evidences what Schroeder (2002) describes as the managerial and ideological function of advertisements. This advertisement was published at a time when significant advances were being made in terms of lobbying for sexual orientation to be included in section nine of the equality clause in South Africa's first democratic constitution. It serves the dual functions of promulgating the notions of a multi-ethnic, inclusive and democratic (i.e. rebranded) society, while simultaneously capitalizing on the excitement and jubilation of potential queer voters during this important zeitgeist in South Africa's queer history. This advertisement, therefore, evidences a particular instance in which the ANC sought to utilize the promise of a homonationalist and neoliberal embrace in which queer citizens would be accepted, protected and thus assimilated within the nation-building discourses of the newly reconstructed post-apartheid South African "Rainbow Nation."

5.2 Homonormativity, commodification and constructions of the "ideal" queer consumer

It has been shown above that homonationalist discourses permeate the realm of sexual identity politics. Following critical scholarship, it has been argued that the sexual dimension of neoliberalism — as it pertains to queer sexual "identities," bodies, practices and representations — is often characterized by homonormative discourses (Duggan 2002; Manalansan 2005; Oswin 2007a; Oswin 2007b; Puar 2006). This section will highlight and analyse those aspects of homonormative discourse which underscore the media representations of the Pink Economy and queer consumer culture. It will be shown herein that the constructions of the Pink Economy – as a hyperreal world of commodities, leisure and luxury – are not only inflected by the homonormative ideologies of assimilation, but also that these constructions are highly exclusionary. It shall be argued, moreover, that these homonormative discourses of the of the Pink Economy over-represent white, gay, male, middle- and upper-class consumer identities as "ideal", and thereby reproduce a divisive and marginalizing representational praxis.

An article in the winter 2013 edition of *Gay Pages* illustrates these latter assertions succinctly. Titled "Las Vegas Welcomes Gay Visitors," the article discusses an advertising campaign in which the city of Las Vegas has "welcomed the gay community with open arms." (*Gay Pages* winter 2013: 8) The article explains how the city of Las Vegas has finally acknowledged that "we're the life of the party," and has thus welcomed the gay community to its "relaxing, elegant surroundings." (*Gay Pages* winter 2013: 8) The article features two separate photographic images of different male couples frolicking near a hotel's poolside (by day) and lounging in chic cocktail bars (by night) – all of them posing in gleeful embraces. In each of the photographic images there are two black male models thrown in for complementary measure, in contrast to the majority of young white muscular male models. In each of these photographs, the black models form one half of (what seems to be) a pair of interracial couples.

Similar to the *Mambaonline* (2013) and *Queerlife.co.za* (2013) articles on gay tourism discussed in the previous chapter, this advertising campaign markets the city of Las Vegas as "gay-friendly" in an attempt to maximise on the lucrative "Pink Dollars" of potential queer consumers and tourists. This article displays a neoliberal homornormative ideology by constructing Las Vegas as a "gay-friendly" space that is accommodating and accepting of all

forms of sexual citizenship. In the light of this assertion, one can see that the advertisement reifies neoliberal values for capitalistic gain through the commodification queer sexuality in the hope of garnering the supposedly "massive" spending power from the lesbian and gay community. Such commodification, however, is a technique by which power (as embodied by the white male heteropatriarchal captains of capital) insinuates itself within seemingly dissident subject positions and practices through the dissemination of homonormative ideologies. According to Kates (1999: 31) "heterosexuality and homosexuality achieve a commonality insofar as corporations recognize the spending power of gay men, advertise in gay media, grant same-sex domestic partnership benefits and bestow respectability in gay culture." In this article, therefore, queer sexuality and consumption gain (heteronormative) institutional and state sanction through a process of homonormative commodification.

Ratele and Schefer (2011: 28) rightly argue that the "development of gendered sexuality, the construction of femininity and masculinity, is powerfully racialised." Such constructions can, and often do, take the form of highly racist and marginalizing discourses. And the Las Vegas advertisement described above is a case in point. By placing white gay male cisgender sexual "identity" at the centre of this media construction of queer consumption (and literally erasing a plethora of other racial, class and gender subject positions) this advertisement confines queer consumption within the exclusive domain of white gay male subjectivity and economic agency. The visual landscape of this article seems to suggest that legitimate "insiderhood" within the Pink Economy is first and foremost a privilege afforded to middle- and upper-class white gay cisgendered men, and only thereafter proffered to few non-white gay men. The placement of the two black models in the article's photographic images thus becomes an ineffective and superficial rhetorical strategy to signify multi-ethnicity, *ergo* "difference", within a domain of consumption that is racialized as essentially white. The placement of the two black models, amidst, scores of white models reifies the racialized (read white gay male) priorities of this particular mode of sexualized commodification and consumption. So the strategic utilization of racial "difference" reveals its own limitations through the discursive over-representation and naturalization of queer consumption as white, gay and male.

Locally constructed discourses within queer consumer media, similar to international ones, tempt South African LGBTQIA subjects into the fold of national belonging by postulating homonormative consumer practices and "identities". In an article of the August 1994 issue of *Outright* titled, "Gay life in South Africa," the editor-in-chief, Madeleine Rose, pontificates on the fragmented but cosmopolitan South African gay "community". Not surprisingly, this

article opens with grand claims about the modernity and globality of South Africa's gay "scene" – with its countless clubs, cafés, restaurants and cruising bars which "sate one's every appetite in food and entertainment," and where "the party never stops." (Rose 1994: 4) South Africa is herein portrayed as a democratic, diverse and liberal space in which all queers have the freedom to consume at will. Rose (1994: 5) further states that:

> gays in South Africa are becoming increasingly empowered and gay life increasingly normalised. South Africa's transformation is very much our transformation: there is an infectious exhilarating air of renewal among gay people – deemed to have been the most racially tolerant in the country.

The article's jubilation and unsubstantiated hyperbole notwithstanding, its rhetorical link between socio-political liberation and conspicuous hyperconsumption bears a palpable homonormative ideology. Rose (1994) argues that despite the fragmentary nature of the South African gay "community" (a concept which she does not interrogate at all), transformation, liberation and social acceptance are nevertheless instantiated and embodied through particularly cosmopolitan queer consumption practices. Rose (1994) describes the ways in which even those not-so cosmopolitan spaces such as Port Elizabeth, East London and Bloemfontein have a vibrant gay scene: "And what of Bloemfontein," she asks regarding the of the small town's lesbian and gay nightlife, "the PARTIES, darling such parties…The BM's…the *bakkies* and the Beetles fill the veld…and the queue zig-zags towards the dam…The doors don't close until the sun is up." (Rose1994: 8, emphasis in original) She posits, moreover, that the modernity of metropolitan spaces such as Johannesburg and Cape Town (with their enormous influx of queer citizens from various parts of the country) evidence the cities' progressiveness and the acceptance of LGBTQIA visibility and consumer agency as articulated by the mythical power of the "Pink Rand". In her description of Johannesburg, Rose (1994: 5 – 6) states that

> It is Africa's little New York, known for its bustle adrenaline and opportunity, the diversity of people …In Jo'burg [sic] we are now, more than ever, exposed to the value of the international community in which homosexuality is barely an issue anymore.

Despite the over-zealous positivism of this latter claim, Rose (1995) seems to posit that Johannesburg is a gay-friendly space wherein the "global gay" (Altman 1997) will move around freely and/or fit it comfortably. Rose (1994: 4) compares the fragmented South

African lesbian and gay community to a shattered crystal vase, and in a glib tone, states that some pieces are "as large as your hand but the majority are sharp-edged, insignificant shards." This metaphor is disturbing because of its flippancy and, more significantly, because of its accuracy in describing (without due analysis) the status quo in South Africa's major "queer" spaces (Visser 2003; Visser 2008a; Tucker 2009). When one considers the disproportional distribution of material resources and access to economic capital in South Africa, it is not so difficult to glean exactly which sector of the LGBTQIA population represents these "sharp-edged, insignificant shards." Through the careful analysis of the prioritization and "whitening" of the discourses of queer consumption (Binnie 1995; Fejes 2008; Han 2007; Roy 2008), one can see that the "insignificant shards" which are continually excluded and swept to the margins, so to speak, are the non-white (especially black) LGBTQIA consumer-citizens. Tucker (2009: 55) asserts that "the recent visibility of white queer men as a result of the development of the gay village, has helped create a lifestyle that while seemingly open and accepting, is strongly biased towards middle class men who subscribe to a narrow interpretation of queer lifestyles." He further posits that "some [middle- and upper-class] gay men have been made overtly visible in urban space, while [non-white] others are kept partially invisible to wider society, tourists and other groups of queer men in the city." (Tucker 2009: 65-66)

Although Rose (1994) refers to this fragmentation of the South African queer "community", she does so only in passing and utilizes this reference as a metaphorical figure of speech in the service of purporting the diversity and multi-ethnicity of South Africa's queer body politic. The fact that the article is littered by photographic images of white revellers and party-goers (consumers) provides additional evidence of its ideological leanings. The visual components of this article are starkly incongruent with its title in bold type: "Gay Life in South Africa." A perfunctory and naïve reading of this text would be that "gay life in South Africa" is a very white, middle to upper-class affair, and that it finds its material instantiation among lesbian and gay consumer-citizens who are in the throes of hypervisibility and conspicuous consumption. But the material reality of South Africa is that while this minute constituency of privileged queer consumers definitely does exist, it is in the minority. South Africa's material and demographic reality is that the majority of LGBTQIA subjects are not educated, upwardly-mobile, white affluent consumer-citizens who are able to enjoy the power of the "Pink Rand". This queer constituency is invisibilized from the media discourses which reproduce this notion of an emancipatory Pink Economy.

Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001: 111) state that "meaning is made in many different ways, always, in the many different modes and media which are co-present in a communicational ensemble." It has been argued above that the visual landscape of the queer consumer media serves to construct the image affluent white homomasculinity as indicative of ideal queer consumption. The linguistic and visual multimodality of the latter article works to this end precisely. But this skewed narrative of "gay life in South Africa" does not end there. Like the popular marketing campaigns which are employed to construct, recode and sell certain select spaces as "gay-friendly", this article utilizes a similar homonormative ideology in order to purport an unrealistic (almost imaginary) idea of South Africa as a multi-ethnic, diverse and all-inclusive "Rainbow Nation". Not only does this article conform to the rhetoric and branding strategies of the nation-state, but it elides the complexities of the fragmentary socio-economic divisions amongst various LGBTQIA groups.

This article evidences the homonormative commodification of queer sexuality in its propagation of gay-friendliness – in services of branding and nation-building – as a benchmark of the cosmopolitanism and progressiveness of South African society (Duggan 2002; Puar 2006). The aggrandizing tone of the article serves to illustrate that the appropriation and mainstreaming of queer sexuality works primarily in the interests of the state and commercial venues which benefit from middle- to upper-class queer consumption practices. Furthermore, the article places the ideas of neoliberalism and freedom within the ambit of racialized practices of hyperconsumption, and thereby endorses homonormative ideologies. Yet again, it is the young, white middle- to upper-class gay male who is strategically foregrounded in these discourses of the Pink Economy as the ideal consumer-citizen.

In an article about the "World's Top Nude Beaches" in the Special Holiday edition of *Gay Pages* 2012/2013, a similar technique of the commodification of queer sexuality constructs, and naturalizes, white gay male consumption as "ideal". An international array of what are called "gay nude beaches" – from Orient Bay in the West Indies, to Sandy Bay in Cape Town – are reviewed according to their accessibility and popularity. It seems as though white gay male consumption of these spaces is (again) given priority, and that queer consumption is instantiated by white gay male subjectivity and economic agency. Of the twenty-six photographic images accompanying this article, there is only one featuring a black male model. The other twenty-five photographs feature individual or groups of nude white males lying, playing and frolicking on beautiful secluded beaches – against backdrops of cloudless

skies and turquois seas. One would think that the "world's top gay nude beaches" (Gay Pages 2012/2013) were only visited by white gay male exhibitionists, voyeurs and cruisers.

Han (2007: 53) observes that

> Exotic' vacations to far away places are marketed to rich white men and poor coloured bodies are only another consumable product easily purchased with western dollars. As such, gay men of colour, whether found within western borders or conveniently waiting for white arrival in the far off corners of the globe, are nothing more than commodities for consumption.

The inclusion of this singular nude black body among numerous images of white nudist consumers serves the dual function of commodifying social and cultural difference in exotic spaces, but also to fetishize the black body as a commodity whose purpose is to sate the sexual desires and tastes of white gay male consumers (Mercer 1994).

These spaces are recoded as queer spaces by virtue of the demarcation and sanctioning of same-sex desire and consumption. But this apparent libidinal freedom and queer visibility comes at a cost. The delimiting of these spaces as essentially "gay" distinguishes them from (heterosexual) beaches, where the freedom to be nude, to cruise and engage in sexual activities is supposedly frowned upon. Such socio-geographic delimiting follows the stereotypical logic in which gay male sexuality is always already marked by notions of promiscuity and illicit sexual behaviour. And this stereotypical discourse is thereby transformed into a marketing tool. The very fact that these spaces are marketed to potential gay leisure seekers (those who have the material resources to travel to such spaces, that is) indicates the neoliberal foundations of this illusory Pink Economy. By tempting the audience with images and the language of liberty, freedom and libidinal indulgence, this article serves as a marketing tool for the consumption of queer spaces which are racialized and sexualized as essentially white, gay and male.

Barthes (1986: 195) asserts that "the relation between thing signified and image signifying in analogical representation is not 'arbitrary' (as it is in language)." Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006: 14) also see "images of whatever kind as entirely within the realm of the realizations and instantiations of ideology, as means-always-for the articulation of ideological positions." It is therefore impossible to read the over-representation of white gay male bodies in the above-mentioned texts as arbitrary or coincidental. To the extent that these white male bodies

signify gay consumer agency, their disproportional representation becomes a metonymic instantiation of idealized queer consumption within the constructions of the Pink Economy. These white bodies, and the consumer agency which they embody, become the "Pink Rand" made flesh. This article disguises its homonormative agenda by promoting the idea of gay liberation, consumption and exhibitionist sexual indulgence. At the same time, it prioritizes white gay male sexuality, consumption and subjectivity as "ideal".

Steyn and Van Zyl (2009: 4) posit that "it is through the meanings attached to non-hegemonic bodies and their desires that Othering is perpetuated, and upon whom different forms of exclusion, oppression and violence are perpetuated. The body becomes the site of discursive power struggles." It has also been argued that the ubiquitous and naturalized white gay male consumers' practices and their bodies are sites of such power struggles. Insofar as they are constructed as signifying the material and libidinal freedom to consume outside the hegemonic heteronormative order, the nude white gay male bodies and subjectivities are no longer pathologized, but commodified in their sexually dissident "Otherness". (This is in stark contrast to the discourses which inform the constructions and commodification of other racialized bodies – the detailed discussion of which shall follow in the next chapter.) Adam et al. (2008: 300-301) suggest that "the gay men's marginalisation in society may be reinforced through the deployment of strategies based on the commodification of difference." But, as has been shown above, such commodification is based upon homonormative ideologies of assimilation into the market. The "Otherness" of queer sexuality is contained and sanitized within the hegemonic social order insofar as it can be assimilated and incorporated into the market through the reproduction of homonormative discourses pertaining to the Pink Economy. When such commodification is understood from the point of view of the assimilationist strategies of homonormativity, one can concede to the assertion that "difference, in the form of sexuality considered to be outside an established norm, may be encouraged and publicly articulated, to the extent that it represents a commercial marketing opportunity." (Adam et al. 2009: 305)

Through the simultaneous process of discursive repetition, and over-representation, this stereotype of the affluence and hypersexuality is utilized in the process of commodifying the white gay male's sexuality and his body: all for the commercial ends of marketing dating websites like *Mambaonline* and *Gaydar.com*, and the above-mentioned "World's Top Nude Beaches". (It bears repeating that such commodifying practices take on a different register when attached to non-white bodies.) In this regard, the white gay male subject comes to be

known through stereotypical discourses of sexually dissident "Otherness" only insofar as it can be marketed as such within the constructions of the Pink Economy. So in order to gain hegemonic institutional sanction, white gay male sexualities, bodies and practices have to be marketed in a particularly niche and homonormative way. In the pursuit of an assimilationist politics of visibility, recognition and acceptance, white gay male sexualities and bodies are thus reduced to being marketable signifiers of hedonistic and hypersexual consumption. In such a homonormative context, affluent white gay male sexuality is neither disruptive nor subversive to the hegemonic capitalist order in which white male heteropatriarchy retains its historical dominance and privilege.

The white gay male bodies and sexual practices in the texts described in this chapter are constructed and sanctioned as tolerable, legitimate, and only have value insofar as they can be assimilated and subsequently commodified within the neoliberal heterosexist hegemonic order of the nation-state and the capitalist market. These constructions find their most efficacious articulation through homonormative discourses. It is then, and only then, that they are rendered comprehensible, tolerable and thus given value in their sexually dissident "Otherness." A corollary of this discursive process is that the under-representation of black male bodies thereby becomes a site of struggle, exclusion and disavowal. The discursive marginalization and negation of black gay sexualities and bodies casts them as subordinate and somehow outside of the domain of "gayness" and/or queer consumption – and are thereby devalued. Such marginalization, moreover, discursively negates the possibility of conceptually incorporating black queer identity within the concept the Pink Economy. In such a representational schema, "'black' and 'gay' are positioned as separate, distinct categories in queer visual culture." (Sonnekus & van Eeden 2009: 89) It then becomes important to question what forms of symbolic violence of negation can be deduced from the erasure of other racialized bodies in these queer consumer media discourses of the Pink Economy. What illusory narratives about liberation and diversity can we deduce from such a homonormative regime of representation?

This chapter has interrogated the homonormative discourses of the Pink Economy in queer consumer media. It has argued that the media representations of the Pink Economy are predominantly inflected by homonormative ideologies which prioritize affluent white gay male consumption as ideal, and therefore most desirable. This chapter has outlined the discursive strategies by which queer identity and sexuality were assimilated within the rebranding strategies of the "Rainbow Nation" in post-apartheid South Africa. In the light of

this, it was argued that the commodification of queer sexuality and identities takes place within the depoliticizing context of homonormativity – wherein queer consumption and the Pink Economy are constructed as key signifiers of liberal rights politics and markers of cosmopolitanism and citizenship. It has also been argued that the overrepresentation of affluent white gay consumption within the Pink Economy is part of the marketing strategies by which the "niche" queer consumer market is constructed as lucrative precisely for the profit-making interests of corporate advertisers. It has been shown, moreover, that the media discourses of homonormativity manifest as a highly marginalizing framework from which disadvantaged non-white queer consumers are continually excluded.

Chapter 6

Marginalized Consumers and Commodified Bodies: representations of black masculinities on the peripheries of the Pink Economy

It has been argued in the previous chapter that the Pink Economy, as constructed in South African queer consumer media, is founded upon neoliberal, homonormative ideologies. It has been shown that in its alignment with the values of "free" market capitalism, the Pink Economy is discursively constructed to benefit the consumer practices and identities of a minority sector within the queer body politic. Furthermore, it has been argued that the queer consumer media's prioritization of this white middle-class minority is also predicated upon the discursive exclusion, marginalization and invisibilization of other modalities of non-white queer subjectivity. This chapter focuses on a critical discourse analysis of the marginalization, invisibilization and negation of queer black male consumption. However, this position is not a simplistic critique regarding the sheer numbers of black bodies within queer visual culture, and the broader racial, socio-economic and political implications thereof.

It shall be argued that by constructing black queer consumer identities as merely happenstance and/or derivative forms of queer consumption, the texts discussed in this chapter not only entrench a problematic and reductive black/white binary, but they also erase and marginalize other racialized and classed articulations of queer subjectivity and consumption. It shall be argued, moreover, that the commodification of the black male body within queer consumer media is a discursive process through which it is placed alongside a wide range other commodities from which the privileged, ideal (*ergo* white) queer consumer may pick and choose. It will be the task of this chapter to show the various ways in which such commodification still relies heavily on colonial discourses and racist stereotypes regarding black male sexuality and bodies. This analysis is informed by the awareness that such derogatory discourses pertaining to the stereotypical representation of the black body and subjectivity have dire implications within post-apartheid South Africa, and the socio-cultural relations in this supposed multi-ethnic, all-inclusive "Rainbow Nation".

The texts which will be analysed herein have been thematised thusly: A features article from *Gay Pages* (Summer 2012: 58) about a black sommelier, an advertisement for the Tsogo Sun hotel in *Gay Pages* (Winter 2012: 19) and a United Colors of Benetton advertisement from

Outright (July 1994: 14-15) will be analysed accordingly. These conditional representations of black masculinity and consumption are quite interesting in terms of their ideological inflections. The transcribed data from the media producers of queer contemporary queer media will be analysed thereafter in order to provide some contextual background as to the motivations and ideological concerns behind the editorial choices of the representations of black masculinities and sexuality. In the following section two fashion photo shoots from *Outright* (November 200: 34-36; August 2000: 28-29) will be juxtaposed and analysed respectively. Then two advertisements for The Factory nude bar appearing regularly in *Exit* newspaper (February 2013: 13; March 2013: 13) will be analysed in tandem. Finally, an advertisement for the Metropolitan life investment company in *Outright* (January/February 2000: 33) will also be analysed. These media texts have been thematically organised in terms of their use of black bodies and sexuality in order to sell certain services and commodities. This chapter, therefore, seeks to locate the position of black masculinity within the discursive constructions of the Pink Economy. It will critique the fixative and homonormative discourses by which the Pink Economy is constructed, and thus problematize the overarching marginalization of black masculinity within queer consumer media.

6.1 Black men as Pink Consumers? Representations of black masculinities and their consumption practices within the Pink Economy

The interconnections between *representation* and *"identity"* cannot be underestimated when it comes to theories of subaltern and/or postcolonial masculinities (Hall 1997; Mercer 1994). Thus a critical discursive approach to the analysis of the conditional representations of black masculinities within the South African queer consumer media will allow us to examine "not only how language and representation produce meaning, but how the knowledge which a particular discourse produces connects with power, regulates conduct, makes up and constructs identities and subjectivities." (Hall 1997: 6) In the light of the foregoing analytical approach, therefore, it is important to take a close look at the representations of black masculinities as consuming subjects within the overarching narratives of the Pink Economy. Although there may be very few such representations within the South African queer consumer media, the analysis thereof will enable us to understand the ways queer black masculinities are discursively constructed within the post-apartheid context; this will also

enable us to understand whether or not they are conceived as legitimate and agentive participants within the Pink Economy.

The summer 2012 of *Gay Pages* features a short article on West Ngcwabe, a twenty five year old sommelier and restaurant manager. The article titled "Go West!" announces Ncgwabe's recent employment at the prestigious Mount Grace hotel in Johannesburg. It details his journey from being a "starry-eyed new intake at hotel school," through to being "introduced to the wonders of wine while a student at the International Hotel School." (*Gay Pages* Summer 2012: 58) It informs the reader that he is now "honing his skills with a Cape Wine Academy qualification," and that "it is clear that West's enthusiasm for wine is an unbridled one." (*Gay Pages* Summer 2012: 58) The article is accompanied by a head-and-shoulder colour photograph of Ngcwabe smiling wryly in profile. His crisp, white, collared shirt, and the tailored lapels of his navy suit give him an air of sophistication and impeccable stature. His bespoke appearance clearly complements and augments his professional status.

The winter 2012 edition of *Gay Pages* features an advertisement for the Southern Sun (now Tsogo Sun) hotel in Hyde Park, Johannesburg. The advertisement depicts a young, slim, muscular, black male model enjoying a leisurely glass of whiskey on the hotel's balcony. He is seated near an infinity pool with his bare feet slightly immersed in the water, while overlooking the leafy northern suburbs of Johannesburg. The sunset in the background complements his pose as he smiles into his laptop screen. This image is a representation of "ideal," leisurely, pleasurable consumption. The caption to this image reads: "Elevate your style this weekend," (*Gay Pages* Winter 2012: 19) with the word "elevate" written in bold uppercase letters, and the word "style" in a large cursive font. This image and its caption work in tandem to promote and sell the ideas of grandeur, sophistication and "stylish" consumption. The fact that this image is photographed on the hotel's balcony also suggests the heightened sophistication and luxury that awaits the potential visitor/consumer. At the bottom of the page, the potential consumer is told that they can enjoy "spectacular views…authentic Italian fine dining…whiskey bar and cigar lounge… [and the] shopping" experiences which are on offer at this hotel (*Gay Pages* winter 2013: 19).



Figure 11: Tsogo Sun advertisement (*Gay Pages* winter 2013: 19). Image reproduced with kind permission from GALA, Johannesburg.

A United Colors of Benetton advertisement is featured in the July 1994 edition of *Outright*. This is a double-page spread from the early "United Colors of Benetton" advertising campaign featuring a multiracial, mixed gender group of smiling young people, all of whom are roughly of the same age. Each model is wearing the trademark brightly-coloured Benetton sportswear and high-top sneakers while caught in a moment of blissful play. The alabaster white background creates an idyllic aura of egalitarianism and equality (a racially, ethnically

harmonious “heaven”), while seemingly erasing all historical, political, social, economic and cultural context from the image. The models are caught in a playful, almost banal, moment, passing basketballs from one person to the next (*Outright* July 1994: 14-15).



Figure 12: United Colors of Benetton advertisement (*Outright* July 1994). Image reproduced with kind permission from GALA, Johannesburg.

In the first article described above, it is evident that West Ngcwabe (*Gay pages* summer 2012: 58) has acquired the symbolic and cultural capital as embodied through Bourdieusian habitus insofar as his "class condition signifies itself (through taste), into classifying practices, that is, into a symbolic expression of class position." (Bourdieu 1984: 175) We are told of his discerning style and taste, we are shown his bespoke suit and his self-satisfied countenance in the hopes that we may revel in amazement at this stylish young black man's exceptionality. The irony of this article, however, is that while it may foreground Ngcwabe's prestige and his accomplishments, the discourses within this article fix him in a stereotypical position as a highly qualified black *servant*. This article is underpinned by a tone of excitement and wonder at the young black (presumably queer?) man's acquisition of the symbols, tastes and cultural capital which have historically come to signify high class and white privilege. It is a form of conditional representation to the extent that "its multiple economy of representation is not resolutely negative but rather inherently ambivalent, positive as well as negative." (Chouliaraki 2008b: 847) It seems to present a positive picture of wonderment and excitement over the accomplishments of this young black man, but is simultaneously (ambivalently) framed within negative ideology of colonial discourse. This article provides intriguing clues for the interrogation of the discursive construction(s) of the dialectic between black/white, self/Other. It pretends to represent a young, successful black renaissance man while it relies on the binary and colonial stereotypes through which black colonized subjects have been discursively infantilized and naturalized as backward, unsophisticated and always already at the service of white desires and consumption.

In his construal of the ambivalence of colonial discourse, Homi K. Bhabha (2004) conceives of mimicry as a metonymic mode of representation in which a reformed, recognizable Other emulates the coloniser's doctrines, systems of knowledge and practices through a process of flawed colonial mimesis. Bhabha's (2004) notion of the mimic man is a mode of representation, rather than repetition, thus amounting to the reification of difference that is almost the same, but not quite. The ambivalence of mimicry, therefore, suggests that the fetishized colonial authority (and discourse) can be rearticulated and problematized to the extent that the disciplinary colonial gaze is parodied and inverted upon itself. In turn, the normative colonial culture is revalued by the mimic man in a process of farcical camouflage that disavows the essences (of the Other) that are constructed within colonial discourse.

Ngcwabe is herein lauded as being an exemplary and successful black (queer) subject – and rightfully so – but from the position of the authoritative white editorial gaze. At first glance Ngwabe seems to represent the quintessentially subversive mimic man – whose racial and sexual differences are thoroughly reformed such that they reach the priority and privilege that is concomitant to white heteronormative masculinity. But a closer reading of this article reveals its ironic reification of colonial stereotype. This article's colonial script is evidenced by its congratulatory language and tone at this highly educated young black man who may have acquired and mastered Western tastes and gentility, but can only remain a servant. Ironically, he is *not* represented as possessing agency as a consumer. He is framed only as a partial ornament within white Western consumer/material culture that he facilitates but does not himself enjoy. While he seems to mimic the accoutrements of Western sophistication, such mimicry is not subversive at all. In fact, this version of mimicry reifies Western white superiority to the extent that it is only a gesture, a posturing and passing for whiteness, but is never quite enough to make it genuine or complete. Ngwabe is thus relegated to the margins if the Pink Economy insofar as he is lauded as a glorified servant – a mode of representation which is yet again steeped in colonial stereotype.

Sontag (1977: 163) asserts that "photographs are a way of imprisoning reality, understood as recalcitrant, inaccessible; of making it stand still." Putting aside its posed, artificial and stylised purposes for the moment, the photographic image in the Tsogo Sun advertisement (*Gay Pages* winter 2013: 19) seeks to fix and imprison a moment (rather the image of a moment) of "ideal" consumption. Sontag (1977: 153 – 154) posits that an image society that traffics in the images or interpretations of reality – and not reality itself – the photographic form (commercial or otherwise) takes authority and precedence in its mimetic effects. Thus "it is not reality that photographs make immediately accessible, but images." (Sontag 1977: 165) Whether it is for commercial marketing purposes or otherwise, no photographic image can be claimed to be "real". And so the reality which hovers over this image is that very few people can afford entry into this expensive hotel and the amenities and services provided therein. Moreover, very few of those consumers who can afford these services are black consumers. So it stands to reason that this image functions on the premise of the exceptional and exotic black consumer. It seeks to petrify this "remarkable" moment of black middle-to upper- class consumption. It is premised upon the fetishization and exoticization of black middle-to upper-class consumption.

In her analysis of media representations and discourses of the "rising" black-middle class in English language South African media during the 1990s, Iqani (2012b) pays particular attention to the narratives of wonderment and the newsworthiness of the consumer practices of the "emerging" black middle-class. Iqani (2012b: 13) posits that "in the white South African imaginary during apartheid, black South Africans did not drive cars, shop in malls or buy drinks in suburban nightclubs and bars." And this is precisely the attitude which still prevails and underwrites much of the post-apartheid representations and constructions of black middle-class consumption. But the above-described advertisement (*Gay Pages* winter 2013: 19) depicts black consumption and upward mobility as a desirable aspect of the Pink Economy. More significantly, this advertisement relies on the commodification of the black body as an exotic, exceptional marketing tool. The black (queer?) body is thus particularized and transformed into a rare commodity that forms part of the package deal for the potential consumer. Through the manipulation of a seemingly progressive and liberal frame, this text *seems* to foreground and celebrate black middle-class consumption. Yet trough the rarefication and exoticization of black consumption, the black subject is therefore negated of his economic and consumer agency. This is a discursive strategy which transforms him into yet another product on offer for idealized white gay male consumption.

What is striking about the image in the Benetton advertisement (*Outright* July 1994: 14-15) is the configuration and positioning of its racialized and gendered subjects. The image comprises five caucasian models (three males, two females) posing in consecutive order. One far-east Asian female model follows this order. And a black male model is positioned on the farthest right end of the image. It is only this black model who is not holding or passing a basketball – the symbol of playfulness and cultural unity in this context. While the other models pass the basketballs to each other during this posed moment of cultural hybridity and racial harmony, the black model smilingly glances upon his peers without being able to engage with them as an equal. He is depicted as happily looking upon this scene of playful exchange from which he is symbolically excluded. It seems as though wearing Benetton clothing is simply not enough in this image. The complete engagement with and consumption of the Benetton brand (and ethos) are instantiated by the stylized and imaginary moment of play – of which the handling and exchange of the basketball plays a significant role. In which case, then, the black male model appears as a partial, marginalized consumer. This is yet another form of conditional representation of black consumption. Although he too is wearing Benetton clothing, his exclusion and relegation to the farthest end of the image renders the

aesthetic and marketing purposes of his presence rather dubious. He is depicted less as a fully engaged and agentive consumer, and more as an accessory (to the same extent as the Asian female) that is marked by his racial difference. His presence in this image is only instrumental in that his racialized subjectivity and his body are used to add an exotic touch to the Benetton brand's diversity palette.

In his analysis of Benetton advertising, Giroux (2002: 10) asserts that "the exaggerated precision of the models and the primary colors used in the advertisements renders racial unity as a purely aesthetic category while eliminating racial conflict completely within this two-dimensional world of make-believe. Within these ad campaigns, race and ethnicity are both accentuated and fixed." The commodification of the black and Asian bodies in this representational praxis primarily serves to sell the Benetton brand's idea of racial "unity" (and clothing, of course). Within this ideal landscape constructed for marketing purposes racial, cultural, gender, and sexual "difference is stripped of all social and political antagonisms and becomes a commercial symbol for what is youthfully chic, hip, and fashionable." (Giroux 2002: 16) This image evidences the abiding need to call into question the discourses circulating around racialized bodies of colour – particularly the black male body – within what Schroeder and Zwick (2004) call the "image economy" of advertising.

Each of the texts described above foregrounds an ambiguous subjectivity that is not in keeping with popular representations of black hypersexual and/or an assertive "butch" hegemonic masculinity. Each of these texts presents a supposedly "queer" black masculinity insofar as each of them (in their own problematic way) projects a *seemingly* subversive black masculinity which may counter normative colonial scripts. None of these texts explicitly states nor subtly hints at the sexual dissidence (or "queerness") of the black male subjectivities therein represented. We are left to make an educated guess that since they are represented within this queer consumer media created by and targeted at gay men, then they too must be read as such. This is not to suggest some normative or ethical imperative to state some or other sexual category of identification – even if that identification is discursively constructed as "queer". This is not even to privilege "coming out" as a precondition for a modern, visible and/or legitimate mode of queer subjectivity (Puar 2001: 171). Ratele (2013: 231) states that "arguably dominant ideologies usually operate best when they are implicit." So it seems that while each of these texts are ambiguous and/or ironic, they do not contest an assumed inferiority that has historically been associated with black male subjectivity, sexuality and consumption. Each of these texts, therefore, serves to reproduce a rather

problematic script of racial and economic inferiority to which black masculinities are continually marginalized. While white gay males occupy a centralized and idealized position within the queer consumer media and its constructions of the Pink Economy, black masculinity (with all its implications of sexual ambiguity) is discursively marginalized to the extent that is continually negated of its consumer agency and legitimacy.

Hennessy (2000: 100) states that "heteronorms reify homosexuality [and other dissident sexualities] – defining, disciplining the human potential for sensation and social intercourse into an identity that complies with the heteronormative logics of gender and desire." It has been argued in the previous chapter that homonormative discourses are inflected, conditioned and regulated by heteronomative ideology and politics. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006: 13) posit that:

> Representation requires that sign-makers choose forms for the expression of what they have in mind, forms which they see as most apt and plausible in the given context…The interest of the sign-makes, at the moment of making the sign, leads them to choose an aspect or bundle of aspects of the object to be represented as being criteria[l]

If the image-makers of these consumer magazines (*Gay Pages* and *Outright*) have in their minds the stereotypical image of black readers and consumers as possibly queer but necessarily inferior then these assumptions may, in theory, be translated into their representations of the black masculinity.

In his response to an interview question regarding the representations of black queer males' consumer agency (or the lack thereof), *Gay Pages* editor, Rubin van Niekerk, stated that "black men are far more closeted and difficult to reach than almost any other demographic. Few gay black entrepreneurs are willing to be openly featured in media which impacts on their role in the pink economy." (personal communication 2013) *Queerlife.co.za* editor, Sharon Knowles (2013), conjectures that "the gay, black male has not been targeted by brands effectively. I think it is actually hard for them to identify the butch gay male." (personal communication 2013) *Mambaonline*'s Luiz de Barros (2013) simply states that black consumers are not represented well enough, arguing that he struggles to get sufficient content from black contributors and advertisers for the website (personal communication 2013). Underpinning such responses are personal, editorial and institutional assumptions

about black queer males' reluctance to participate actively within the Pink Economy and use their Pink Rands as forms of empowerment, consumer agency and broader political visibility.

First, these editors' assumptions were not qualitatively nor quantitatively verified through extensive consumer research. Second, one need only look around queer consumer culture to see that there are, in fact, a significant number of affluent black queer consumers who actively and regularly engage in various consumer practices within the Pink Economy. (Although this is not a sociological study, the latter assertion is commonly evident.) Third, there is ample evidence of black queer consumer-citizens from poor, underprivileged and rural backgrounds who engage in creative and stylized forms of consumption and identity negotiation (See Garber 2004; Livermon 2013; Reid 2003; Tucker 2009). So it rather surprising that these diverse and creative modes of black queer consumption are marginalized within the corporate targeting of queer consumers and within the queer media constructions of the Pink Economy.

Another ideological position to note within these editors' responses is the conflation of the terms "black," "butch" and "closet." But this could not be further from the truth. The calculated and strategic marginalization of black queer consumption is not the effect of some supposed "closetedness" or "butchness" on part of black queer males. These, in fact, are carefully constructed discourse which actively negate and marginalize various forms of black queer consumption and economic agency through superficially liberal but ultimately stereotypical and derogatory representations. In fact, this amounts to one of the "whitening" processes Bérubé (2001) refers to in relation to the LGBTQIA rights movement and the Pink Economy, arguing that the discursive prioritization and naturalization of white gay males' interests has proven detrimental to the LGBTQIA body politic. Chasin (2000: 146) asserts that "a liberal cultural politic does admit of difference, but often prefers to contain difference, or to see it manifested relatively superficially." And it is precisely these kinds of limited, conditional and biased representation of black queer consumption which superficially allows for racial and sexual "difference," but only within the regulatory confines of homonormativity that continues to legitimate and prioritize *only* white gay male subjectivity and consumption as "ideal" within the Pink Economy.

6.2 Selling Bodies, selling Sex: The discursive commodification of the black male body

This section will provide an exegesis of the problematic representations of the black male body within the visual landscape of queer consumer media. It will highlight the ways in which these representations are articulated through racist and colonial stereotype. It will also be shown herein that such misrepresentation is utilized in the service of selling particular commodities and services, as well as perpetuating these biased notions regarding black masculinity and sexuality. It will be argued that the commodification of the black male body finds its most efficacious currency through the implementation of the white gay male gaze which still wields economic and editorial power within this discursive regime. It will be argued, moreover, that the gay white male gaze, is not only an instantiation of power, but also a modality through which black queer consumption continues to be marginalized and negated insofar as black masculinities and sexualities continue to be sexually commodified.

A fashion photo shoot aptly titled "Shopping" is featured in the November 2000 edition of *Outright*. This photo shoot evidences the apex of care-free luxury and consumption. The main model is young, white and slim, with handsome, chiselled facial features – thus representing the "ideal" gay consumer. He is shown in various poses, positions and spaces of obviously high class, luxury consumption. In the first photo, the model reclines on a bed amidst a cloud of satin white sheets while eating a croissant. Another bare-chested model (presumably his lover) hands the main model an ashtray. The latter model has a range of magazines spread before him. He does not, however, look at these magazines but bold-facedly returns his gaze to the camera. There is an atmosphere of assertiveness and cavalier confidence in this model's gaze. In the next photograph this same model is seated in the back of a glistening luxury car while being driven by another model in a black suit (presumably his chauffeur). The main model is dressed in a crisp white shirt as he nonchalantly rests his elbow outside his open window. Again, in this image, he returns his determined and unflinching gaze to the camera. In the last photo in this series, the main model stands with his wide shoulders upright, facing a full length mirror. A short tailor with silver grey hair – quite the Karl Lagerfeld lookalike – adds the final touches to the main model's bespoke two-piece suit. This time the main model inverts his narcissistic gaze upon himself while looking at the mirror. Together, these images tell a story of exclusivity and the imagined gay white male consumer's immersion into a world of exorbitant and luxurious commodities and services.

Interestingly, these images were photographed in Paris – thus augmenting the atmosphere of style, sophistication and modernity throughout the photo shoot.

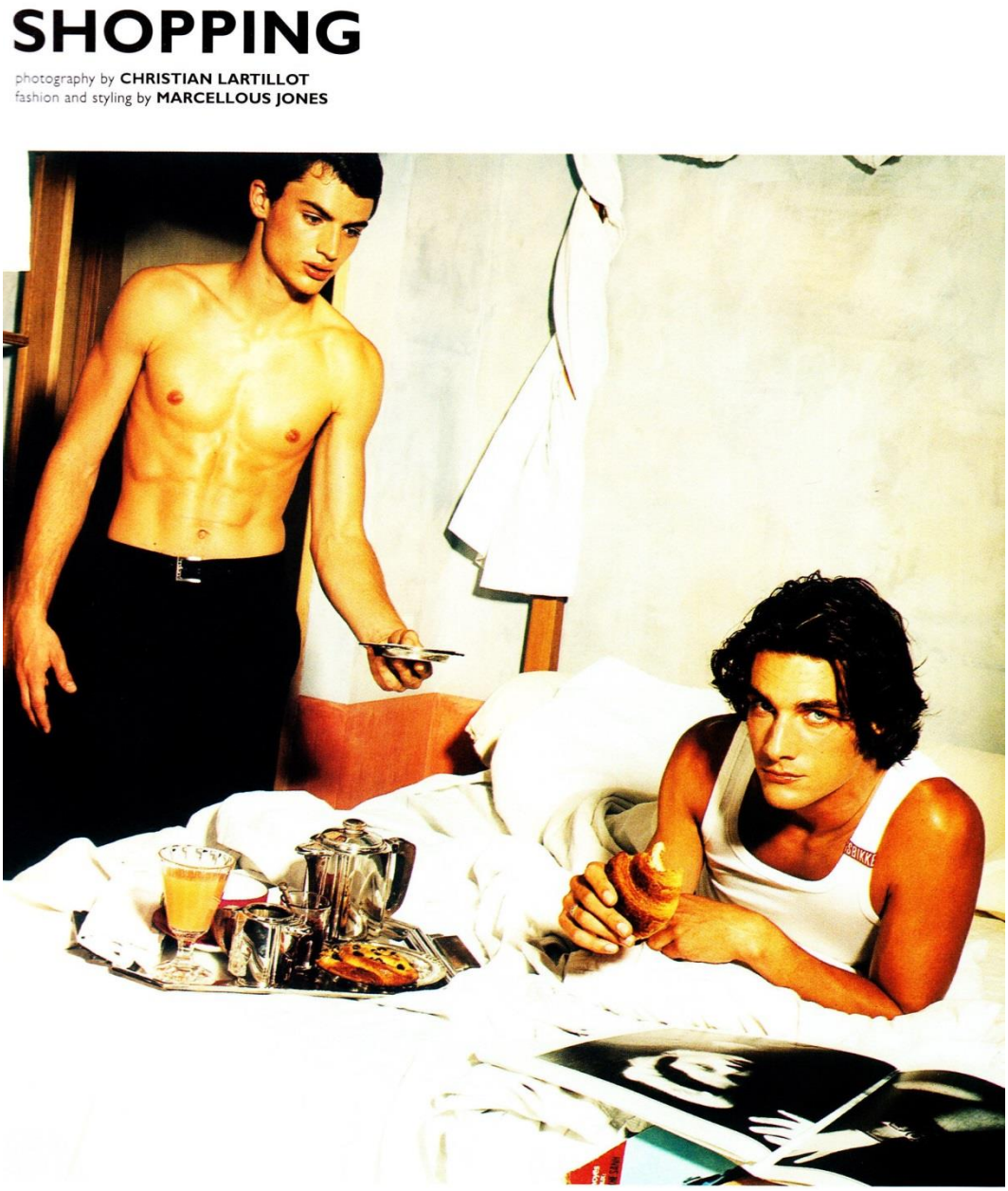


Figure 13: "Shopping" photo shoot (*Outright* November 2000: 34 – 36). Image kindly reproduced with permission from GALA, Johannesburg.

In stark contrast to the above-described photo shoot, the August 2000 edition of *Outright* features a fashion photo shoot titled "This city is a bitch." Photographed in the bustling central business district of Johannesburg, this photo shoot stops at nothing to "represent" the "gritty, rugged and rough" side of city life in Johannesburg. Although the introductory photographic image seems to have nothing to do with fashion and style, it resonates poignantly insofar as it sets the tone for the rest of the shoot. Set amidst the midday cacophony of a mini-bus taxi rank, this image foregrounds the figure of a black man standing upright while smoking in front of a row of white mini-bus taxis. This central figure, simply dressed and holding a plastic shopping bag, returns his stern gaze to the camera thus creating a moment of intimate mutual recognition between himself and the viewer. A plethora of other commuters mill about behind him looking for the right taxi going in their respective directions. Despite the intentional and stylistic use of this particular image, it seems to echo Sontag's (1977) formulation of the photographic image in that it freezes, fixes or imprisons reality into a single moment. The city's inscrutability, inaccessibility and simplicity are seemingly "frozen" within this black male figure standing and smoking in isolation amidst the hustle and bustle.

The rest of this photo shoot, however, is set *inside* a tattered mini-bus taxi. It is again impossible to disregard the atmosphere of simplicity and crudeness in the torn and threadbare leather seats. The main figure in these images – a black fashion model – is simply dressed in a casual floral collared shirt and beige pants. Ironically, these are the only clothes the model is wearing – the only aspect which changes with each photograph in the series is the angle from which it is shot. The main photograph in this shoot – taking up a full page – focuses directly on the model's bulging crotch. (It is important to mention also that each of the smaller images also feature his prominent crotch.) His shirt is completely open in the front showing his smooth, muscular torso, and his arms rest on his thighs as he reclines in the shabby back seat of the taxi. It seems that the images we are being sold are not clothes but the black male's body. This photo shoot's atmosphere of style, sophistication and fashionable creativity are absented through a subtle process of simplification, while the model's body become highly sexualized and commodified as an object that is exchangeable, amongst a host of other products, for the viewer's (or consumer's) pleasure.

Taken together, the images in the first photo shoot, "Shopping" (*Outright* November 2000: 34-36), tell a story of exclusivity and the imagined gay white male subject's immersion into a world of luxurious consumption. The choice of location for this photo shoot also suggests "a

yearning for affluence and status associated with foreign travel, and aspirations of and glamour associated with all things European." (Binnie & Skeggs 2004: 51) In many ways this photo shoot, and the commodities and services within it, all simulate the apex of queer consumption in its most sophisticated, bespoke and exclusive form. Williamson (1986: 37) states that "a product may be connected with a way of life through being an accessory to it." So the luxury products and services featured in this fashion shoot may discursively signify the quintessential "gay lifestyle" insofar as it instantiates the power of the ideal consumer's Pink Rand. We have here the apotheosis of the Pink Economy which confidently asserts and celebrates the "power" and allure of exclusive queer consumption.



Figure 14: "This city is a bitch" photo shoot (*Outright* August 2000: 28-19). Image reproduced with kind permission from GALA, Johannesburg.

Collectively, the images in "This city's a bitch" (*Outright* August 2000: 28-29) reproduce the stereotypical image of a hypersexual black male who is always already available to sate the sexual appetites of those who have the power to gaze upon him (hooks 1992; Mercer 1994; Ratele & Shefer 2011; Teunis 2007). The word "commodified" is used specifically to refer to the ways in which the black body/sexuality are conceived, regulated and represented in the white imagination. Within this particular context, the representations of the black body function to sell not clothes specifically, but the ideas of an elusive, dark hypersexuality that is embodied by the black male. In this regard, the black male body signifies licentious hypersexuality that can be consumed and enjoyed – if one possesses the power of the Pink Rand. The black male body is thus objectified, and becomes exchangeable, alongside a wide range of other products and services within the Pink Economy. Whereas whiteness is constructed as a "privileged signifier" (hooks 1992: 167), representations of blackness and the black body have ultimately come to signify primitivism, degradation and compulsive hypersexuality (Mercer 1994; Hall 2003; Fanon 1952). In the light of the forgoing claim, therefore, the decrepit setting of the mini-bus taxi in which the black model's body is represented stands in predictable accordance with the colonial and racist conceptions of "primitive and detestable" black bodies and subjectivities. The setting in which the black male figures are depicted in the second photo shoot is neither sophisticated nor comfortable – unlike the sophisticated settings in the "Shopping" (*Outright* November 2000: 34-36) photo shoot.

The juxtaposition of the two photo shoots discussed above highlights the apparatuses and strategies through which the Pink Economy is constructed. Posel (2010: 160) contends that "consumerism includes aspirations to consume that are closely linked to the making of selfhood and performance." Such aspirations are also discursively delimited according the regimes of knowledge and power through which various subjectivities are represented. So if we are to read these two texts as both consumerist and aspirational, we see two vastly different racialized, classed and sexualized narratives. On the one hand, white homomasculinity comes to embody luxury and style (in accordance with the homonormative ideological constructions of the Pink Economy), and on the other, black (homo)masculinity is marginalized and constructed as decrepit, degraded and inherently inferior. Not only is the Pink Economy a construction predicated upon the dialectics of homonormative politics, discourses and representations, but it is also shot through with what Bérubé (2001: 238) calls "whitening practices." These are discursive practices which amount to:

> the *selling* of whiteness – the marketing of gays as white and wealthy to make money and increase political capital, either to raise funds for campaigns…or to gain economic power (by promoting or appealing to a [white] gay consumer market).
>
> (Bérubé 2001: 238 emphasis in original)

Whereas the first photo shoot "Shopping" (*Outright* November 2000: 34-36) instantiates the mediation of idealized queer consumption, the second photo shoot, "This city is a bitch" (*Outright* August 2000: 28-29), evidences the discursive marginalization of black queer consumption through the use of stereotypical and derogatory signs. In the first instance, we see a hypostatization of empowered, agentive and sophisticated queer consumption. The second photo shoot, however, draws on discourses which have historically been used to denigrate black bodies, sexuality and subjectivity. Taken as stark contradictions of one another, these two photo shoots bring to light the tensions between race, sexuality, citizenship and consumption – especially within the post-apartheid context. Iqani (2012b: 7) argues that "deprived for centuries of [the] material markers of 'the better life', South Africans comprising the oppressed racial categories remained marginalized onlookers of globalised consumer culture, deprived of both political rights and economic agency." The former photo shoot instantiates the idealization of participation within the Pink Economy as embodied through whiteness and privilege. Conversely the latter photos shoot reproduces colonial signs and metaphors in the form of stereotype (through the commodification of the black body and the use of a derelict space) in order to marginalize and represent black consumption as simplistic, unsophisticated and therefore irrelevant. The juxtaposition of these two photo shoots also serves to evidence "the manner in which 'white' affluence is positioned as the epitome of gay masculinity." (Sonnekus & van Eeden 2009: 84) These representational forms, therefore, shore up questions about who gets to consume, who has access to economic and material resources in post-apartheid South Africa, and who is excluded and denied consumer agency. These questions should be constantly interrogated at the level of representational discourse (taking different forms within various media), and within lived reality as well.

The primary function of a fashion photo shoot is to market various clothing brands to readers and consumers, keeping them up to date with the latest trends and styles. It can thus be seen as an elaborate and hugely expensive advertising campaign. So if it is true that "advertising

delivers instructions on how to live a good prosperous life," (Schroeder 2002: 21) then these two photo shoots are quite revealing in their contradictory narratives. On the one hand, if the first, "Shopping" (*Outright* November 2000: 34-36), is meant to offer instructions and guidelines on how to participate in and engage with the Pink Economy, then we can read this economy as a very elitist, exclusionary and white domain of queer consumption. On the other hand, if we are to read the second shoot, "This city is a bitch" (*Outright* August 2000: 28-29), in terms of Schroeder's instrumentalist perspective, then it is possible to see how the Pink Economy marginalizes black queer consumption and consumer identities as rudimentary, crude and outmoded. Moreover, since the discursive construction of the Pink Economy relies heavily of discourses of elitism, globality and cosmopolitanism, it is impossible to downplay the racialized and classed components of that construction. Binnie & Skeggs (2004: 52) rightly posit that "cosmopolitanism as a claim to authority, as a way of achieving unspoken sophistication is always classed and sexed." But their formulation of cosmopolitanism downplays the significance of the ways in which it is also a *racialized* discourse. The juxtaposition of the latter two photo shoots evidences the ways in which style, sophistication and cosmopolitanism (as embedded within the constructions of the Pink Economy) are naturalized as a distinctly white queer male modalities of consumption. Black queer male consumption is thus marginalized through representations which signify a lack and inaccessibility of such cosmopolitanism and consumer agency. In the light of this, then, black queer consumption does *not* signify nor suggest "the good life" which constitutes authentic and agentive participation in the Pink Economy. This marginalization, moreover, is operationalized through the commodification and (hyper)sexualization of the black male body which fixes and immobilizes his subjectivity and consumer agency. The black body, then, does not signify nor have access to the "good life" as constructed and legitimated within queer consumer media.

However, if the black queer body cannot be adequately nor profitably used to sell luxury cars, cuisine, holidays, fashion or the "good life," then it is can (and is) most frequently be used to sell *sex*. This assertion is evidenced by the (over)representation of black male hypersexuality within the queer consumer media. Sonnekus (2009: 98) refers to "blacks appearing primarily as some form of exotic eroticism in gay media." So it is important to critically interrogate and analyse such imagery and the discursive implications thereof. The examples of such exoticism and eroticization of the black male body can be seen in the advertisements for a Johannesburg nude bar called The Factory – which appear monthly in *Exit* newspaper. These

black and white pull-out advertisements are printed over two pages (reminiscent of the *Playboy* or *Penthouse* pull-outs) and invariably feature attractive, young, nude black male models. The two advertisements which were included in the corpus for this study, like all others of their kind, depict the models groping their erect penises while returning their suggestive gaze to the camera/viewer. The models are each photographed in what seem to be make-shift warehouses or rudimentary photography studios. These are not full-frontal images, however, since the models' penises are obscured by bold printed text. In the first selected advertisement, the words "Men: F*cking Proud" (*Exit* February 2012: 13) barely conceal the model's genitals. And in the second, the words "Men: I Say GO" (*Exit*, March 2012: 13), also (barely) serve the function of "hiding" the model's penis. It is clearly evident, from such imagery and wording, that the Factory is a queer space where libidinal consumption is both sanctioned and rampant – it is a nude bar, after all.

The intentional use of black male bodies, their penises especially, to market this space is of particular interest here. First, the printed text which is meant to "hide" the genitals actually draws even more attention to that specific area – by being both visually inadequate and strategically placed. Second, the printed text, the ironic focus on the penis, and the models' suggestive/inviting gaze work together to show the viewer exactly what is to be found at this establishment: raunchy and plentiful sex. In these instances, the black male body, and his penis especially, come to signify uninhibited, lustful and insatiable sexuality. The black penis (whether concealed or not) is thus transformed into a commodity that is used to attract potential patrons to The Factory. It becomes a calling card, a marketing "tool" to blatantly sell sex. Han (2007: 57) observes:

> rather than existing as individuals, black men exist as sexual tools, ready to fulfil, or violate, white male sexual fantasies. This fetishization of the black man's penis is perhaps most evident in the nude photographs of black men, taken by white men, and meant for white (straight, gay, male, female) consumption.

The commodification of the black penis, however, is often underscored by racist and colonial ideologies regarding the uncontrollable hypersexuality of black subjects (hooks 1992; hooks 2004; Ratele & Shefer 2011). Within such derogatory discourses of black masculine sexuality, the black penis becomes "the forbidden totem of colonial fantasy." (Mercer 1994: 183) The black male subject is not conceived or represented as a whole and autonomous

being, but is dissected into several body parts which then become subject to the colonial and racist gaze. As in Fanon's (1952: 130-131) famous conception:

> …the Negro is eclipsed. He is turned into a penis. He *is* a penis…The white man is that the Negro is a beast; if it is not the length of the penis, then it is [the Negro's] sexual potency that impresses him.
>
> (emphasis in original)

Within the above described advertisements for The Factory, the black male is discursively reduced to nothing other than his erect and inviting penis. And that penis, moreover, is used to sell sex – or the fantasy of potent, plentiful and vulgar sexual trysts that can be bought by the entry fee into the nude bar.

More subtle (but no less derogatory) examples of the commodification of the black male body can be found within the post-apartheid queer consumer media. One of these is an advertisement for the Metropolitan investment company featured in the January/February 2000 edition *Outright* magazine. Two young, attractive male models appear in the advertisement – the one black and the other white. The scene is set in a dimly lit pool hall in which these two models size each other up lustfully. They look directly into each other's eyes with highly charged sexual energy and intent. The white model sits with his legs splayed on the corner of the pool table as he applies chalk onto his pool stick. The black model leans against the wooden wall, smoking, as he smiles wryly, "knowingly", at his potential conquest. The white model is photographed in profile, and the viewer can vaguely see his side features and his brunette cropped hair. The black model, however, is strategically framed such that his handsome face and his inviting, "come-hither" posture are within full purview (of both the viewer and his potential lover).

Such a scene might seem quotidian to anyone who frequents gay bars anywhere in the world. What is interesting about this advertisement, however, are the symbols and printed text that are interspersed therein. The letters "GWM" are printed in bold type on the white model's typically tight white t-shirt (*Outright* January/February 2000: 33). An ice-cold beverage sits on the pool table beside him. Clearly he is enjoying his evening, the space and the possibility of a sexual encounter. Printed text hovers between the models, which reads: "'Bet you've got a hot portfolio,' joked Jeff, spotting Tim's GUY WITH MONEY T-shirt." (*Outright* January/February 2000: 33).The written text, gives away the game, and literally *tells* us

exactly what is going on this scene. The black model (Jeff) is flirting with the "Guy With Money" (the white model named "Tim"). The irony of this particular advertisement works insofar as one reads it in relation to popular queer subcultural lingo.

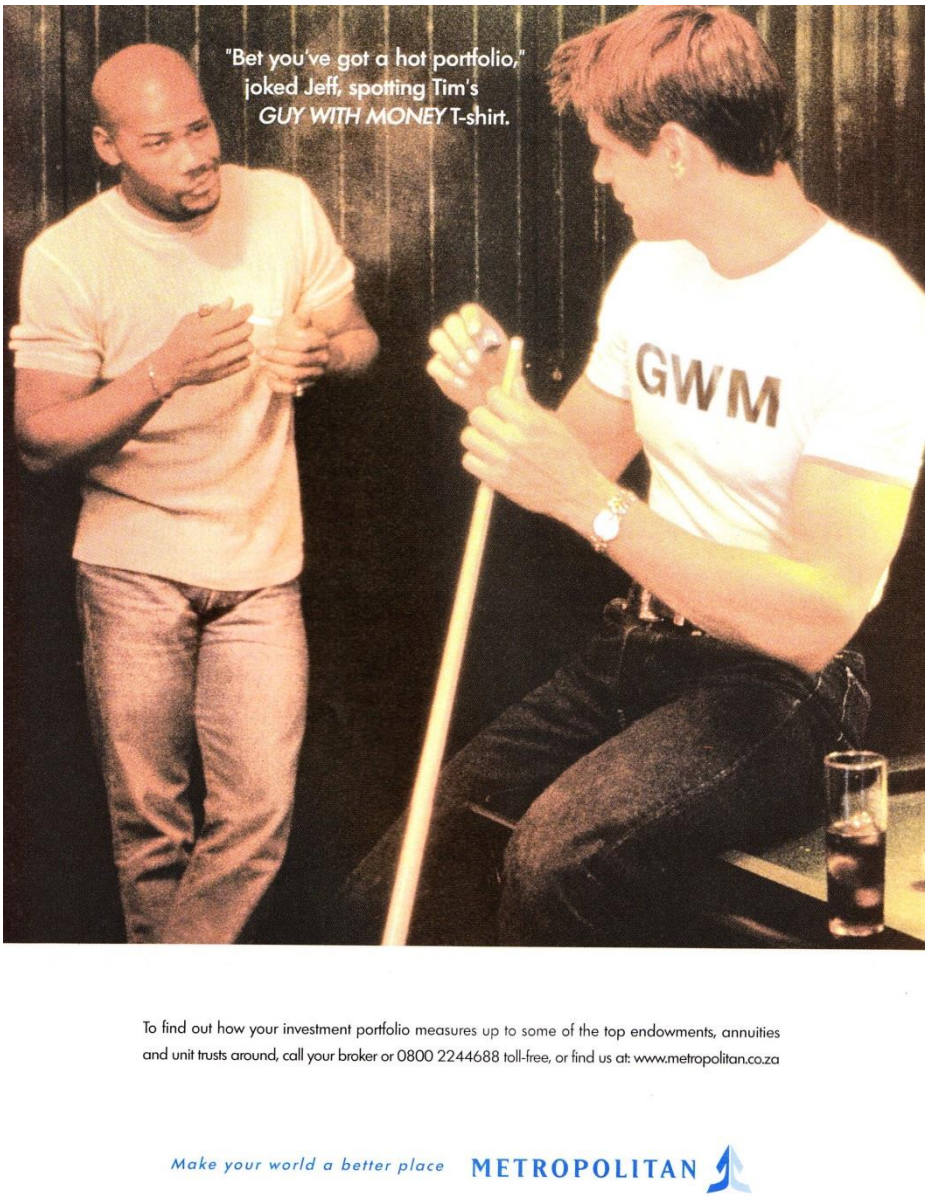


Figure 15: Metropolitan advertisement (*Outright* January/February 2000: 33). Image reproduces with kind permission from GALA, Johanneburg.

In popular queer rhetoric, "GWM", is an acronym and/or shorthand for "Gay White Male." This advertisement relies on a pun which collapses the latter colloquialism into the printed t-shirt sign "Guy With Money." The "Gay White Male" ostensibly becomes the "Guy with money". This pun, however, is a discursive technique which functions to prioritize and naturalize white gay male consumption and consumer agency as obvious and natural. The white model, or the "GWM," takes the central role in this scene because his physical presence is in the foreground of this image, and so is his "identity" as an ideal queer consumer. "Jeff," the black model, consequently plays the peripheral role as a spectator and a predatory hunter who is out to (figuratively) devour the "GWM" and his money. In this advertisement, the black male figure does not possess the same consumer agency as his white counterpart. The "GWM" is empowered through his financial wherewithal and is thus enabled to choose to consume whichever commodity he may so desire – including the black man himself. The "GWM" thus represents the queer consumer *par excellence*. The black male figure, however, does not have the same access to material wealth. He merely serves the representative function of fulfilling the consumer desires of the "GWM". He becomes, therefore, another commodity amongst a plethora of others from which the "GWM" may pick and choose.

The hypersexualization of the black model's body, as shown in these media texts in this section, is a mode of discourse that is inflected by the "fixity" of colonial stereotype and discourse (Bhabha 2004). The black male subject and its sexualized embodiment is therefore locked into the stereotypes by which it had come to be conceived, ordered and regulated in the white imaginary during colonial and apartheid eras. In their examination of white narratives regarding the sexuality of the "Other" (read black), Ratele and Shefer (2011: 28) are particularly interested in the "the psychical reproduction of racism through and in sexual desire." Originating from the psychical realm, this ambivalent fascination with and repulsion towards the black male's sexuality and genitalia finds its racist manifestation in representations such as those described above. These texts' singular focus on the model's body, his grotesque yet captivating genitalia, and his "dangerous" sexuality all shore up the white racist and colonial fears and insecurities which have historically been projected onto the black male body. In this regard, then, "white racist sexualisation… all but immobilizes black subjectivity," (Ratele & Shefer 2011) limiting its potentiality and depth within stereotypical discourses whose roots can be traced back to the colonial enterprise (Bhabha 2004)

6.3 The power of the white gay male gaze: the marginalization/negation of black queer consumer agency

In his critique of Robert Mapplethorpe's nude photographic portraits of black males in *The Black Book* (1988), Kobena Mercer (1997: 176) argues that Mapplethorpe's white gay male gaze instantiates:

> the fetishistic logic of mimetic representation, which makes present for the subject what is absent in the real, can thus be characterized in terms of a masculine fantasy of mastery and control over the 'objects' depicted and represented in the visual field, the fantasy of an omnipotent eye/I who sees but is never seen.

So what is known and knowable about black queer male bodies, sexualities and subjectivities – within contemporary visual culture – is largely a product of the ideologies and processes which underlie such representations. As a discursive regime of power/knowledge, the post-apartheid queer consumer media therefore regulates, stratifies and constructs black masculinities as being at the bottom of a hierarchy that privileges ideal white gay male consumer agency. Through the power of his male gaze, the white male reader (and editor) is enabled to objectify, commodify and consume the black male body in direct accordance with his colonial ideologies and fantasies. And this is precisely what amounts to the marginalization of black queer masculinities and consumption within the post-apartheid queer consumer media. The black queer male is divested of his consumer agency and subjectivity, and is thus marginalized as one commodity amongst many others which are available to the ideal white gay male consumer.

Mulvey (1975: 488) posits that "according the principles of the ruling ideology and the physical structures that back it up, the male figure cannot bear the burden of objectification. Man is reluctant to gaze at his exhibitionist like." But such a claim is untenable when one considers the power of the gay male gaze. As has been shown above, the homonormative constructions of the Pink Economy and the "ideal" white gay male consumer are, in part, mobilized through the discourses which prioritize the white gay male gaze. The face-to-face interviews conducted as part of the corpus for this study showed a disproportional ownership of the media publications by white gay males (with the exceptions of the two white females who edited and published *Outright* and *Queerlife.co.*za, respectively). Thus we can see that

the representations and discourses which are foregrounded within queer consumer media are predominantly shaped by the white gay male (editorial) gaze. As Sonnekus (2009: 85) rightly argues, "white editorial role-players essentially direct gay media." Since it is mostly white men who own, produce, disseminate, *and profit from* such media representations, it is impossible to maintain that these men cannot bear to see other gay men who look like them. Moreover, the corpus that was constructed for analysis in this study is primarily aimed at gay males. It stands to reason, therefore, that the readers/consumers of these various media actively engage with it precisely because of its gay male content and orientation.

The political economy of the contemporary queer press evidences disproportionate levels white gay male ownership (Fejes 2003; Han 2008), and so too does the editorial content of this media sector. So it seems that the white gay male gaze utilizes and maximises its power to objectify and commodify other racialized bodies in order to pander to the interests of advertising capital in order to make profit. The commodification of the black body, therefore, has wide-ranging implications in terms of race, class and gender relations within the queer body politic, but also has lucrative implications in terms of profit-generation. The gaze, therefore, is not only a socio-cultural instantiation of power, but an economic one as well. Those with the economic power to "gaze upon" Other bodies/sexualities, thus wields the power to commodify and thus regulate the knowledge which circulates around those Othered bodies.

One may object that the white gay male gaze is unproblematic insofar as it is inverted upon itself – that white men simply enjoy looking at other white men (Fung 2005; Han 2007). But the *over-representation* of whiteness and its discursive naturalization within the media constructions of queer consumers and the Pink Economy is precisely what requires critical intervention. Moreover, the naturalization and idealization of whiteness as *the* quintessential modality of queer consumer-citizenship is done at the expense of other modes of subjectivity. Butler's (1990) conception of representation of the Other will be helpful at this point. Butler (1990: 1) states that:

> The domains of political and linguistic "representation" set out in advance the criterion by which subjects themselves are formed, with the result that representation is extended only to what can be acknowledged as a subject. In other words, the qualifications for being a subject must first be met before representation can be extended.

If young, white, educated, middle- to upper-class gay masculinity is always already "known" and represented as the "ideal" queer consumer identity within this representational context, then all other modes of subjectivity will fall to the margins. And if this particular mode of whiteness is to reproduce and represent itself, it does so by continuing to discursively marginalize that which it is *not* – i.e. poor, Black, Coloured, Asian, lesbian, intersexed, transsexual, disabled, etc. Thus what is at stake here is not only the over-representation of white affluent gay consumer identities within the post-apartheid queer consumer media. What needs to be theorized (even beyond the scope of this dissertation) are the discursive and structural machinations which continually disavow black masculinity and sexuality, while simultaneously drawing on colonial and racist discourses of representation in order pander consumer products and services to white middle- to upper-class gay men. The white middle- to upper-class gay consuming subject is already "known" and prioritised as evidenced by the over-representation of this particular subject position within queer consumer media. Within this "white episteme of queerness" (Puar 2001: 172), the black body and black sexuality are seen and thus objectified through the symbolic, economic and material power of the white gay male gaze. Those representations of black masculinity, sexuality, and the black body which are steeped in colonial stereotype must be continually interrogated and problematized because they are predominantly used in service of social injustice and racist stereotype in order to "ensure[] its repeatability in changing historical and discursive conjectures; inform[ing] its strategies of individuation and marginalization." (Bhabha 2004: 95)

Through the analysis of various media texts, this chapter has shown that the marginalization of black queer consumption and the commodification of the black male body and his sexuality are two sides of the same coin of systemic denigration. These are two interrelated discursive practices which have been operationalized in queer consumer media to reproduce whiteness as the ultimate consumer ideal. It has been argued that the few instances of what *seem* to be progressive, subversive and/or liberal representations of black (queer?) consumption are largely inflected by stereotypical discourses of exoticization and/or black exceptionality. It has been argued, moreover, that the objectification and commodification of the black male body – and his sexuality – constitute a two-fold strategy. One the one hand, these stereotypical discourses are employed predominantly to sate sexual fantasies of the white gay male reader/consumer. And on the other, the sexualisation and commodification of black masculinity and sexuality serves the profit-making interests of those in positions of editorial and capitalist power insofar as it can be incorporated within marketing strategies to sell

commodities and services within the Pink Economy. Furthermore, it has been argued that the representations of black masculinities within the queer media landscape are structured and ordered by the regulatory power of the gay male gaze.

Conclusion

The discourses of the Pink Economy, "the gay lifestyle", and the lesbian and gay "community" are often propounded in popular, media and academic discourse without a cogent examination of the implications of these terms. They are often used in order to assert some essentialist notion of subcultural homogeneity amongst various LGBTQIA citizens – within local and global contexts. In reality, these afore-mentioned discourses are operationalised according to the interests of the state institutions and capitalist advertising corporations. This is done in order to market certain images, spaces, products and services as queer-friendly, and thus seemingly more liberal, cosmopolitan and progressive. It is, therefore, rather difficult to dissociate the processes of queer consumer culture from such a discursive regime which *seems* to endorse and reproduce the notions of affluence, public visibility, sexual liberation and liberal citizenship. But it must be noted that alongside such strategies of institutional legitimation and state sanctioning come limited and conditional forms of liberation, visibility and citizenship. Binnie and Skeggs (2004: 47) argue that "the branding of…space as cosmopolitan [vis-à-vis queer] is part of a strategy to make the space less threatening, hence a more appealing and desirable space of consumption for a wider, straight community." In the light of such an assimilationist discursive regime within the nation-state and global capitalist markets, it is important that queer citizen-consumers continually ask themselves: "What are the links between our social rights and our rights as consumers?" (Binnie 1995: 189) It is important to question the conditions under which such sexual "liberalism" and consumer rights are proffered to queer consumer-citizens. And it is equally important critically analyse the assimilationist strategies which take material form and articulation through homonormative politics and media representations.

This study has sought to analyse the constructions of the Pink Economy in post-apartheid South African queer consumer media, and the marginalizing discourses which are inherent in such representations. Styn and van Zyl (2009: 9) argue that "intersectional analyses show that social positionalities such as class intersect with gender and 'race' or sexuality…Not only do these axes of social power intersect, but they also shape each other, even constitute each other." By theorizing the intersectionality of sexuality, gender, race, class and other subject positions which are constitutive of queer identity politics, the aim of this study has been to problematize those naturalized assumptions regarding queer representation, visibility, citizenship and consumption. In the main, this dissertation has aimed to provide a qualitative

critical discourse analysis of post-apartheid queer consumer media in an effort to shore up both the homogenizing and marginalizing representations which were found therein. It has been argued that the spurious notions of the homogeneity of the lesbian and gay "community" are neither sufficient nor necessary conditions upon which the related ideas of the Pink Economy and "the gay lifestyle" can be predicated. The idea of some unitary, decontextualized and Westocentric lesbian and gay "community" is far more exclusionary than first meets the uncritical eye. This supposed lesbian and gay "community" has historically favoured white middle- and upper-class (affluent) educated and employed gay men. The over-representations of white affluent homomasculinity, therefore, are naturalized and propagated as the universal standard for legitimate economic agency and participation within the Pink Economy and "the gay lifestyle". The effects of such homogenizing media discourses are that a wide range of other non-white queer subjectivities are thus excluded and marginalized.

Overview of the analytical chapters

Chapter four of this dissertation provided contextual background of the history and the political and economic influences within queer consumer media. It showed that the political climate in South African during the transitional period towards democracy in the early 1990s was conducive for the emergence of queer consumer media market. It was shown that the contemporary landscape of post-apartheid queer consumer media evidences a disproportional over-representation of white masculine dominance – in terms of ownership, marketing, and the editorial content which can be found therein. This chapter also historicized and contextualized the marketing myth of the affluent "niche" market of lesbian and gay DINKS who constitute the ideal market of queer consumer-citizens within the Pink Economy. While it was acknowledged that this small group of queer citizen-consumers do, in fact, exist, it was also argued that they form only small demographic sector of the LGBTQIA body politic. By undertaking a detailed analysis of various articles which discussed the power of the Pink Rand and the political and economic significance of the Pink Economy, this chapter then provided a detailed account of the ways in which the Pink Economy is marketed and postulated as desirable, ideal and therefore constitutive of the modern "gay lifestyle". The articles which developed similar claims regarding the importance of gay tourism in the formation of a modern, global and cosmopolitan gay "identity" were also analysed. The

analysis of several luxury car, cologne and jewellery advertisements was also undertaken in this chapter. These editorial and advertising texts were analysed through a social semiotic approach. The discursive signs of leisure, luxury and affluence – as instantiations of agentive consumption within the Pink Economy – were shown to be highly exclusive domains of queer consumption. It was argued that legitimated participation within the Pink Economy takes place through the structuring process of acquiring, and therefore expressing, the dispositions of Bourdieusian habitus through particular choices, tastes and consumer practices. The Pink Economy was theorized as a discursive domain which privileges and over-represents white homomasculinity, consumption and desire as singularly valuable, and therefore ideal.

Chapter five provided a detailed discussion of the socio-political and economic conditions within which several LGBTQIA movements and queer media emerged in South Africa during the early 1990s. It was shown that the nationalist and neoliberal discourses of the new, multi-ethnic, and all-inclusive post-apartheid South Arica – a process that culminated in the rebranding of the "Rainbow Nation" – provided a spring-board from which the LGBTQIA liberation movement and its corollary media could gain significant cultural and political ground. This chapter also provided an account of the economic imperatives which facilitated the loosening and deregulation of global "free" capitalist markets, and their infiltration into South African markets during that time. The media representations of multi-ethnicity, cultural diversity were analysed in order to highlight their underlying complicity in the propagation of a "Rainbow Nation" ideology. The media representations of "gay-friendly" liberalism and assimilation were also analysed. These media texts drew attention to the ways in which neoliberalism provided the socio-economic conditions under which the assimilationist politics of homonormativity took shape within the consumer media discourses regarding queer consumption and the Pink Economy. Borrowing from Duggan's (2002) theoretic concept of homonormativity, it was argued that the media discourses of the Pink Economy are both marginalizing and exclusionary as evidenced within queer consumer media. Furthermore, it was shown that the presuppositions of the Pink Economy privilege and foreground white gay affluent male consumption as ideal.

Chapter six sought to locate and analyse the representations of black masculinities within the media discourses of the Pink Economy. First, the few representations of black male consumers were analysed, and were thus shown to be steeped in the rather problematic paradigms of black consumers' exceptionalism, and the concomitant exoticization of black

consumption as something rare within the domain of consumption which has been discursively naturalized as white. Second, those media representations in which black masculinities and sexuality were depicted as excessively erotic and hypersexual were examined and critiqued. These media representations were shown to follow from historically entrenched patterns of the colonial derogation and the humiliation of the black body. It was shown that these representations constructed black male bodies and their sexuality as commodities that are always already available (amongst a plethora of other commodities and services) for consumption by the affluent gay white male. The colonial and racist underpinnings of such discourses were shown to be problematic in that they negated black queer masculinities of their consumer agency and participation within the Pink Economy. It was argued, also, that such representations are better theorized through the notion of the gaze and its regulations and relations of knowledge and power. It was argued, therefore, that the privilege and power behind the white gay male (editorial) gaze engendered a discursive regime wherein black bodies and sexuality are fixed in all manner of colonial stereotype. Such discursive regimes and strategies, it was argued, are tantamount to the marginalization and of black queer consumption, socio-cultural visibility and an insidious process of intra-cultural exclusion and discrimination within this supposed LGBTQIA "community".

Contributions of the study

Hennessy (2000: 107 – 108) posits that "middle-class professional lesbian, gay, and queer-identified subjects are being welcomed into the cultural and corporate mainstream, an incorporation that bears testament to the fact that capitalism does not necessarily need heterosexuality." It has been the tacit task of this dissertation to expose the homonormative discourses – upon which the Pink Economy and "the gay lifestyle" are based – for the insidious discursive tools of exclusion and marginalization they, in fact, are. Manalansan (2005: 143 – 144) argues that "the market is constructed to be the filter of gay freedom and progress so much so that dominant discourses in the gay community disregard how this kind of freedom is predicated on the abjection of other groups of people who are not free to consume and do not have access to these symbolic and material forms of capital." Likewise, Puar (2013: 337) asserts that "the narrative of progress for gay rights is…built on the back of racialized others." By providing a critique of homonormativity as a discursive regime that is not subversive and sanitized within the regime of heteronomativity, this dissertation has

shown that the media discourses of the Pink Economy perpetuate and reproduce homogenizing images and narratives which keep white imperialist heteropatriarchal capitalist supremacy (hooks 1992) in its place of historical and systemic domination. This study has therefore drawn attention to the ways in which the discursive regimes of representation and consumption work in tandem in contributing to the dissolution and fragmentation of the LGBTQIA "community" – a concept which is ironically bandied about within queer consumer media in order to gain advertisers, and thus maximize on the supposed power of the Pink Rand.

Limitations and opportunities for further the study

Since it is located within the related fields of media and cultural studies, this dissertation focuses on a qualitative, critical, visual, and discourse analysis of queer consumer media texts. Thus a sociological study of audience responses and reactions to the texts under analysis was not undertaken. Although a study of the kind is indeed important, it could not be incorporated herein. It would be interesting to study the extent to which (black and white) affluent middle- and upper-class queer consumers respond to and consume the media texts that have been placed under scrutiny in this study. It would also be insightful to engage in an ethnographic study of queer consumption in spaces which have not necessarily delimited and sanctioned as visibly "queer" spaces. Another limitation to this study is that it is located within the specific sub-field of discourse analysis. As such the political economy of the global economy of the Pink Economy has been discussed and analysed from the point of view of the most influential and contemporary scholarly and popular literature. Due to limitations of geography and time, the key marketing decision-makers and captains of global advertising capital were not interviewed in this study. Therefore, the author was unable to glean the motivations and ideological implications of certain advertorial practices and decisions within the media publications discussed herein. The study of queer consumption amongst affluent black and other non-white subjectivities seems a key site for further scholarly research. Such a study may contribute interesting questions regarding the homonormative assimilation of non-white queer subjectivities within the reproduction of neoliberal capitalist heteropatriarchy.

Appendices

Appendix A

Summary of selected media texts that were chosen for analysis

Title	**Type of text**	**Thematic category**	**Media Publication**	**Date Published**	**Page**	**Source**
"The Power of the Pink Rand"	Features article	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Outright*	December 1994	6-10	GALA
"Hey Pink Spender"	Features article	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Wrapped*	June 2006	84-86	GALA
"Gay for Life, and in style"	Op-ed article	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Exit*	February 2012	9	GALA
"South Africa – Gay Tourism Hotspot"	Features article	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Queerlife.co.za*	September 2013	n/a	WWW
"Eat: Beefcakes"	Review	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Mambaonline*	October 2013	n/a	WWW
"About Gay Life in Johannesburg"	Op-ed article	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Queerlie.co.za*	November 2013	n/a	WWW
"Visit South Africa"	Advert	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Mambaonline*	November 2013	n/a	WWW
"Outright"	Advert	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Outright*	May 2000	3	GALA
"Absolut Perfection	Cover	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Outright*	November 1994	n/a	GALA
"Porsche"	Advert	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Gay Pages*	2011/2012 Special Holiday Edition	1-2	GALA

"Mercedes-Benz CLS"	Advert	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Gay Pages*	2012/2013 Special Holiday	33	GALA
"Time for Change"	Advert	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Wrapped*	Issue 19, 2009	12	GALA
"Azzaro Chrome"	Advert	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Outright*	August 2000	9	GALA
"Bang Bang"	Advert	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Gay Pages*	2012/2013 Special Holiday Edition	19	GALA
"Out of the closet and into the streets"	News article	Sexual identity politics	*Exit*	October/November 1990	1	GALA
"Outright"	Cover	Sexual identity politics	*Outright*	November 1993	n/a	GALA
"Outright"	Cover	Sexual identity politics	*Outright*	August 1994	n/a	GALA
"It would be HILDA it wasn't for OLGA."	Advert	Sexual identity politics	*Outright*	March 1994	13	GALA
"Las Vegas Welcome Gay Visitors"	News article	Gay travel	*Gay Pages*	Winter 2013	8	GALA
"Gay life in South Africa"	Features article	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Outright*	August 1994	4 – 8	GALA
"World's Top Nude Beaches"	Features article	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Gay Pages*	2012/2013 Special Holiday Edition	78-83	GALA
"Go West!"	Features article	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Gay pages*	Summer 2012	53	GALA
"Elevate your style this weekend"	Advert	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Gay Pages*	Winter 2012	19	GALA
"United Colors of Benetton"	Advert	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Outright*	June 1994	14-15	GALA
"Shopping"	Fashion spread	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Outright*	November 2000	34-36	GALA
"This city is a bitch"	Fashion spread	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Outright*	August 2000	14-15	GALA
"Men: F*cking Proud	Advert	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Exit*	February 2013	13	GALA
"Men: I Say GO"	Advert	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Exit*	March 2013	13	GALA
Metropolitan	Advert	Queer consumption; Pink Economy	*Outright*	January/February 2000	33	GALA

Appendix B

Transcribed interview with Gavin Hayward (GH): Editor of *Exit* newspaper

By Katlego Disemelo (KD): University of the Witwatersrand

Conducted in Johannesburg, South Africa

8 October 2013

KD: For recording purposes, could you state your name and your position.

GH: I'm Gavin Hayward. I'm the publisher and editor of *Exit*.

KD: Thank you. Umm, so first things first, when did you join *Exit*. And in what capacity did you join the publication?

GH: Ja, well. It wasn't a case of joining. Uh, I bought it from Gerry Davidson. Um, if you want to know the juicy details, I used to…I was an English lecturer at Giyani College of Education. And, uh, my car got petrol bombed in the student unrest. We like to think it really wasn't my car but a staff member's car. But I'm not sure, but I wanted to get out of there, you know. And Gerry's daughter was one of my colleagues. And we drove together to Cape Town, during which time she slept at Gerry's place. And between here and Cape Town she persuaded me to buy *Exit* by saying to me, "well you know about publications, you can write, you're a moffie, why don't you buy *Exit*?" (laughs)

KD: And what year was this?

GH: Uh, that was '95. Mmm

KD: So, by virtue of your English background, and the fact that you can write, and you have certain sexual inclinations, you bought *Exit*?

GH: Yes. Look, I do have…have considerable background in…sort of informal publishing, you know. I…I started umm…I was one of the editors of uh, *Rodeo* when I was at Rhodes University. I was the arts editor of *Varsity* when I was at UCT. And then I went into teaching, and at every school that I worked I kind of started a publication. It was kind of the extra mural activities (sic). Um, and then, of course, I'd…I did that at Giyani College, I started…umm…I started something called *GCE News*. And then, and then another one which we called *Sharp*.

KD: Sharp Sharp?

GH: Mmmm…

KD: Um, so what…umm…what, what…besides Gerry's daughter's persuasion, what, what is it about *Exit* that made you want to buy it? You know, you could've started your own, or…you know…

GH: Look, I knew *Exit*, I'd been a subscriber to *Exit*, I knew about *Exit*. And, umm, no you couldn't have started your own. *Exit* was very well established, umm, at the time, in the mid-90's, I mean it was almost all there was. I think the *Gay Pages* had just started, um, and um, people used to flock to Exclusive Books in Hillbrow (there was still one there) to get the latest *Exit*. Now why? Mainly because they wanted to find a man. (Laughter) Ja…

KD: Um, so once it was started…Once you took over in '95, what were your personal, slash professional, slash editorial visions for *Exit*? Once you took it over…um…I mean, you had this very well established baby on your hands…

GH: Sure…

KD: So, where did you wanna take it, what did you think…

GH: Well, first of all, my first priority was to make it a kind of commercial success as I had bought it. And when I took it over it came…it had been coming out periodically. Though she says she…Gerry used to say bi-monthly, but, in fact, sometimes it was longer. And I followed that pattern for six months. And then I realized, "no this is nonsense," and I changed it to a monthly. So that is a big thing: I wanted to make it more frequent. In fact, Zaki Achmat said to me, "I wish you could bring it out every two weeks." But, of course, I couldn't because at the time we relied very heavily…Look it's a commercial venture, it has to pay for itself. So we relied very heavily on income from the clubs' advertising in *Exit*.

KD: Were these niteclubs or restaurants?

GH: Ja, you know, discos. Um, I mean we're talking mid-90's, there was…there was The Zoo, and there was Gotham City. Champions advertised with me every month. And, uh, Connexions even advertised – mid-90s. Um, and they couldn't…those people could not afford to place their adverts twice a month. So from that perspective, we were constrained there. Also, the logistics are very daunting to bring something out more frequently because, um, you gotta [sic] get into the CNA, you gotta [sic] get it to distributors, there are deadlines. It's…even a monthly is a mission. So, um, so to get back to my personal and professional visions for the publication: look, this is a very broad question, so, the one important thing, I believe, was to make it more frequent because Exit contains information that people want. Also, at the time in

the 90's there was action, you know, there was…there was the Provincial Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Equality, there was the National Coalition. And we formed part of all that movement, you know. Um, I used to go to meetings of the Provincial Coalition, and, um, we would come up with things to do. So, for example, the big push at that time was for the equality clause. Um, and at the provincial meeting they asked for volunteers to go to gay venues and get people to sign, make a little speech. So I volunteered to go to the club in Germiston. And I went with one…because, because it was my local, you know, and other people were more keen to go to Champions and whatever, I thought, "fuck that, I'll go to Germiston." It was a busy club, and um, I went there with about two pages which had lines on and numbers, and little…whatever the petition wording was at the top. And, of course, the owner of the club knew me, you know, I asked him if I could make a little speech – which I did. And true's [sic] God, my little two pages weren't enough, we had to scramble around for bits of paper for people to sign. So that was very exciting, you know. It's…it's historic, it's…we don't have anything like that any more.

KD: And is it exciting both as a publisher slash editor and as a citizen lobbying for certain kinds of…

GH: Ja, look, I mean by virtue of buying *Exit* I became a gay activist of sorts, you know…

KD: That's very interesting…

GH: I hadn't been that before. It kind of pushed me into this position. Um, I'd always been openly gay though, even though I was a school teacher. Um…so ja.

KD: I mean, what you're telling me is very interesting in relation to the fourth question, um, what you were speaking about in terms of activism: I what ways do you think that *Exit* contributes to the creation or the construction of a gay community in post-apartheid South Africa?

GH: Ja, well look…

KD: I mean, from '95 onwards, in what ways – both as an activist and as…

GH: Especially, especially in terms of post-apartheid, okay…

KD: What do you think it did for the community? And how do you conceptualise this quote-unquote community?

GH: I have to tell you, when I took over it was hellova [sic] white thing. And I worked quite hard to change that, you know. Take this as an example [shows me a recent copy of *Exit* on which

the cover model is black], you know, this goes into, um, the shelves of the CNA all around the country, I mean…

KD: In '95 [laughs] …

GH: No that wasn't '95.

KD: Well, 2010. But, I mean, earlier ones…

GH: There were earlier ones…I mean, I don't have that many earlier ones at hand.

KD: I mean, I've got stuff from 1990…

GH: I had these lying around [shows me more recent copies], which I thought…these are very recent. This is this year. This is Sabelo Mlangeni's photo. And this guy volunteered, he wanted to be on the cover [shows me another recent cover model who is black]. He's a sort of DJ, or something or the other.

KD: I mean this "community", what do you think *Exit* did for it?

GH: Look, it kept it informed. Um, we, we kept them informed about, um, and in a way we were…were at least part of the thing that kind of mobilised them. Um, as I say, I went and collected, um, signatures. And then we wrote stories about that, we had pictures of them…of the Coalition, um, I was…I kind of knew Kevin Botha (he lived down the road here), and he introduced me to Mazibuko when he went to work for the coalition. And Zaki is an old personal friend of mine, you know, so I was connected in that way. And we kind of kept the issue in front of the community so that they don't always think about finding men. That there's more to life than sex [laughs].

KD: But…I mean, what's interesting is that you speak in the past tense: we "contributed", we "kept" them informed. I mean, what's changed?

GH: Look, things have changed…things have changed considerably…

KD: How so?

GH: And we'll get to that. Also, our focus changed a lot. We became clear that, I mean, there was no…information about HIV for gay men…anywhere. Some of the clubs didn't even want to mention it because, you know, it would make their customers nervous, or whatever. So we launched into changing that kind of thing, even in the logo. And um, you know, now we have Health 4 Men, and we have OUT, who are educating the community about, you know, (how dare I say) condom-use, and lot more: the need for water-based lube, some people…some

people, I bet you even today don't know, they're still using Vaseline Intensive Care [petroleum jelly], and they don't know that it corrupts the latex in the condom. So there was a need to educate people about all that.

KD: Do you think it still does?

GH: Absolutely, ja. So you see, there things have moved on. So we used to rely on information…on income from clubs, and all that. The clubs hardly exist anymore. I mean, we're now 18 years down the line. The recession hit the clubs very badly. Um, and, of course, there's um, competition from websites like Mambaonline, and what have you. I mean I'm friendly with Luiz [editor and publisher of Mambaonline], and all that. Um, you know, the fact is we've moved into the kind of digital era, and you can…you can get things online, you can look on your tablet and get, uh, *Exit* – not to mention Mamba and various other websites. So our source of income also moved on. So now we rely on Health 4 Men's advert and Out's advert. Ja. That's an interesting dynamic.

GH: Well the gay "community", if you've read in *Exit*, you'll find that we are a little bit cynical about it…

KD: The concept of a community?

GH: Tim [Trengrove-Jones] writes that this chimerical concept of a gay community…

KD: I mean, that's one of the things I'd like to hear from you as well. That's why I put it in inverted commas in the first place…

GH: I mean is there a gay community? Is there a gay community?

KD: Are you gonna [sic] leave it there… [Laughter]…with a huge question mark?

GH: I mean, uh, you know, the term "community" implies that people know one another, maybe that they help and support one another. And I'm doubtful about lots of these things.

KD: The premises of a "gay community" are what you're very doubtful of?

GH: Ja.

KD: Alright. I think you just answered me there. [Laughter]

KD: But, um, Davidson and Nerio in *Defiant Desire* argue that in the early 90's, they said that one of the mandates was, to quote: "to politicise, inform and entertain diverse and isolated gay communities-without alienating its readers or offending its financial base."

GH: Ja, well, I agree with entirely, and some of what I've been saying endorses that. And, um, lots of that, I'm afraid, is still relevant. You can't, you know, we don't publish pictures of cocks because mainstream advertisers will be…won't go anywhere near it, you know. In publishing you rely on media buyers at, um, ad [sic] agencies, and you can't offend them. So, you know, we've moved on from the mid-90's, we now get adverts from Ster-Kenikor (when they've got gay movies coming up), we get fragrances which are…which people think will be particularly good for gay consumption, or their marketing is kind of "gay", you know.

KD: Um, that also goes into the next question, particularly because what you said in terms of not trying to offend advertisers…I was gonna [sic] ask if there are any tensions. But you've just said "yes, there are," right?

GH: Yes, there are. Of course, there are.

KD: And can you elaborate more. Does it also influence content? And where do you stand as the publisher and editor in terms of that kind of media buy-in?

GH: It doesn't really influence content. I don't let it do that. Um, though, for example, if you…in the very latest issue [shows me latest issue]…look, these are some good examples here. We picked up advertising from Lovers' Plus, because they were the naming sponsor for [Joburg] Pride, the Sandton Pride –the fuck up [laughs].

KD: You're on record Gavin [laughs]

GH: Oh dear [laughter]

GH: But you know what I mean? So, I didn't want to offend Lovers' Plus too much, we wrote something critical of [Joburg 2013] Pride…

KD: This year's Pride?

GH: Ja, it's poor arrangement, the fact that it was postponed at the last minute for spurious reasons, you know. And then they put out a press release saying "Back to our Routes" - R.O.U.T.E.S – I mean hello, this is a meaningless statement. And, uh, Pride actually has quite a proud history of themes to conscientise the population. And, of course, *Exit*'s been involved in communicating those themes to people, you know. For example, in…what it in the 90s or the early 2000s, there was "African Pride." I don't know if you remember that one? It must've been in the late 90s, they called it "African Pride" and some clubs got together and there were camels in the procession, and helluva [sic] sexy boys on them, and all that, you know. Um, because people…people needed to wake up to the…we wanted to emphasize the fact that we're part of Africa. We're not some kind of European, you

know…And there was a whole need to counter Robert Mugabe, and the fact that being gay is "unAfrican", and that bullshit, you know.

KD: Um, then again…this question kind of answers itself with regards to the political liberationist stance. Um, do you think that your publication, *Exit,* still espouses that?

GH: Look, this liberation thing has largely been achieved, has it not? At least in this country. But what we do try to remind them is that there's still a bit if an out-post in Africa. It's still illegal in half of the continent. So, yes we do still do that.

KD: And is it of the…core…if there is a hierarchy of, um…a hierarchy of priorities for the paper, is it one of those…to…to conscientize us South Africans about a liberation struggle beyond our own?

GH: Absolutely. I've run stories about the gay thing in Zimbabwe. And, um, tagged on it at the end that Harare is actually closer to Johannesburg than Cape Town. [laugh] Just to bear that in mind. I mean, there were people being charged with sodomy up there, just recently.

KD: And in Cameroon.

GH: Ja, well, there's the Zambian case going on at the moment. But there were Zimbabwean cases not that long ago.

KD: And, going back again to the issue of advertising, how do you as an editor balance the two: um, keeping the buy-in of the advertisers, making sure that they're not offended and are happy, but also espousing that political stance, are there any tensions? Is there juxtaposition?

GH: The kind of advertisers that we have are not offended by any political stance, as far as I know. In fact, they're supportive. Um…

KD: And is that conscious choice, from both you and the advertisers…to find advertisers who will be supportive of *Exit*'s mandate or…

GH: There are just some advertisers we cannot get, you know. The *Gay Pages* survives on advertisements from Aston Martin, and Mercedes, and, you know, all that lot, with this sort of "Pink Rand" myth. And we don't get those advertisers because they only go onto gloss…[laughs]…So, ja, *Exit*'s a bit more of a humble thing. So we can already forget about half of the potential advertisers out there because they only want to go on gloss.

KD: And is it a sign…do you think that it is a sign of the times…um, this question is not on the list [of prepared questions], but I think what you're saying is very poignant. Do you

think the inclination towards glossiness, towards upward mobility – from the side of the advertisers – do you think it's a sign of the times that this "myth" (quoting you) is largely being bought into?

GH: Ja. And it's kind of…it's kind of…ja, well, look, it is and it isn't a myth, okay. There are elements of truth in the fact that the "Double Income No Kids" thing is a reality. But, um, the other reality that I always point out is that if the gay population constitutes 10% of the broader population, then most gay people are in Tokoza, and such places. And most of them are poor. That is the flaw in the "pink Rand" argument. It's valid in Melville and Parkhurst and Parktown North, but it doesn't apply in Tokoza and Tembisa, I'm afraid.

KD: And do you think that your…what you espoused…and it's a very contentious and beautiful argument, you know, we could chew the fat for days on end about it. But do you think that it's one of the…do you think that it's a position that is largely propagated in *Exit*?

GH: That they "Pink Rand" thing is a myth?

KD: That it is both a myth and not. And is quite subjective…

GH: Um, you know what, we haven't actually elaborated hugely on it.

KD: And why not?

GH: Tim [Trengrove-Jones] is often referring to the gay community as being chimerical, about the "Pink Rand" argument being a myth. But it's never been fully elaborated upon.

KD: And why is that, do you think?

GH: That's a good question. Um, because on the one hand, uh we rely on advertisers who buy into this myth [laughs]

KD: You cannot bite the hand that feeds you

GH: Yes, you see. So, for example, Ster-Kenikor would be an example of the kind of advertiser that buys into the myth that the "pink Rand" is out there to go and flock [sic] to their movies. And, um, we had advert from Jaguar recently which, hello, you know, you need coupla [sic] million to go and buy the latest F-type [model].

KD: And, uh, can you elaborate more on that advert for Jaguar? How did it come about, how…if you are at liberty to speak about it.

GH: Ja, look, it came about through…we have a regular motoring section. We call it the "Motoring Mavis". So it's kind of gay, and we make sort of quips about "gay cars, we've…we've run a list of the world's top ten "gay" cars, and those type of thing [sic], whatever "gay car" means. So finally we got noticed. We have had adverts from Volkswagen in the past as well. So, um…mainly they advertise they're hoping that people will go to their dealership and buy their cars. We don't tend to get the big brand advertising, we usually get a dealership. And we usually get them because there's somewhere there's a personal contact or whatever.

KD: But can I throw a spanner in the works, by virtue of having a list of "gay cars", do you not also therefore construct the idea of a gay buy-in or "Pink Economy"?

GH: Yes, I'm sure you do, ja. So we're in a…

KD: Quandry…

GH: A catch-22 situation there, so ja.

KD: As is the case, I'm sure, with most publications…

GH: I personally very cynical about the "Pink Rand" thing, for reasons which I've given you. But my personal thing is not necessarily *Exit*'s position. We've gotta [sic] tread more of a middle line by virtue of the fact that we rely on advertising. We have no grants or anything like that. We pay our own way. And printing costs are huge.

KD: So, ja, we can speak at length about this "Pink Economy". And I have a long list of questions about it, 'cause [sic] it's such a…I mean this is the basis of my study, right. How this is constructed especially in media. I'm necessarily concerned as to whether it exists or not…Again, going back…just to close up the pink economy topic, do you think that your…in some ways, or to what extent does *Exit* construct the idea of an ideal consumer who's situated somewhere within this nebulous thing that is the "Pink Economy"? Is there a constructed ideal, is there a constructed consumer?

GH: No. Definitely not.

KD: And why is that?

GH: People say to me, what is your readership like? And I say the readership of *Exit* ranges in ages from 16 to 86. And, um, it's also distributed across all race groups. Um, though by virtue of the fact of our pathetic distribution, it's probably a fact that it gets more…it's much more urban than rural. And probably…there's probably still an imbalance in, ah, proportional

number of white readers and/or buyers of the paper because, you see, distribution is a problem. You asked a question somewhere about, "why do you choose to distribute in certain places," I don't. I don't have control over it. We distribute through RNA who distribute to the CNA and Exclusive Books around the country. And, uh, they used to be much better than they are now. And I've tried to say to them, "you still don't get *Exit* to Polokwane." And then they tell me things like, "well the manager objects." And I can't go around the country to individual managers of CNA to try and change their minds, you see. So, ja.

KD: So what you're saying is both the issue…not only is it an issue of distribution, but it's also a case of space – where, what self, what literal, physical shelf that *Exit* would occupy?

GH: Absolutely, and if you have observed recently, CNAs have become smaller – the shelf space is thus in greater demand, you see. So, my closest one is Bedford Gardens [Johannebsurg], the CNA has halved in size over the last ten years. And you used to get, like, 30 *Exits* on their shelves there. Now, I would say they get about ten. And, as you say, it's partly competition of space on the shelves, but there's more to it than that. We also rely on the whim of distributors. They say, "no we'll only take 4000. And we are distributing to these branches." And I say to them, "but I need you to get it to the Southgate Mall." …We do very well at The Factory [Johannesburg]. We get rid of thousands at The Factory, The Rec Room [Johannesburg], Camp David [Pretoria], all the places where they take their clothes off [cruising bars] [laughter]. For some reason *Exit*'s always done well at steam baths. And I can…I know why. People arrive there, and there's nobody there, so they sit and read the newspaper. And other people, of course, pick it up and take it away. There are people who go to these places, and don't pay to go in, they say, "no I'm just here for an *Exit*." Yes, it still happens.

KD: So, in many ways Gavin, what I'm hearing you say is…you [*Exit*] are part of this "economy". Somewhere, somehow, because…and stop me when I don't make sense…but these spaces do generate some kind of income, they're there for commercial reasons, right? And by virtue of the fact that the physical paper is in that space, doing something in that space, there is meaning constructed…

GH: Look, there is no doubt that there is "Pink Economy", there is a "pink Economy"…

KD: And you [*Exit*] are situated somewhere in that?

GH: But it's the "Pink Rand". We have to distinguish between the "Pink Economy" and this whole…the huge buying power of the "Pink Rand". That's the one I have a problem with. Look, the Rec Room, I don't know if you've been there, it's quite a plush sort of, um, steam bath in Randburg. It's large. It's been going for 15 years – advertises regularly in Exit, you know. And distributes lots of *Exits*. But, it's not cheap to go in there. Of course, I don't pay, but I'm a bit out of touch. Well I don't go there anyway. Um, but if I did, I wouldn't have to pay. So I don't know what they [customers] pay, but I think they pay R75, R60, it's not cheap. The Factory, I think they pay about R60 to get into. I don't know if they advertise their price in their ad [looks at an advertisement for The Factory]. So there's no doubt that there's a "Pink Economy". So, we've managed to make that distinction. It's the "Pink Rand" that is a…

KD: That is not sitting well…

GH: Yes.

KD: And thank God you started that topic about the Factory because we're gonna [sic] get into really, really topical issues. And you spoke about it earlier…I mean representations of sex and sexuality and masculinity. Are there any guidelines that are governed by advertisers in terms of the representations of sex, sexuality, the body?

GH: Ja.

KD: Can you speak more about that?

GH: Well, the chief guideline is that you wouldn't…you can't represent any…you can't represent a sex act. That's crossing an unspoken line, you see. Um, so, for example, look here [shows me a male nude pull-out advert]. That's from an ad agency, there's a hunky man with a six-pack, and all that, but he's got his pants on. And this one [another advert] is a good example of a factory ad on what's acceptable to me. There's no genitalia [sic] in evidence. The advertiser, The Factory, they want a naked man because theirs is a naked bar. And he [the model] would preferably have a huge cock showing. But I will not. And we [*Exit* and advertisers] have fights about it.

KD: Can you tell me more about this very passionate…

GH: You see, I try to find pictures like that [shows me another advert].

KD: So you'd rather go for the risqué as opposed to the explicit?

GH: Of course, yes, because otherwise you're going to offend, um, mainstream advertisers like Ster-Kenikor. You're gonna [sic] offend the media buyer at the media shop [retailer].

KD: So yours is more of a…and again correct me if I'm putting words in your mouth…more of a very strategic editorial decision?

GH: Yes. Of course. Look there, see? [shows me another advert] These pictures are found and proposed by me to the advertiser. But he [the advertiser] prefers to have a more risqué thing. And he just doesn't get it. When he does, it [his penis] gets covered.

KD: Um, but what about advertisers like, for example, Ratz [Johannesburg] and other bars, 'cause they could also be seen as mainstream.

GH: You mean Ratz the bar?

KD: Yes, the bar. 'Cause that's a different kind of bar from The Factory.

GH: Ja, very much so.

KD: So can you speak more about certain decisions, for example, we understand that [an advertisement] an online, hooking up type of…

GH: You see, people like Ratz, they supply their own ad. And I mean they're gay men. They wouldn't be offended a picture like that [shows me an advertisement in *Exit*] being opposite their bar. But you have to be sensitive…I wouldn't put a Volkwagon ad here [opposite an advertisement of a male nude bar]. No. Somebody would be offended. I wouldn't put a Volkwagan ad opposite a Factory ad. And a Factory as is always towards the back of the paper, where the personals are, and the rent boys [laughs]. Those, of course, are very conscious editorial decisions.

KD: And I like how very candid you are about that [laughter].

GH: Again here's another topic: about, um, the black men on your covers. Or non-white men. I mean *Exit* was one of the first, *Outright* was one of the first as well…one of the first publications to have black men on the cover. Tell us more about that decision. Was it conscious; was it something you had to fight through? Just elaborate.

KD: Well, as you've seen, I'm part of a bi-racial couple. So it's not a personal issue of mine. But, um, I've consciously gone for black models on the cover for educative reasons. To show lots of guys who are in the closet, and…'cause there are, there are a lot…that it's OK, you know. So there's that. And to show all the queens in Sandton that there are all these beautiful black guys as well. Ja, there are all sorts of reasons, you know.

KD: Um, and I think all those reasons are very important to elaborate on because, um, besides the libinal consumption of the black body, we [black males] also have agency as consumers, right. Do you think that *Exit* represents black males, or non-white males as consuming agents, as opposed to subjects whose bodies are there for the consumption of those "Sandton queens"?

GH: Ja well look, he's [a black model in *Exit*] a consuming agent, isn't he?

KD: Tell me. If I was a lay "Sandton queen" please elaborate for me.

GH: Ja, no I don't quite know what you mean by "consuming agent", it's all getting a bit technical for me. But what we have here is…we're trying to not just show the beautiful black body, there's also a political statement in this, you know. Um, South Africa is not a white country. And, uh, there have been lots of people who didn't know that [laughs]. When I started teaching, this is a little bit off the topic, when I started teaching my first job was in Wynburg, in the Cape. Way below the line. And, uh, it was an eye-opener for me. We're talking the '70s, you know. And I'd kind of gone to white universities, you know. Suddenly there was this whole other world. So, ja, and I got embroiled in all that coloured politics, and all that, you know. And then, uh, people who still lived in white parts of town, I remember saying to somebody, "well I'm moving to Muizenburg, and you can drive along, um, Prince Edward Drive, you know, it's very interesting." [Gasps] "No I'm not going near Grassy Park," they would sort of say. And I found that very strange. I taught at night school in Grassy Park, and I never had any problems of the nature they were thinking of. So, ja.

KD: So, my question relates to the contentious "Pink Rand" question because when I speak about a "consuming agent", or agency within consumption, I'm speaking about someone who has a certain kind of buy-in, someone who, give or take, belongs to a certain LSM group, and my question in that regard relates to whether or not *Exit* would represent non-white, or black, men as men who are, i.e. upwardly mobile, as part of that nebulous "D.I.N.K.S." crowd.

GH: Of course, we do that. We've tried to do that.

KD: And was that also a political, intentional form of representation?

GH: Yes, I guess it is, ja. Um…

KD: Can I ask why?

GH: Well, um, there are kind of monetary reasons, you know. You want your advertisers to know that you're getting to the black market as well. I've been asked, "what percentage of black

readership do you have?" Advertisers want to know. Um, what I'm saying here is that these [black] guys are part of the "Pink Economy". Um, and I think I'm saying a lot of things by saying that.

KD: Can you tell me more about the "Tales from the Township" column.

GH: OK, look, the columns, um…the columns have a life of their own. People have approached me with various ideas. And, um, one of them was this coloured guy with "Township Tales", and I thought that was fascinating.

KD: What about it was fascinating?

GH: I wanted that sort of perspective. The more interesting one was "Craig at Large", who's this enormous fat gay man, and wanted to write for *Exit* about the experience of being a fat gay man. He's run out of…he's long since run out of those topics, and he now writes about other things. But, uh, that's how he started, and he wrote and proposed to me this kind of thing. And I thought it was an affirmative type of thing to do, ja. The columns have a life of their own. They propose to me, and if I like them then they go, you know. I've had other people propose to me to write a sort of fashion column, and I tell them to fuck off.

KD: 'Cause that's not part of your agenda?

GH: No it's not. I don't…I find it too trivial. What can you do with fashion?

KD: Both as a reader and as an editor?

GH: Yes.

KD: OK. My question about "Tales from the Township" is very pointed, because it's pointedly a political thing. Um…other publications don't have it. That kind of column, that is pointedly from a different LSM group, and about a different experience outside certain urban spaces that are purported to be, you know, middle-class, upwardly mobile and, therefore, desirable. And it does something by virtue of its being there. And I found…I just wanted you to elaborate on that choice to have something so different, something that would…

GH: Well, we've had others. Township tales has lasted well. Um, we started a column…we had a column long ago…long, long, long ago, we had a column called, "Umthondo weSizwe" [literally, Penis of the Nation", a pun on "Umkhonto weSizwe]…

KD: [Laughter] OK.

GH: …which had a sort of, a logo which was a rip-off of the ANC [African National Congress] logo, and where they've got a spear, we had a penis. [Laughs] It didn't last very long.

KD: I definitely have to find that. I have to go to GALA to search through their archives.

GH: And also, the contributor, the guy who wrote it, he wrote it in a sort of, this mixture of Xhosa, Vlytaal, it was supposed to be accessible to lots of people, you see. 'Cause needless to say, vast sections of the population don't speak Xhosa. He [the columnist] was unreliable, so it sort of petered out. But ja, I've made attempts to diversify *Exit* in that way, you know. Um, of course I've had Afrikaans columns in the past. And I publish Afrikaans stories periodically but getting them…getting stories in other languages is not easy.

KD: Understandably, because of globalization, and most of us do speak English regardless of our educational background. But the last question to this very interesting interview is about last year's [2012] controversial Pride [march], right. 'Cause for me…

GH: The One-in-Nine activists…

KD: Yes, and about…particularly in terms of last year's Johanneburg Pride…

GH: Well look, I would like to give you some background. We've [*Exit*] criticized [Johannesburg] Pride for years – that Pride that was run in Rosebank. You go to Pride, and they have a stage that looks like a 5fm stage, or a Highveld [Stereo]…'cause that's their main sponsor. OK I understand that you have sponsors. I have advertisers. But there was not a red ribbon on the stage, there was not a gay [rainbow] flag, we've criticised them for these things…editorially, you know. And we've criticised them for the fact that they were promoting Pride as a jol [party], party, party…I mean, they stand up on the stage and say, "Are you ready to party?", you know. They don't have somebody standing up on the stage and reminding them that people are being charged with sodomy in Zambia, which is just a coupla [sic] hundred kilometres away. And important issues like that. You need to bring these to the attention of the gay community repeatedly, especially the ones who are there to party. They need to be woken up to the fact that there's more to life than partying. And this is the kind of thing we criticise Pride about repeatedly. So when the One-in-Nine protest happened, I said, "hallelujah." I wrote to Carrie Shelver, whom I know personally, and congratulated her. [Laughs]

KD: And as *Exit,* what stance did you take on that? 'Cause it happened in October [2012], and I was looking at the November issue, and I was trying to find something that…

GH: Um, we just ran it as a story, and we gave prominence to the photos.

KD: The spread…

GH: The people lying in the street, and "No Cause For Celebration" [banners], I made sure to publish that.

KD: For what reason? I just want to get this on record, to hear you say…what stance, as such an important texts, with such an important and long legacy…when something that dramatic, violent and very disruptive happens, where did you stand as Exit…do you understand my question?

GH: Ja. Look I thought…we'd been criticizing them for years for the depoliticization of Pride. They don't have a speaker. Edwin Cameron is on hand, we said to them, "you could get Cathy Satchwell, you could get some gay person of note to come and speak to the queens about something serious." Just to give it…I mean, it happens all over the world…to give it political content, so that the newspapers like the *Sunday Times* have no excuse for just publishing pictures of drag queens. They're then forced to report that Cathy Satchwell said "X, Y and Z" at Pride. You see what I'm getting at?There's that sort of media dynamic that [Johannesburg] Pride lost complete sight of. "Are you ready to party," was their theme. And we criticise them for it. And so, the One-in-Nine protest was a disaster waiting to happen. And eventually, the radical lesbian did it for us, you know. *Exit* sniping from the side-lines was going nowhere. I even went to the AGM of [Johannesburg] Pride, and said my little peace, and got pushed aside and ignored, and made to shut-up, you know what I mean? [Laughs] So, um, look, I think…I think they did us all a favour because they brought that issue to the fore. And, um, Pride this year, or the proliferation of Prides has only served to confirm that. And these issues need to be dealt with. You know, Pride needs to be a political thing. It needs to remind the queens who're there to party that their black lesbian compatriots are being raped and murdered in the townships. You need to shove it in their faces.

KD: And that's where you stand. [Laughter] Thank you so much Gavin…

Appendix C

Transcribed interview with Luiz de Barros (LdB): Editor of *Mambaonline*

By Katlego Disemelo (KD): University of the Witwatersrand

Conducted in Johannesburg, South Africa

05 December 2013

KD: Please state your name and position.

LdB: It's Luiz…Luiz de Barros. And I'm editor of *Mambaonline.com*

KD: Thank you. Can you tell me when you started at *Mambaonline*, and in what capacity?

LdB: Well, I started *Mambaonline*, I was running a multimedia and film and television production company, um, with a partner, called Underdog Productions. And we worked…we did quite a lot of, um, queer projects. So we did some documentaries, we did a documentary on the life of Granny Lee, uh, we did a documentary…well not a documentary but a sort of series called *Below the Belt* with the Baroness, who was a drag queen who went around to various spaces. Um, and I think we were one of the first companies to really start producing, um, gay and lesbian kind of television material that was actually broadcast locally. And, uh, as we expanded into various other media, we expanded into, um, into the web. And I was, at the time, very frustrated with the, with local gay media which was very…very small. And I felt that it really just consisted of publishing press releases, and wasn't very critical. And so I tried to kind of begin, I sort of launched this project *Mambaonline*, and um, I tried to bring a slightly more critical perspective to things. And have a little bit more thought behind what was published. And, anyway, we launched this website, and it was very much a side-line kind of project for the company. And, uh, and then in 2005, I think it was 2005/2006, I decided to leave the company, and pursue my own projects. So I left the company and I took *Mambaonline* with me. Um, and decided to kind of dedicate more time to it, and make it a viable…because up until that point it wasn't making any money, it wasn't self-sustaining, it was just funded through the company as a side pet project. So, um, that became my goal, it was to try and make it a self-sustainable [sic] medium. And, um, ja, that's pretty much how it started.

KD: So, as you say, when you started it and left with *Mambaonline*, what were your visions, you know, like…both professional and personal?

LdB: I mean, I really wanted *Mambaonline* to be, as I said, self-sustaining, something that I could make a living from. Um, but something that…my intention's always been to kind of be very much a lifestyle website in the sense of…whatever that lifestyle is, but in the sense that it…I always wanted to combine a sense of fun, and a sense of specifically gay male sexuality, together with kind of more serious issues. And deal with the realities that gay and lesbian people face in the country. So I wanted to be able to sustain myself, make a living, but also be able to kind of make an impact on queer culture in South Africa.

KD: Um, and in terms of marketing, um…first of all have those visions changed?

LdB: No, no. They haven't changed. They haven't been achieved, but they principally haven't changed. So, the website is not self-sustaining. I have to…I do other work as well. So I do copywriting, I do design, I have clients on a freelance basis who sustain me, so that I can do the site. Even though the site occupies eighty percent of my time, it brings in maybe twenty percent of my income.

KD: You say those visions haven't changed, right? But how do those visions, both personal and professional visions translate into a branding or a marketing strategy for *Mambaonline*? I terms of trying to sell the product, in terms of trying to get the name out there, in terms of trying to make it more sustainable?

LdB: That's quite a vast question.

KD: Or do they at all?

LdB: Well, it does, in a way. I mean, I think that the marketing strategy is sort of to see the site as a lifestyle website. So that it's a place where people can come and read about everything from their sexuality, to news headlines, to get an eye-full of good looking guys occasionally, and that's the approach I've kind of taken, and that's the way I think that we've tried to market it. So we never market ourselves as a hard news site, or an activist site, per se, although I think those elements are quite strong in the site. But again the site has its moments of ups and downs, where different elements get focussed on at different times, depending on circumstances and depending on capacity. I think the big thing, I'd say, is that there's a lot of compromise that goes on behind this site. And that the capacity dictates what we're able to achieve, and what we're able to produce, and what content we're able to…so it's a constant juggling act of trying to kind of maintain that vision and also the editorial kind of perspective on things, but also what we have available to work with.

KD: Do you think *Mambaonline* contributes to the construction of a "gay community" in post-apartheid South Africa.

LdB: I think it does play a contribution. I think that's something very much we've wanted to do [sic]. I think there is a concept of a gay community on a kind of meta-level. Um, and I think that it's a valid sense of…there are commonalities between gay and lesbian people, and between LGBTI people, and their common goals, and their common desires. There's also a lot of differences. But there's sufficient commonalities [sic] for people to identify, or hope to identify, or hope to identify as a community. And I think there's a lot of power in that. It's something that I would like to see become more of a reality. I don't think it is. But I think I would like to see it more [in] reality. Because I think it empowers us in many ways. So, for example, I just think that in this country gay and lesbian people…let's say people of means, they don't contribute towards gay and lesbian causes. When they die, they leave their money to their pets, or to some charity…ja, and they probably are very good charities, but…or to their families. But there's no sense of giving back to "the community", a sense of, you know, "how can I give to LGBTI organisations to make them be more self-sustaining?" Um, which there is in other countries. Um, and I think that's really because we don't have a sense of community. I think it is something to aspire to. And I do think that Mamba…we'd like to kind of promote that, and build that community.

KD: Um, in what way? At a discursive/representational level, in what way?

LdB: In a sense of belonging, in a sense of feeling that you are part of a bigger whole. I mean. I think the problem in South Africa is compounded by the reality of South Africa, and our background, and our racial differences, and our socio-economic differences are tied to racial differences, so it's you know, a little bit difficult when there is so much diversity or so many splits…for there to be a sense of community.

KD: You mentioned earlier that you'd like it to be a lifestyle site. Um, that's how you'd like it to be seen, and that's how you market it…the so-called "DINKS"

LdB: It is, in a way, because that is perceived as being the market that has money and is marketable to, and therefore advertisers would want to reach them through our site. So, it's a juggling act because I think you're finding a lot of…and I like what's beginning to happen because if you see, for example, our dating website, you're beginning to see a shift in demographic there in people that are using the site, and I'm loving that. And I think that also, if you begin to see the kind of articles that are making an impact and that people are reading, are not necessarily the articles that would appeal to that demographic. So, I see us shifting, I think we're trying to move to a broader…again our focus on *Mambaonline* is still male. So the primary focus is gay

male. So I think it's shifting to a broader socio-economic kind of base of that gay male. Um, and that's the aim. Um, and I think when the site is marketed to marketers, that's where that "DINKS" thing comes in. Um, because we're still basing a lot of things that we…we see ourselves on international models. And it's easier, sometimes, to talk to advertisers in those ways because they have something on which to base, you know, ja…

KD: So, what do you think has made Mambaonline so successful?

LdB: I think, well, relative consistency. Better consistency than perhaps our competitors in that we're more consistent in the amount of content that we generate. And I think, often it's better content. Um, and the fact that we've just been around for a long time. It's gonna [sic] be our twelfth year [2013] that we've been around. So, we've been around for a long time, especially in the online space. And I think also online is becoming a more preferred way of people kind of consuming media. So, that makes a difference as well. It's easer…people can access it, and it's cheaper to access, in a way, than print media. We've been around for a while. We've been building the brand, we've been building awareness – slowly but surely. Again, we've never…I've spent no more that R500 a year on marketing or advertising. Firstly, because we don't have the resources to do that, but secondly, we've just built it through word-of-mouth, through people. So, um, ja, I think that all those things play a role.

KD: Do you think the Meetmarket [the dating site on *Mambaonline*] has also contributed to its success? And in what way?

LdB: Well, I mean, it helps to build an audience. Meetmarket was created solely for the purpose of attracting people to the site. Meetmarket doesn't make any money – maybe someday it will. We're planning on adding a payment membership level. So you'll be able to access the site for free but if you want certain benefits, you have to pay. I don't see that as making a huge amount of money, but it'll help paying towards the costs of the site. But, so, Meetmarket was created as a means through which to attract people to the site and feed them to the rest of the site as well. But that's been the primary purpose of the Meetmarket. And to add to that sense of that lifestyle package, you know, that it's content but it's also interactivity with people, with the community.

KD: Um, in your own words, how would you describe the "Pink Economy" or the "Pink Rand", specifically, however broadly…in whatever broad terms you can. What sense do you make of it?

LdB: Well, I'm not entirely sure it exists in any real sense because…I think it exists in the sense that sure there are gay and lesbian people out there and I believe that if you talk to them in a language they connect with and you talk to them in way that acknowledges them and their

existence, they are more likely to be interested in your product or your brand if it appeals to them. Obviously if you try and sell them something that doesn't appeal to them, no matter what you do it's not gonna [sic] work, but if it has that potential appeal *and* you speak to them in that way, I think there is scope for that. But I think as a pink community in terms of banding together more actively, I think…so in other words…So what do you define, what does that mean "Pink Economy"? Does it mean consumers who are gay and lesbian who purchase things? Does it mean a [sic] economy of gay and lesbian people or LGBTI people who function together and interact together financially and use each other's products, so I'm not entirely sure what that concept means. Um, and I think that if it does exist in South Africa, it's very broad, and it's a very loose concept because I think we don't really have a good sense of a pink community or a gay community. So without that, it doesn't bind us very strongly together. So, in other words, I don't think we're very good at using consumer…our potential consumer power to change. I don't think that you could call a boycott of gay and lesbian consumers in South Africa, because of some reason, and see a perceptible difference, because we don't function, we don't have that sense of belonging, and that sense of, uh…so, ja, I don't know if that helps.

KD: I'm also tryna [sic] make sense of it, and however idealistic this question might sound, do you think there is a possibility of creating a discernible "Pink Rand"? And do add some basis to my question, there is a discernible "Pink Dollar", right, there is a discernible "Pink Euro"…however it can be defined, by whoever, right, in whatever terms, there is a large buy-in from certain consumers from certain parts of the world, right. And in South Africa, do you see that as a bourgeoning…do you see that as a possibility, however nebulous it might be?

LdB: Ja, I think there's a possibility, definitely. I mean, it's part of what we're trying to work towards.

KD: As *Mambaonline*?

LdB: Ja, I mean, it's to empower our community. It's not about necessarily…There's that sense of, well…this notion that this whole "Pink Rand" thing from one angle is an exploitative use of the gay and lesbian market, some people would say. But I think ultimately it's more an empowering tool, it can be an empowering tool, because it gives us power. If we can flex our "Pink Rand" and choose actively, as much as possible, where to use our money, it gives us power, and it gives us power to potentially change things. To tell companies, brands, whatever, countries even, to some extent, in terms of things like tourism, to say, "No, we don't agree with that and we're going to kind of withhold our money." It's part of a political…any mass movement, well minority mass movement…any kind of power you need to have people coming

together and kind of having a common purpose. So I think it kind of…economically it also gives us power.

KD: I read the 2012 [Gay] Consumer Profile from LunchBox Media, and 69% of the participants of that survey are "image conscious", and they have a very large disposable income. They spend between 27 and 30 percent of their income on luxury goods, right. So from a marketing and advertising point of view, do you think that *Mambaonline's* advertisers are aware of this market that is potentially lucrative?

LdB: They are aware of it, but they don't understand…they believe that, this is a South African experience I've found, is that they believe that gay and lesbian people consume mainstream media, which they do, so we all read the *Sowetan*, we all read *Men's Health*, we all watch TV, we don't only watch gay and lesbian media or consume that media. So their understanding is that well if they know that *Men's Health*, for example, 20 percent of their audience is gay and lesbian, or gay male audience (and apparently I hear that they have quite a strong gay following), they know that they're reaching that market through there, that's what they believe. What they don't understand is that they don't really build a relationship with that gay and lesbian consumer because, the reality is that being part of a community that's been, you know, neglected, rejected, um, oppressed, to a large degree or unable to express ourselves…itself, um, we feel…I think we connect to people who speak to us in a language that we understand, and speak to us directly, and say, " I acknowledge you as being a gay or lesbian person, and I'm cool with that or I love that or I celebrate that." And I think when a brand or a company does that it creates a much stronger connection than if you just happen to, you know…If I see an ad…I'll give a terrible example of an ad…we got an ad campaign from Multiflora, or one of these online flower places for Valentine's Day, and the banner ad they gave us was a guy giving a girl flowers. And I just thought…I don't understand what the rationale was, but they probably thought, "we'll put the ad up on their website." But that's so stupid. Surely you…you're actually gonna [sic] turn me off, actually. It's actually gonna [sic] be a little bit of an insult in a way. So, I think that shows you the mentality of the kind of marketing that happens here.

KD: In South Africa?

LdB: In South Africa. We're not…we're not at all targeting gay and lesbian people.

KD: Interestingly enough, I just recently saw a proliferation of Mango [Airlines] ads on *Mambaonline,* and there was an ad with two guys holding each other, you know, on the beach, you know, I was some form of embrace, and…Can you speak to that, can you elaborate in relation to what you just said about a brand that does not address you

directly versus a brand that does. What does it say to you, both as an editor and as a consumer, as well?

LdB: Well, again, it shows a sense of respect for my identity or our identity. It shows a sense of acknowledgement and a sense of celebration, I guess to some extent, of who I am, and an affirmation of that. And I think that's very important for gay and lesbian people. And that affirmation comes through in our desire to look good or spend money on all these things, you know, it's part of that need to feel good about ourselves because…I think that's where advertisers can tap into that or should be able to tap into that. So that Mango ad, for example, is very rare. Very, very few major, um, mainstream brands advertising really…Again, in the twelve year history of the site, there's been very few. And most of them have tended to be things like quite a lot of car brands, quite a lot of airlines…and very rarely are those campaigns targeted at gay and lesbian [consumers]. We're just included in the bouquet of publishers or media that are gonna [sic[be running a particular ad. And ironically, I go to a site overseas and I see a brand, like L'Oreal Men, okay, for example, face cream and all that stuff, you approach them and say, "please advertise in a gay publication," they are not interested. Yet that same brand is very proudly advertising to gay men in America, but not here.

KD: Why do you think that is?

LdB: I think there's a lack of…I think people are very much in their comfort zone. South African marketers and advertisers are in their comfort zone. I think they believe that, as I said, they're reaching that market *anyway* through the mainstream media. And I think there's also a fear that they're going to put off their straight market, because they fear for some reason their straight market will come rushing to gay websites and see…but there is that genuine sense of, "well we don't wanna [sic] specifically target…" And there's all kinds of preconceptions around a gay website as a sleazy site.

KD: In what way does *Mambaonline* espouse LGBTQIA politics?

LdB: Well, I think that goes without saying. I think it's intrinsically bound into every aspect of everything we do. At the end of the day, almost any kind of thing that we do has political element to it, in the sense that just putting a picture of two men on our website kissing is a political statement, it's a political statement towards our advertisers. The point is, it's key part of what we do, it's a key motivator behind what we do. And I think another thing we try and do is we try get people to talk about things, I think *Mambaonline* has been pretty good at mediating between a lot of different extremes in the gay and lesbian community. And trying to give as much credibility to…for example, of various people in the gay and lesbian community – whether it be the People's Pride, and giving their more socialist kind of, um, queer activism agenda, giving them

coverage, as much as people that wanna [sic] have a Pride, and have a big party, and get drunk and have sex. We believe that people have the right to be who they wanna [sic] be and express themselves in the way they wanna [sic]. I'm pretty good at trying to find a middle-ground, and trying to get people to understand each other.

KD: Do advertisers shy away from that liberationist stance? Does it compromise advertising at all?

LdB: Not really, no. I mean, where there is a potential conflict comes in the sexuality aspect of that. So when it's expressing our sexuality…Google, for example, won't advertise on our website because they believe the site is too explicit, and they reference articles where we talk about men's sexual health. On *Mambaonline* there is nothing explicitly sexual – image wise – and when there is explicitness, it's usually within the context of sexual health, or something like that. I mean that's one of the things we focus very much on – men's sexual health. We've worked with Health 4 Men, we run regular content around men's sexual health, 'cause I think it's a key issue in South Africa. So those are the areas where you begin to find issues. That's where advertisers may not always necessarily be comfortable with that. But it's something we haven't compromised on. I mean, I never wanted *Mambaonline* to be visually explicit – Meetmarket is a different story – but in terms of *Mambaonline,* I've never felt that I needed to compromise that.

KD: With any gay medium, you have bath houses or cruising bars, you know, adult stores advertising in that media – be it magazines or online – but you never get that on *Mambaonline*. Why is that? Could you explain?

LdB: I have no idea why. Not that we won't run the advertising. I have in the past approached a number of them. The only restriction in terms of the advertising is that we wouldn't want it to be overtly explicit. So in other words, we're running a campaign at the moment for a website called jockstrap – which is a gay male online sex store – and they gave us a number of banner ads…and some of them are more explicit, and some of them are not. So the more explicit ones we run on Meetmarket, and the sort of tame ones we run on *Mambaonline*. So I have no issue with that whatsoever. Firstly, we've had a lot of issues with clubs and venues in terms of advertising – in terms of payment issues. Um, they are the worst advertisers in the world. If they decide they didn't make money this month, well they're not gonna [sic] pay you. So it's a logistical thing, so I say to them, "well you have to pay me upfront." I'm not gonna [sic] accept waiting till the end of the month to get the money, because often I don't. There are three clubs in this town that owe me money. It could also be that, personally I don't go to those venues. So I haven't established personal connections. I think a lot if the advertising in certain media is friends of friends…

KD: And with the dance clubs and the restaurants, how is the relationship with those advertisers going? Because it also seems to be quite scant.

LdB: Ja, it is scant because we're a national website…the budgets are very low, people have very little money to pay for advertising. So it's not something that I actively pursue per se because, you know, to get a thousand Rands from a company, the energy you have to put into it…so we try to focus on larger companies that wanna [sic] reach more of a national market. Advertisers are not really focussing on the gay and lesbian community properly from a business, marketing perspective.

KD: A key aspect of my research has to do with representations of black males. To what extent do you think that *Mambaonline* represents black men as consumers within this nebulous "Pink Economy"?

LdB: Not well enough.

KD: Why is that?

LdB: I'll tell you why. The first is consumers…okay…we do struggle to find content by black writers because we don't pay most of our writers. So a lot of content is from people that want to contribute stuff. The other thing is that stick imagery: most of the imagery that we use in our content, even in our advertising, when we create advertising…so to illustrate the articles, we get all our stock from America. And the reason for that is because it's cheap. For R2000 I can get enough stock images to last me from a year to two years – images of gay men kissing, holding hands, whatever. The problem is that 99% of that imagery is of white men. So it's a constant frustration. I literally have about ten images where you see either a black male couple or a biracial couple that I can use. And, um, I have other options to consider. Either I need to create to create my own stock imagery, and then I have to try and kind of find models, find the time, take the pictures, and when you trying to illustrate a vast range of articles from all aspects of a…life, it's very hard to do that. I mean, it's not what we do. I mean, we don't create images. We're not a creator of those kinds of stock images. So that's a big frustration, and I think that's something…I'm very conscious of that. When I look at my website I think, "how representative are the images on this home page?" Believe it or not, it's something I'm very conscious of. And it's a constant issue for me, and then there's the balance of do I use a really bad photo because it has a black guy in it, or do I use a really good photo which has two white guys in it?

Appendix D

Email Interview with Rubin van Nierkerk (RvN): Editor of *Gay Pages*

By Katlego Disemelo (KD): University of the Witwatersrand

22 January 2014

KD: What were your personal and professional visions when you founded *Gay Pages*?

RvN I founded a business network with just over 100 members in January 1992, called The Family Business, because we all experienced some levels of discrimination, especially at work. Consequently many highly skilled gay people explored their entrepreneurial skills from a young age. The average age of our members in 1992 was 29 and almost everybody was aged between 24 and 46. Only 3 members were aged over 50. Being illegal to be gay meant our organisation had to be underground, as we feared the repercussions of being openly militant. We decided that I should go public and test the waters of public opinion. It caused quite a stir, but our monthly theme parties at the Civic Theatre were considered harmless I guess. Our network grew faster than I anticipated and we received a lot of publicity that ironically did not create too many problems, other than some death threats from unconvincing anonymous callers and being followed around indiscreetly, while my house was also staked out by suspicious cars. Many members felt we all needed to come out more publically, which created a passionate debate, resulting in members choosing their level of openness. A year later in January 1993 we started publishing a newsletter with almost all the names of the members of The Family Business and distributed it amongst ourselves and our friends. At this stage my vision of an open business network, facilitating entrepreneurial spirit was realised faster than anticipated and before the birth of the new South Africa. Late in 1993 our newsletter evolved into a business directory and we started designing 113 advertisements to be published in a 136 page magazine, titled the *Family Business Directory* on 10 December 1994. Due to the recognition received from members and the media, I became successful as a financial and business consultant at the age of 29, but I failed to convince insurance companies to provide products for gay people, or at least to acknowledge our closeted existence. From about 1996 the tide changed and some medical aids allowed same sex partners to share benefits.

KD: The *Gay Pages* website states that you created the magazine to "provide a public platform where the gay community can network and develop entrepreneurial skills." Has this changed in any way since you started?

RvN Our network today has changed and is much bigger and more informal, but the philosophy of networking has grown strong globally in all countries where true democracy flourishes and the free intellectual pursuit of meaningfulness is kindled. Our network today is magazine and website based, but our office receives frequent enquiries for unlisted services. Most of the activity is around Johannesburg, Cape Town and Pretoria, but has grown countrywide.

KD: How are your vision(s) or purpose translated into the marketing and branding strategies for the magazine?

RvN: Any magazine needs to be a good product first. Passion, quality and attention to detail as well as consistency, almost always translate into success. We aim to provide a meze platter of entertaining information about a variety of products and services that is useful to our readers seeking welcoming service providers, whether at a doctor's consultation, or on a honeymoon in a rural town.

KD: In what way(s) do you think *Gay Pages* contributes to the creation of a gay "community" in post-apartheid South Africa?

RvN: Providing a network and platform to connect in the old South Africa, helped us to grow more determined and by the time we were living in post-apartheid South Africa we realised political systems come and go, but social acceptance still has a long way to go. Employment and social discrimination remains, while we need to work and study harder to perform better than our peers before we earn respect and recognition. A powerful development in South Africa has been the dawning awareness that retirement should be delayed as long as possible, due to our lack of extended families as we age. If we remain closeted while living a lie, then we find ourselves alienated within mainstream society. In the black community the percentage of people that are openly gay remains small due to the high levels of homophobia in those communities. We need to be self-sufficient longer and when we arrive at an old age home, going back into the closet is a scary thought for most. Fortunately many retirement homes are being established for gay people globally and in South Africa the trend started in 2013, after we published two well-researched articles on the topic, written by Alan Samons. Time will tell how fast or slow this vital need will be catered for. The *Gay Pages* contributes significantly to gay people's lives and sustains a sense of meaningfulness. Most young people search for belonging and as a gay person there is little support out there. The Gay Pages is a handy tool for someone with no idea how to connect, by offering a list of community organisations, businesses and entertaining content, helping to eliminate the sense of isolation that we all share.

KD: Would you say that *Gay Pages* espouses an LGBTQIA political agenda? If so, in what way?

RvN: Without a political agenda, our focus remains on gay men who like to support gay owned businesses and who are mostly self-employed or hope to develop their entrepreneurial skills. South Africa's ability to encourage entrepreneurial spirit is quite disappointing and all the red tape and clumsy labour legislation obstructs employment opportunities. We need to develop our infrastructure, encourage investment and industrial development that will attract highly skilled emigrants and entrepreneurs that will bring money and employment opportunities to South Africa.

KD: Does the propagation of a liberationist agenda impact upon funding/advertising?

RvN: Our primary focus is to produce a world-class magazine, while being a liberationist publication has to be subservient. By adhering to the editorial meze platter concept, it is easy to portray gay content without alienating our corporate advertisers, who understand that we have to remain interesting and informative to our readers. We do this balancing act well, as can be seen by our long lifespan that shades most of the popular international gay titles available on shelf. Avoiding pornographic content is crucial, as mainstream advertisers follow strict guidelines set in their countries of origin.

KD: Who are the target audience/readers of *Gay Pages*?

RvN: Our target audience are gay men aged 18 to 70 of whom almost half are self-employed entrepreneurs.

KD: What is the Living Standards Means (LSM) of the magazine's target audience?

RvN: LSM 8-10.

KD: The lifestyle sections of the magazine often feature restaurants, hotels, guesthouses, fashion, grooming and fitness regimes, holiday destinations and motoring. Are these feature articles aimed specifically at an audience with a large disposable income – the so-called "DINKS"?

RvN: Glamorous, glossy publications always feature luxury lifestyle as this aspirational quality ads reader value. Most readers wish to experience some of these establishments and many do. A high percentage of our readers are actually single, so the term DINKS would apply to about 60% of our readers.

KD: In your own words, how would you describe or define the "pink economy"/"pink rand" (however broadly conceived)?

RvN: Pink money is money generated by gay people who channel a substantial percentage to businesses that welcome their custom. Corporations who advertise their products in gay media or design gay specific advertising placed in mainstream media are sending a message to consumers that being gay is more than just OK, in fact they want gay clients. Often these products would be luxury products, or highly specialised products aimed at discerning consumers. Gay consumers are considered discerning, due to various market research surveys finding higher levels of education, income and life expectancy amongst gay consumers. High levels of brand loyalty and long careers that continue into their seventies, mean that besides high disposable income, they remain active consumers who spend generously on their homes, cars, luxury products and entertainment. Enormously successful travel companies like RSVP Tours cater specifically to a gay audience with global events and shipping cruises that are booked about a year in advance.

KD: What motivates the choice of advertisers in the magazine?

RvN: Advertisers choose a gay audience and we can only be grateful. Should an advertisement be too risqué or pornographic we would refuse to publish it.

KD: To what extent do the advertisers influence editorial content?

RvN: We reward loyal advertisers with editorial content, if it offers reader value. No advertiser can demand publication of unwanted editorial, but if they insist and diplomacy fails, then the relationship fails. Most corporates are reasonable and grateful for any editorial, which gives us a bit more creativity.

KD: Are there any editorial guidelines regarding the representation of sex, sexuality and erotic content in the magazine?

RvN: We avoid pornographic content, but aesthetically pleasing photography of men published in coffee table publications feature in every edition. Corporate advertisers can get quite nervous, so we go out of our way to ensure content that is not sexual in nature, but sensual at most. Men kissing for example could be fine, but anything more suggestive is not. This selection can be quite taxing and has the potential to create conflict between advertisers and their head office guidelines. This balancing act is our greatest challenge.

KD: What motivates the choice of the models on the magazine's cover?

RvN: Cover models that are actively involved in some or other gay event, like Mr Gay South Africa or Mr Gay World are preferred. Sometimes cover models are simply placed for their stun-value. Eye contact is really important and professional photographers with sufficient lighting are non-negotiable.

KD: How are the pin-up male models chosen in each quarterly issue of the magazine?

RvN: They are usually chosen from coffee table publications, mostly published by Bruno Gmünder, the largest gay publisher in the world.

KD: How would you describe representation of black and other males of colour within *Gay Pages*?

RvN: The white and coloured communities are the most gay tolerant generally, therefore it is a lot easier to publish their pictures. The Indian and Black community are becoming more tolerant, so they appear more frequently than in the past.

KD: To what extent are black males represented as possessing agency as consumers within the "pink economy"?

RvN: Black men are far more closeted and difficult to reach than almost any other demographic. Few gay black entrepreneurs are willing to be openly featured in media which impacts on their role in the pink economy. As more people choose to live alone or with a partner, rather than within their families, the sociological shift is significant. Many Muslim men have moved away from their families and a gay Muslim organisation, called The Inner Circle, was established in in Cape Town in about 2010, to facilitate support.

Appendix E

Email interview with Sharon Knowles (SH): Publisher of *QueerLife.co.za*

By Katlego Disemelo (KD): University of the Witwatersrand

02 December 2013

KD: When did you join/start *Queerlife.co.za*? In what capacity did you join/start the website?

SK: *Queerlife.co.za* was started in 2007. My initial idea was to have a place where the gay community could find relevant news, happenings and issues that they could related to. I am the owner and founder.

KD: What were your personal and professional visions for the website? Have these changed in any way since you started?

SK: In the beginning there were none other than to have a relevant portal. I now have an editor that works on the site and the vision. In 2012 started to change as suppliers expressed interest in advertising on the site. In 2012 we achieved the status of top read LGBT site in South Africa.

KD: How are the visions and/or purpose translated into the marketing and branding strategies for the website?

SK: I employed a marketing agency to sell on our behalf which is new for *Queerlife.co.za*. We have broadened into other areas of travel, jobs and property. In 2014 our mission is to increase brand awareness and focus more on getting Queerlife.co.za in to the "reading" space of every gay South African.

KD: In what ways do you think *Queerlife.co.za* contributes to the construction of a gay "community" in post-apartheid South Africa?

SK: We report on all news for all South Africans. We report mainstream news that applies to all gay readers.

KD: The lifestyle section of the website often feature articles on restaurants, hotels, BnB's, fashion shows, the latest advances in grooming and fitness regimes, and the most desirable holiday destinations. Are these aimed *specifically* at an audience with a large disposable income – the so-called "DINKS"?

SH: I think the perception is that gay people are rich because they have no children and if you market well they will spend on your brand. I personally think that the term DINKS will soon fade away, as it becomes easier for gay people to marry, adopt and have families and not ostracized so will discretionary income spending patterns change. So no, we look at interesting and new products, inspiring travel destinations and talk about financial issues that could apply to all.

KD: In *your* own words, how would you describe or define the "pink economy"/"pink rand" (however broadly conceived)?

SH: The pink economy is a marketing term that has benefited gay media owners as straight suppliers all wanted to market to this great, untapped market. In actual fact if brands wanted to have gay people spend their money on their product they would need to see the community as a niche market and market accordingly.

KD: Where would you place *Queerlife.co.za* within this "pink economy"? What contribution does the website make to the "pink economy"?

SH: *Queerlife* is a conduit for suppliers to get their message across to a community that will buy good , quality products.

KD: In the 2012 Gay Consumer Profile for LunchBox Media, 69% of the survey's participants describe themselves as "image conscious", and a large number of them are said to have spent between 30% - 27% of their disposable income on luxury items. How does your website maximise on this demographic in terms of advertising space. Are mainstream advertisers aware of this demographic? And if so, to what extent are they keen on aligning themselves with this lucrative group?

KD: Would you say that *Queerlife.co.za* espouses a LGBTQIA liberationist political agenda? If so, in what way?

SK: Not at all.

KD: Would the espousal or propagation of any liberationist political agenda compromise the website's advertisers and/or corporate funders? Please elaborate.

SK: Not relevant for us.

KD: Who are the target audience? What is the LSM of the intended audience?

SK: Anybody who likes to be up to date with the current gay news. The brands are there and we offer our advertisers specific demographics when asked. We try to cater for every gay person out there.

KD: What motivates the choice of advertisers in the newspaper? To what extent do the advertisers influence editorial content?

SK: The influence is dictates our content, we try monitor and offer what our reader searches for.

KD: Are there any guidelines regarding the representation of sex, sexuality and erotic content on the website?

SK: Not really, we don't want to come across too sleazy and we try and limit the graphic content.

KD: Bathhouses, cruise bars and sex clubs often feature prominently and frequently on the pages and advertorials within South African print media, whereas there is virtually no such advertising on the *Queerlife.co.za* websites. Why is that?

SK: The idea was that not all of the gay community wanted the sex and sleaze and porn even though it is part of the gay culture. The attempt of the site was to offer a professional news portal with gay news for the person that wanted to be kept up to date. Our m2m site is another matter. So the judge can be who he really is behind "closed doors' or the closet rugby player. These are just examples of an extreme nature to try and show that it is not all visible.

KD: How would you describe representation of black males on the website? To what extent are black males represented as possessing agency as consumers within the "pink economy"?

SK: We have a very [sic] representation of black males on the site and I can't answer you. In the events that we participate we chat to quite a few men and ask them for submission and stories.

I don't believe that the gay, black male has been targeted by brands effectively. I think it is actually hard for them to identify the butch gay male.

KD: There seems to be very little representations of men of colour on the *Queerlife.co.za* website – either as consumers, pin-up models, sexual objects or political activists. Why is this the case?

SK: I think that this has been more of a cultural upbringing and it is more a stigma, I am not really sure. We have tried to encourage more of our African and coloured community to send us blogs but have had limited response.

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