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"Notions of gender within the ANC Youth League (ANCYL): a key to understanding present-day responses to gender controversies"

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INTRODUCTION

The ANCYL, despite its propensity to make controversial news headlines in the past two years, stands as a powerful organising force for young people throughout the country. At its June 2011 National Congress, membership was recorded at more than 360 000 members – confirming its relevance and influence among the youth of South Africa (Mboyisa 2011). This research provides an analysis of the ways in which this youth organisation engages with, conceptualises and commits to the self-proclaimed call for gender equality into action.

The constitution of the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) (as amended in 2011) explicitly binds its members to pursuing a future South Africa that is "united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous" (ANCYL Constitution 2011: 4). In the constitution's aims and objectives, the ANCYL further commits to "promot[ing] gender equality in all spheres of life, especially among the youth" (ANCYL Constitution 2011: 5). In addition to these foundational constitutional commitments, the constitution devotes a section of the document to "gender and affirmative action," which binds all decision-making structures within the organisation to the 50/50 gender quota (ANCYL Constitution 2011: 9).

This commitment is understood in a context of the past (and to a large extent, continued) discrimination against women, pervasive sexist attitudes and strongly heteronormative attitudes both within the Youth League and the broader South African context. In considering the 360 000-strong membership base of the Youth League, it is important to consider the ways in which the ANCYL has conceptualised concepts such as gender, sex, sexuality and patriarchy within both its analysis of existing gender inequality and its strategies to move forward towards a more gender equal society.

The ANCYL constitution further engages with the question of unequal gender relations in two discussion documents of gender equality, entitled "The ANC and its role in the struggle for gender equality" (2001) and the "Discussion document on Gender Relations and Women's Emancipation" (2011). These three documents (which form the focus of this research) demonstrate that the ANCYL recognises the necessity to engage with existing unequal gender relations in order to move towards a more equal "non-sexist" South Africa.

Existing concurrently (and uncomfortably) with these commitments to the pursuit of gender equality stands the reality of the ANCYL's responses to two gender controversies. One such example is that of the Kenny Kunene sushi debacle. In this debacle, there are two events of

interest: Kunene's 40th birthday party in 2010 and the pre-opening of his Cape Town nightclub, ZAR, in early 2011). At both of these events, it is reported that sushi was served off the bodies of half-naked women – a claim to which Mr Kunene responded "I should not have to defend what I spend on a huge milestone in my life[1], when it's honest money and we were having honest fun" [!] (April 2010).

The response of the ANCYL to this incident of blunt sexism provides the starting point for this research. There were two events at which sushi was served off the bodies of half-naked women: both the African National Congress (ANC) and ANC Women's League (ANCWL) only condemned the practice after the second event (in early 2011)[2]. Their condemnation of the practice prompted Kunene to explain that "it was never [his] intention to associate the eating of sushi off models with the ANC, and I accept the ANC's condemnation of the practice" (Mail & Guardian, 2 February 2011).

It was only after this turn of events that the Youth League released a statement:

> "The ANC Youth League welcomes the commitment to stop serving food on human bodies as such undermines the ethos of the movement. The ANC Youth League had on more than one occasion disapproved of such practice in the past, and publicly voiced our disapproval. ... The ANC Youth League and its leadership will together with the ANC continue to speak openly against practices that have potential to undermine the ethos of our revolution" (ANCYL statement, 2011).

This response of the Youth League will be drawn out in chapter one. This example is used to unpack the nuances of the Youth League's (delayed) response to a blatantly sexist incident: it is not used to criticise the behaviour of a particular individual. It is discussed in an effort to unpack how the sushi 'saga' was responded to by the Youth League, and how this response may be symptomatic of existing structural inequalities, attitudes, behaviours and organisational culture within the ANCYL.

There appears to be a discrepancy between the provisions of ANCYL documents that commit to the pursuit of equal gender relations and their delayed (and possibly superficial)

[1] It is alleged that Kunene's birthday party cost over R700 000 (Majavu 2010).

[2] The ANC statement declared that the ANC is "a revolutionary movement" (Times Live, 31 January 2011). Gwede Mantashe (secretary-general of the ANC) condemned "the act of serving sushi on a woman's body, as this act is anti-ANC and anti-revolutionary. This act is defamatory, insensitive and undermining of wom[en's] integrity" (Ibid).

condemnation of a blatant sexist practice. How can these two things fit together? Can an answer for the ANCYL's failure to speak out as an organisation against sexist practices (and consequently the violation of women's rights) be found in the conceptualisation of the concept of gender in the ANCYL?

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This research ultimately aims to unpack notions of gender that are contained within these three key documents, and use these insights to understand present-day responses to gender controversies. The objective of this research is to consider the theorisation of gender relations in the ANCYL documents themselves.

The example of Caster Semenya provides a different insight into the Youth League's engagement with the fullness of the notion of gender, and helps to explain the aims of this research. In 2009, Caster Semenya (a South African athlete) was celebrated as South Africa's 'golden girl' after her performance in the 800m event in the Berlin Athletics World Championships (Schuhmann 2010: 96). Soon thereafter, an Italian athlete raised questions about her sex – an allegation which led to Semenya undergoing "physical, hormonal and psychological tests" in an attempt to establish her "sex status" (Ibid).

This case provides an example of what happens when a woman's performance undermines the coherence between "biologically allocated sex and gender performance" (Schuhmann 2010: 96). Of particular interest to this research is the way in which the response of the Youth League revealed the unwillingness (or possibly inability) of individuals to consider the possibility of individuals who may "transgress the norms of the two-sex system" (Schuhmann 2010:102). At the time of the incident, a statement released by the Youth League declared that "even if a test is done, the ANCYL will never accept the categorisation of Caster Semenya as a hermaphrodite, because in South Africa and the entire world of sanity, such does not exist" (Ibid).

This example provides insight into the ways in which the Youth League may subscribe to a rigid understanding of a two sex system, in which every individual is either male or female, and in which every individual's sex (be it male or female) must match up with the performance of that sex (their gender). The claim that hermaphrodites do not exist in South Africa and "the entire world of sanity" suggests a need to unpack the ways in which

responses may be symptomatic of a particular shape and form of conceptualising gender relations, sex, sexuality and desire.

This research aims to problematise the ways in which the Youth League conceptualises gender relations, and in particular, the ways in which the different discourses of sex, sexual identities and heterosexual desire work to construct a particular shape of gender relations within the Youth League. It is important to acknowledge that work around the idea of sex (the binary of man/woman) as a social construct only arose in the 1990s in the United States with the advent of the transgender/intersex movements. In South Africa, it was only with the establishment of Gender DynamiX[3] (2005) and the 2011 International Conference on African Same-Sex Sexualities and Gender Diversity[4] that these kinds of questions began to be considered. This is a relatively new field of study, particularly in a South African context.

This research, therefore, engages with these insights (highlighted by transgender and intersex movements). It considers how there may be an opportunity for the Youth League to broaden and deepen its work around unequal gender relations in future documents: this research points to the importance of considering the constructed nature of sex, and the (necessary) coherence between sex/gender performance/desire within a broader discussion of the structural violence of male domination over women.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholarship that has been produced on this topic (the theorisation of unequal gender relations) particularly within a South African context has focused on unequal gender relations, given the long (global and national) history of discrimination (in various forms) against women[5]. This research will speak to the ways in which the ANCYL is engaging with the pursuit of gender equality in contemporary South Africa.

The concept of gender is relational: as such, it involves considering how the relations between, attributes and performances of being a man and/or woman are socially constructed.

[3] Gender DynamiX was the first organisation in South Africa (and Africa) to "specifically advocate for transgender people" (Spectra 2012).

[4] This conference aimed to begin a conversation about "male, female and/or gender variant same-sex sexual practices, identities and communities" in an effort to "promote their social acceptance" and general well-being (Women'sNet 2011).

[5] The category of 'women' is used to refer to a category of biological sex. I recognise the problematic of this category, and the ways in which the binary of man/woman is constructed. For the purposes of this research, however, I use the category of 'women' to refer to individuals who either identify themselves as women, are perceived as women and who are, for the most part, perceived as heterosexual. I recognise the complexity of defining what and who a woman is.

Understanding gender relations as a social construct arose in the context of the 'second wave' of feminism. In this period, feminists argued that there was a distinction between the concept of gender and biological sex. The second wave identified gender relations as social categories which can be challenged and changed whereas biological sex was seen as fixed (Bock 2003: 11). This wave of feminism demanded equality for women and men, regardless of their biological differences (Ibid).

Furthermore, the link between gender and sexual identity is crucial: to understand gender-related questions, one must engage with questions of sexuality. This link between gender relations and sexual identity will be drawn out in chapter two. To engage fully with the category of gender, one needs to explore existing hegemonies which entrench the privileged position and opportunities accorded to men. In addition to privileging men, these hegemonies beg the question of whether they act to entrench a state of affairs in which heterosexuality is presented as the norm, and any sexual identity which transgresses this heterosexual norm is seen as deviant. This shall be examined in chapter three. This research will draw out issues related to both gender and sexual identities in an attempt to understand the ways in which the ANCYL have framed the problem of gender inequality.

Any engagement with gender relations (and the concept of gender as a relational category) requires scholars to consider the experiences of men, and the dominant shapes of masculinity. There is a need to acknowledge that masculinity and femininity are socially constructed categories that serve particular patriarchal interests. As such, there is a need to consider alternative forms and shapes of masculinity (and femininity) in any discussion of gender relations (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005: 831-832).

The ANCYL

It can be argued that writing on the ANCYL tends to focus primarily on the ever-growing tension between the ANCYL and its parent body, the African National Congress (ANC) (Twala 2010). Research around the ANCYL either focuses on the internal dynamics and functioning of the ANCYL or it engages with individual's actions such as the controversy surrounding the actions of Julius Malema (past president of the ANCYL).

Scholarship has, for example, engaged with Malema's inflammatory remarks in the context of President Jacob Zuma's rape trial (Keehn 2010: 1). There is, however, little analysis which unpacks this behaviour as symptomatic of deeper structural issues within the ANCYL.

Malema declared (about the woman that Zuma had allegedly raped) that she had a "nice time" with Zuma because if a woman doesn't enjoy it [sex], she "leaves early in the morning. Those who had a nice time will wait until the sun comes out, request breakfast and ask for taxi money" (Keehn 2010: 2). Scholars used Malema's comments to illustrate the ways in which the ANCYL's commitment to non-sexism plays out in practice.

Extending these two modes of engagement (the relationship between the ANC and the ANCYL and comments made by individual Youth League members), this research promotes an understanding of gender as a socially constructed category. As such, the notion of gender relations is constructed through different discourses such as the sex/gender distinction, sexual identities, dominant forms of desire and forms of masculinity (what it is to be a man).

Drawing a distinction between sex and gender

This section unpacks existing work on the sex/gender distinction. The case of Caster Semenya is particularly helpful. Schuhmann (2010: 69) explains that, until recently (with the advent of the transgender/intersex movement) sex was understood as referring to the "biological hardware, the body, with its signifying genitals, hormones, facial features, reproductive organs ..." (Schuhman 2010: 69). Sex is "supposed to be coherent" with gender: gender signifies the "socially learned ways of how to conduct oneself" as a masculine or feminine person (Ibid). Munro (2010: 386) explains how individuals are expected to have their sex and gender "in sync": the case of Caster Semenya and the forced "sex 'verification' procedures" confirms Munro's claim.

This conceptual distinction (biology/gender) was epitomised by the second wave of feminism. It is today challenged as reinforcing binaries (male/female, culture/nature). Nevertheless, this constructedness of gender/fixity of biology can be seen as the dominant discourse informing the understanding of gender relations. This distinction asks questions about how one defines "sex difference" and how one makes space for "people who don't neatly fit into our categories" of sex and gender (Munro 2010: 383-384).

Relevant to this discussion is Munro's work on black "female masculinity" (Munro 2010: 384). The example of Caster Semenya (and her embodiment of female masculinity) signifies a critical moment for others whose sexuality, gender and sex may not conform to social norms. The questioning of both Semenya's sex and gender performance pointed to the need for women to, as explained by Munro, constantly "visually and perfomatively re-feminize

themselves" (Munro 2010: 387). Work in this field urges scholars to complicate the existing male/female binary through acknowledging "alternative identities or embodiments – whether intersex, transgender, transsexual" (Munro 2010: 292).

Feminist theory questioned the so-called essence of (what is commonly understood to define) male/female. It has considered what constitutes a woman. Is a woman primarily a mother, a wife, a subordinate child or a political activist? This is a particularly important discussion in terms of South Africa's political past. In the struggle against apartheid, nationalism framed the policies, actions and strategies adopted by the anti-apartheid movement.

Aspects of gender inequality within the ANCYL

During apartheid, all political action (of anti-apartheid movements) was focused on the dismantling of the Apartheid state (Hassim 1991: 65). Women were mobilised within the struggle but their participation was premised on their role as mothers (Hassim 2004: 436). Women were called upon to play their role in the struggle, though raising children with nationalist aspirations (Kimble & Unterhalter 1982: 21).

The ANC, ANCYL and the majority of anti-apartheid movements did not consider the fact that women may have had specific demands other than building a nation for their children (Kimble & Unterhalter 1982: 22). The role of women mirrored the role of women in broader society: their function remained to fulfil their maternal role and perform duties within the liberation movement strongly associated with the domestic sphere, such as organising catering and entertainment for ANC meetings (Budlender, Meintjes & Schreiner 1983: 132). So-called "women's issues", seen as any issue relating to sexuality, gender-based violence and reproductive rights, were seen as separate from and dangerous to the national liberation struggle (Hassim 2004: 446) and so, women and their issues, concerns and interests came to sidelined in the national struggle.

Although women's participation in the time of transition towards a democratic South Africa was successful in mobilising for the inclusion of an effective gender equality principle in the South African Constitution and the implementation of an institutional gender machinery, we need to consider how we (and the ANCYL) conceptualise gender relations in the pursuit of social change today. How are masculinity, femininity, sex and heterosexuality imagined? This work explores such questions in relation to how ANCYL documents and the ANCYL constitution relate to these concepts (and the implicit power relations).

Sexuality

It is important to acknowledge the ways in which gender and sexuality are inextricably bound up. Schuhmann speaks of how "hegemonic understandings of ... gender are intersecting with compulsory heterosexuality within dominant, nationalist discourses that despise the transgressions of norms" (2010: 93). Schuhmann's work highlights the importance of "rigid bio-politics [that revolve around] purity, authenticity, belonging, sacrifices, values ... [by] policing women's bodies and bodies in the name of nation-building" (2010: 100). This rigid policing of women's bodies speaks to the ways in which sexual identities are also controlled and policed: this work encourages scholars to examine ideas of "compulsory heterosexuality" (Ibid). "Compulsory heterosexuality" speaks to the ways in which there are "two clearly identifiable and opposed entities – men and women" and anyone who deviates from this form of desire is "perceived to be a threat to this norm" (Ibid).

The two-sex system

These "narrow boundaries of this two-sex system" rest on a clear binary of man/woman (Schuhmann 2010: 101). It is crucial to consider a "third space of fluid gender identities and ambivalent sex status beyond a male-female binary and the congruence of sex and gender performance" (Schuhmann 2010: 104). The boundaries of this rigid two-sex system are confirmed when we consider the ways in which individuals acting out alternative sexual identities are being "tortured, raped and murdered to 'cure' them of their same-sex desires" (Sanger 2010: 115). This enforcement of heterosexuality is directly related to masculinity, and the ways in which heterosexuality serves the interests of a particular performance of being a man.

Femininity and masculinity

In the context of the Youth League, the responses to Kunene's decision to serve sushi off the bodies of women and to the uncertainty around the sex and gender performance of Caster Semenya demonstrate a particular understanding of gender relations. This understanding appears premised on a particular reading of being a man: in the case of Kunene, this form of masculinity meant that a blatantly sexist practice was condemned long after its occurrence. In the case of Semenya, this shape of masculinity revealed a need to protect and affirm the woman (albeit in a way that further entrenched the rigidity of sex).

This reveals a need to unpack masculinity. Work on masculinities has received renewed interest in South African scholarship: authors such as Erlank (2003), Hassim (2009) and Morrell, Jewkes and Lindegger have undertaken work unpacking the shapes of masculinity in South Africa today. Morrell, Jewkes and Lindegger unpack the complexities and variances of masculinity (Morrell et al. 2012: 11). These authors draw on the work of Morrell who argues that "the concept of hegemonic masculinity provides a way of [acknowledging the existence of a number of masculinities and yet acknowledging that] a particular version of masculinity holds sway, bestowing power and privilege on men who espouse it and claim it as their own" (Morrell et al. 2012: 20). This work on masculinities reveals the contested terrain of what it is to be a man, providing yet another entrance point into any discussion of gender relations.

Existing literature unpacks the distinction between sex and gender, delves into how women are understood (their role and dominant identity) and acknowledges the necessary link between gender relations and sexual identity. South African scholars have engaged extensively with this link, framing it in terms of heteronormativity as well as considerations of masculinities.

This research builds on the insights offered by existing scholarship and explores the ways in which different discourses (that may be contained within a text) construct a particular discourse of gender relations. This research unpacks how the discourse of gender relations is constructed through understanding the concept of gender, sex, sexual identities, desire and masculinities in a particular way.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Feminist theory aims to "analyze how we think, do not think or avoid thinking about gender" (Flax 1987: 626). Scott (1986: 1066) writes of how the history of feminist thought has involved a refusal of "hierarchical constructions [of a particular mode] of relations between male and female, ... and an attempt to reverse and displace" these constructions. Feminist investigations must aim to "disrupt the notion of fixity, and to ... discover the nature of debate and repression that leads to the appearance of timeless permanence in binary gender representation" (Scott 1986: 1068). As such, a feminist perspective provides key direction to this research: it provides the basis from which to investigate assumptions that may be (unintentionally/intentionally) relied upon within the three ANCYL texts.

Importantly, this research aims to unpack the ways in which gender is conceptualised, interests that may be served by a particular conceptualisation, and the implications of a particular formulation for the pursuit of gender equality (Flax 1987: 633).

At this point, it is important that I situate myself. Flax (1987: 642) explains that it is crucial to acknowledge that any research will necessarily be partial (and informed by the experiences and identity of the researcher) (Cerwonka 2011: 71; Griffin 2011: 95). I am a young white, female South African. I recognise that my whiteness allows me historical privilege, and I recognise the need to move away from an imposition of that privilege on the predominantly black, youth structure (of the ANCYL). My investigation of this topic is motivated by a desire to unpack provisions of these three ANCYL texts: my desire to unpack this topic is rooted in my identification as a feminist, and my objective is to try to understand the ways in which a particular formulation of gender relations can hinder or promote the pursuit of that equality. In this sense, I approach the texts with an overarching feminist methodology, which seeks to uncover the ways in which patriarchy may be perpetuated in subtly powerful ways.

Many feminist scholars agree that gender analyses "should be linked to an investigation of other social categories, and [the way gender intersects with] race, ethnicity, class, sexuality [and] nationality" (Buikema et al. 2011: 4; Flax 1987: 624). It is argued that identities and power are always complex, and "based on multiple interwoven categories" (Buikema et al. 2011: 4). This concept refers to how different systems of oppression are "interwoven, ... interacting and interlocking" (Staunges and Søndergaard 2011: 52). Recognising intersectionality requires understanding that the effects of categories of race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, age, dis/ability and nationality "cannot be understood in isolation from each other" (Staunges and Søndergaard 2011: 45).

Born out of the black feminist movement in the United States, the concept of intersectionality aimed to demonstrate the "invisibility" of black women (Staunges and Søndergaard 2011: 46). This concept spoke to the ways in which black American women encountered discrimination in the forms of "(hetero)sexism, racism, class marginalisation and other classic 'isms'" (Ibid). Intersectionality encourages researchers to take account of the "variation, complexity, confusion, ambivalence and change" that is encountered when engaging with categories of identity and differentiation (Staunges and Søndergaard 2011: 47).

Intersectionality feeds into a broader discussion of the importance of thinking critically and "sceptical[ly] about beliefs concerning truth, knowledge, power, the self, and language that

are often taken for granted within (and serve as legitimation for contemporary Western culture" (Ibid). In this way, researchers are urged to unpack the "effects of gender arrangements that [lie] beneath a [seemingly] neutral and universalizing facades," and to move away from "transcendental claims [which serve to] reflect and reify" the experiences and interests of (predominantly) white, Western men (Flax 1987: 626).

As such, this research also draws on the work of poststructuralists: poststructuralism explains that meanings are dynamic, and always potentially "in flux" (Scott 1988: 5). It is important to consider the "conflictual processes that establish meaning:" poststructuralists encourage scholars to consider the forces and interests involved in constructing a (seemingly) fixed appearance and meaning of concepts such as gender (Ibid). This poststructuralist imperative unpacks the "variability, volatility and political nature" of the construction of meaning, premised on the idea that the meaning of concepts is unstable, and open to reformulation (Scott 1988: 5).

The work of Foucault offers deeper insight in unpacking the ways in which concepts are constructed, particularly in his focus on the "interconnections between knowledge claims ... and power" (Flax 1987: 633). Foucault's work explores the ways in which specific claims to truth may take only certain forms and not others (Ibid). He explains that any system of knowledge requires the "suppression of discourses that threaten to differ with or undermine the authority of the dominant one," which may require the suppression of "important and discomforting voices" of individuals whose experiences may be different to our own (Ibid). The suppression of these voices may be a "necessary condition for the ... apparent authority, coherence and universality of our own" (Ibid).

The idea of discourse is fundamental to this research: Foucault's understanding of discourse shall be explored within a discussion of research methodology. Tamale (2011: 25) cautions scholars against "uncritically using theories that are constructed from the global North to explain African sexualities" and as such it is important to explain why the work of Foucault is relevant to this research. Foucault's work is particularly important (beyond the notion of discourse) for the way in which it engages with the idea of the idea of power, and the ways in which power is implicated in knowledge production, and regulating and controlling certain forms of being. This is a key insight offered by feminist and Foucauldian theory.

This research also draws on the work of Antonio Gramsci and the idea of hegemony. Litowitz (2000: 517) explains how the idea of hegemony refers to how "the supremacy of a social

group" requires power as the level of "force and ... consent, authority and hegemony" (Litowitz 2000: 519). The central insight is the idea of hegemony as "the spontaneous consent ... given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group:" the dominant group is able to enjoy this consent because of its "position and function in the world of production" (Gramsci quoted in Forgacs 1999: 306).

Litowitz explains that Foucault rejects Gramsci's idea of oppression as a "one-way imposition by a dominant class" in favour of an understanding of oppression as largely invisible, which is "encoded within institutions and discourse that appear as instruments of knowledge, and not sites of power" (Litowitz 2000: 534). The idea of hegemony remains, nonetheless, central to this paper. The concept is used to explore the ways in which a hegemonic conception of gender relations may work to constrain and regulate the conduct of ANCYL members.

What is key to Gramsci's formulation of hegemony is the way in which the dominant class needs to appear to represent the national interest (Woolcock 1985: 206). This is relevant in this discussion as the ANCYL is the youth wing of the (currently) ruling national party, the ANC. The relevance of Gramsci's work becomes clearer when we consider how hegemony is established. Firstly, the dominant class acquires control and able to become "economically revolutionary" at the level of production, secondly, the dominant class acquires control over the state apparatus "to reshape the political structure of domination and ... use the apparatus [to further its] own interests. Finally, and on an intellectual plane, the dominant class diffuses a conception of the world throughout society which "obscures the nature and character" of its domination (Woolcock 1985: 204 – 205).

This is salient in this research, particularly in the sense that the ANCYL is the youth wing of the ANC and in this capacity (as the youth wing of the ruling party) has access to economic power, political (and state) apparatuses and intellectual capacity (in the sense that these three documents are produced by the Youth League itself).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research focuses on unpacking the ways in which the three ANCYL documents conceptualise gender relations. In order to do this, this research relies on textual analysis of the provisions of these texts. The textual analysis will draw on Foucauldian discourse

analysis in an attempt to draw out the ways in which different discourses (such as the sex/gender distinction, sexual identities and desire) work to construct the discourses of gender relations, and hegemonic masculinity. The ways in which this discourses are constructed will be drawn out in the following chapters.

Foucault's work on discourse (and the ways that meaning is constructed) is particularly relevant to this research. Discourse refers to a "group of statements which provide a language for talking about – representing knowledge about – a particular topic" at a particular moment in history (Hall 1987: 72). As such, discourse is about the "production of knowledge through language" (Ibid). Hall (1992: 295) explains that discourses are ways of talking, thinking, or representing a particular subject of topic" and produces "meaningful knowledge about that subject [and] this knowledge [then] influences social practices, and so has real consequences and effects" (Ibid). The question of whether a discourse is true of false is less important than "whether it is effective in practice ... [as] part of the way power circulates and is contested" (Ibid).

For Foucault, discourse "defines, ... produces and ... governs the way that a topic can be meaningfully talked about" (Hall 1987: 72). As such, the meaning of biological sex and sexual identities (contained within the Youth League documents) belongs to a particular discourse: discourse produces knowledge and meaning about gender relations (Ibid).

Key to the work of Foucault, and feminist scholarship, is the idea of power, and the ways in which power is implicated in knowledge production, and regulating and controlling certain forms of being (Flax 1987: 633).

Foucault saw "knowledge as always inextricably enmeshed in relations of power, because it was always being applied to the regulation of social conduct in practice (to bodies)" (Hall 1992: 293). For Foucault, once knowledge becomes linked to power, knowledge is able to assume the "authority of truth" and as such, has the power "to make itself true:" all knowledge, applied in the real world, therefore has "real effects" and becomes true (Ibid).

This research analyses the ANCYL texts which engage with unequal gender relations in an attempt to unpack how the discourse of gender relations is constructed. Considering discourses which construct knowledge about gender relations includes considering discourses such as sex/gender, sexual identities and desire. In this way, this research will unpack how

knowledge about gender relations (within the Youth League) gains "authority, coherence and universality" (Ibid).

In addition to textual analysis of the discourses contained within the Youth League documents, this research also draws on three expert (semi-structured) interviews that I have conducted with young, black, university-educated, feminist ANCYL activists. These young activists have all been involved in the Youth League for more than five years, have held various leadership positions (at different levels of the organisation) and are actively involved in drafting documents on unequal gender relations within the Youth League. The interviews afforded me insight into the ways that a particular understanding of gender relations may play out in practice. This methodological approach allows this research to engage with the discourses that may construct a particular conceptualisation of gender relations as well as explore the ways in which the theoretical strengths and shortcomings of the texts may play out in practice.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

This research aims to unpack the implications of employing a particular discourse in pursuing gender inequality. As such, the first chapter, *Unpacking the documents*, provides an initial readings of the three texts – the ANCYL constitution, *The ANCYL and its role in the struggle for Gender Equality* (2001) and *The ANCYL Perspective on Gender Relations and Women's Emancipation* (2011). It engages with the strengths of the various texts (in moving towards the pursuit of gender equality), and outlines the key differences between the texts. This chapter identifies themes that are contained within the documents and explores the problematic of the identity category of 'women' (the main subject of the documents).

Chapter two, *The sushi, the saga and the social construct*, provides a discussion of the Youth League's response to the Kenny Kunene sushi incident. This exploration provides a starting point to interrogate the documents' conceptualisation of gender, sex, sexuality and masculinity/femininity. A close reading of the documents reveal that, although the documents claim to acknowledge the 'social constructedness of gender, it still relies on a binary understanding of man and woman in order to move towards gender equality. This chapter involves a much deeper and more thorough discussion of the gender/sex distinction, the problematic of the binary of male/female and the implications (of using this binary) for the pursuit of gender inequality.

Chapter three, *The binary is just the beginning*, considers the ways in which this binary (of man/woman) has implications for work around sexuality. This chapter argues that the ANCYL texts construct a dominant form of heterosexuality which dictates, regulates and limits the alternative sexualities that are (and can be) recognised within the structure, and its members.

Chapter four, *The invisibility of masculinity,* engages with the ways in which the binary understandings of sex as well as heterosexuality contribute to a hegemonic form of masculinity dominating the organisation. This chapter draws out the features of this form of masculinity and unpacks the ways in which this masculinity undermines the Youth League's commitment to equal gender relations. Drawing on the work of Gramsci (and hegemony), this section uncovers the shape of hegemonic masculinity within the ANCYL. This chapter also provides a brief exploration of the dynamics of the national struggle for liberation (under apartheid), and how this experience may have contributed to the hegemony of this form of masculinity.

This research concludes by proposing that the responses of the ANCYL to gender controversies (which take place in contemporary South Africa) make sense when we consider the embeddedness of the binary of sex, and the engagement with shapes of desire. The final chapter, *So, what does this mean for the Youth League?*, unpacks how these discourses work to construct a particular form of gender relations, and a particular shape of hegemonic masculinity within the Youth League. When we understand the ways in which understandings of gender relations are constructed, and the entrenchment of this particular shape of hegemonic masculinity, various (seemingly inadequate and problematic) responses of the Youth League come to make sense.

CHAPTER 1: UNPACKING THE DOCUMENTS

> "For every one person that understands what gender equality is, there are ten more other people who don't understand it, and in fact don't even care."
>
> (Nosipho[6], 11 December 2012)

> "It's up to those who ... are dedicated to understanding [the gender question] to make sure that others [become] dedicated to understanding it. It's very difficult, it's very complex. The more you attempt to understand it, the more you realise [that] you are far from where you should be." (Sophie[7], 11 December 2012)

The ANCYL is internationally heralded for its commitment to the promotion of gender equality, epitomised in its adoption of a 50/50 gender quota, as well as its detailed discussion documents on unequal gender relations, which engage with the practical living circumstances and realities of black women in South Africa. This chapter seeks to unpack the ways in which three key ANCYL documents deal with unequal gender relations: it considers the ANCYL constitution (as amended by the 24th National ANCYL Congress in June 2011), as well as the discussion documents dealing specifically with gender inequality, *The ANCYL and its role in the struggle for Gender Equality* (2001) and *The ANCYL Perspective on Gender Relations and Women's Emancipation* (2011).

In order to do so, this chapter will outline key themes contained within the documents, and discuss the differences and commonalities between the texts.

The constitution calls on the youth of South Africa to "support and unite behind the ANCYL, and actively participate in the struggle" to create a "united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous South Africa (2011: 4-5). In pledging to "promote gender equality in all spheres of life, especially among the youth," the constitution further provides that every member of the ANCYL shall have the right to "protection against any harassment, victimization and/or discrimination based on race, ethnicity, sex or creed" (2011: 8).

[6] Name has been changed to ensure confidentiality. She is one of three young ANCYL feminist activists (interviewed for this research) and is actively involved in drafting documents and working on committees within the Youth League who deal with issues of unequal gender relations.
[7] Ibid

The constitutional imperative to pursue gender equality is echoed by the 2001 discussion document, *The ANCYL and its role in the struggle for Gender Equality*, which aims to improve the "position of women" and promote "gender equality" (2001: 1). The 2001 document explains that it aims to assess "where we are as a country" and discuss how the ANCYL can improve the "position of women" and promote "gender equality" (2001: 1). The discussion document of 2011, *The ANCYL Perspective on Gender Relations and Women's Empowerment*, further confirms this commitment to the pursuit of gender equality, acknowledging the need to "build an ANCYL that is gender conscious, and well-armed to fight gender struggles in society" (2011: 1).

It is clear that the Youth League is aware of the need to develop, and implement strategies to move away from existing forms of unequal gender relations: the 2001 document calls for the development of an implementable programme that will ensure a "gender perspective [within] the [ANCYL]" (2001: 3). This text calls for the development of a "gender policy for the Youth League" (2001: 4). It is envisaged that this policy will "stipulate key concerns" for the Youth League on "matters of gender equality;" these matters of gender equality will focus on "issues affecting women" and how to "respond to the particular concerns of young women," in order to "improve the position of women in society and the organization" (Ibid). The "gender policy" would also focus on strengthening "women leadership," the representation of women within the Youth League, and addressing violence against women (Ibid).

These ANCYL documents claim that the root of unequal gender relations lies in the system of patriarchy (2011: 1). In this system of domination, "women occupy subordinate positions" in the "economy, family life, the church, and culture" (Ibid). The term, gender relations, refers to the "power relations defined by inequality between the sexes, and the gender roles ascribed to each" (Ibid). This document argues that the term 'women's oppression' should be used instead of 'gender oppression,' arguing that the term 'gender oppression' "obscures the fundamental issue, [and] neutralises the question of domination and masks the unequal way in which men and women relate in a patriarchal society" (Ibid).

The drafters of the 2011 text argue that although gender is a useful analytical category, it holds the potential to be "misinterpreted and misused" in order to "maintain the status quo:" ultimately, gender relations are about "women's subordination and male domination" (Ibid). The sole engagement with men, as a subject other than women, comes in the acknowledgement of the ways in which men's experiences with the patriarchal system differ:

men will have "different subjective experiences with the system, on the basis of different ages, races, class and even sexual orientation" (2011: 2). The text calls for a "deeper understanding of these power relations, and how they are maintained in direct and indirect ways" (2011: 2).

An interviewee explains that the 2011 document was "well-researched, well-written and ... raised many things that have been taboo in the organisation for some time, [such as] prostitution, sex work, why the gender quota must stay, abortion [and] health" (Sophie, 11 December 2012). It is important to explore the strengths of these documents, as well as to suggest ways to potentially deepen the Youth League's engagement with unequal gender relations. This research aims to unpack the consequences of theorising about gender relations in a particular way.

WHAT DO THE DOCUMENTS ACTUALLY SAY?

A consideration of successful "gender" initiatives, policies and programmes may also reveal the ways in which gender, and the fight for gender equality, is understood. The 2001 document lists, among these, policies "that promote gender equality ... [which] have been introduced to realize visible changes in the living standards of women and families" (Ibid). These include policies that call for the eradication of gender stereotyping in learning, policies that "forbid" the objectification of women in advertising, legislation such as the Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act (1996), the Domestic Violence Act (of 1998) and the Maintenance Act, the SADC Declaration on the Prevention and Eradication of Violence Against Women and Children, labour laws (that seek to protect women in vulnerable sectors), as well as the existing National Gender Machinery (2001: 1).

The 2001 discussion document also mentions practical initiatives such as "access to clean, running water, child support grants, electrification and telephone installation programmes [in] rural areas, free health care for pregnant mothers and children [younger than] six, clinic-building programmes, [the] establishment of sexual offences courts, community-based public works programmes ... as well as the deployment of women into strategic and senior positions in the state" (2001: 2).

The discussion document of 2001 provides a particularly nuanced discussion of the real-life circumstances of women, and explores the effects of issues such as the "systemic

institutionalization of racism," the triple oppression faced by black, working-class women[8], poverty and inequality, violence against women and children, low literacy rates as well as a lack of control over reproductive rights (2001: 2). This document calls for the interrogation of "problematic assumptions" that may be contained within existing policies and legislation which can work to "entrench patriarchy in society" (Discussion document 2001: 3). This research responds to this call (made by the ANCYL) to unpack potentially problematic assumptions in existing documents on gender relations.

An important strength of this document lies in the way in which it provides an in-depth exploration of (black, working-class) women's needs in contemporary South Africa. The documents engage with what Maxine Molyneux terms "practical" and "strategic" gender needs. Molyneux explains that although one cannot assume the homogeneity of women's issues and interests, the gendered division of labour and male domination are core issues that affect women (in different ways) in different contexts.

Practical gender interests are those needs which "arise from the concrete conditions of women's positioning within the gendered division of labour" (Molyneux 1985: 233). These gender interests are usually "a response to an immediate perceived need" (Ibid). An important comment is that these practical gender interests do not "in themselves challenge the prevailing norms of gender subordination, even though they arise directly out of them" (Ibid).

By contrast, strategic gender interests are "derived ... from the analysis of women's subordination and from the formulation of an alternative, more satisfactory set of arrangements to those which exist" (Molyneux 1985: 232). Such gender interests necessitate the "formulation of strategic objectives to overcome women's subordination, such as the abolition of the sexual division of labor, the alleviation of the burden of domestic labor and childcare, the removal of institutionalized forms of discrimination, the attainment of political equality, the establishment of freedom of choice over childbearing, and the adoption of adequate measures against male violence and control over women" (Molyneux 1985: 233).

The 2011 discussion document responds to Molyneux's call to explore strategic gender needs. This text responds to accusations that the Youth League treats "women's oppression under a patriarchal society [as] 'a bit on the side' [or as] 'an optional extra,'" and acknowledges the need to challenge "patriarchy by making radical gender reforms and

[8] Triple oppression refers to the ways in which black, working-class women experience oppression on the basis of race, class position and sex.

demands" (2011: 1). The drafters of the 2011 document call for theoretical work to move beyond considerations of practical gender interests and interrogate the "power relations" that maintain patriarchy (a system of male domination) "in direct and indirect ways" (2011: 1-2). These power relations are defined by "inequality between the sexes, and the gender roles ascribed to both" (Ibid).

The 2011 text also engages with the ways in which South Africa's neoliberal development trajectory, and particularly the withdrawal of the state from the provision of basic services, "disproportionately" affects the poor (2011: 6). This section points to how the curtailing of social spending unequally impacts on the lives of women, who are left with "additional burdens and responsibilities" (Ibid).

It considers the ways in which poverty is "feminised:" it speaks to the reality (for many women) of the responsibility (and unremunerated task) of home-based care systems, the inadequate provision of health services, as well as the ways in which women are expected to shoulder the burden of childcare (in a state that is failing to provide childcare facilities and parental benefits) (2011: 6-7). The document explores the existing Child Support Grant, and challenges the assumption that female applicants are lazy, unwilling to look for employment, and willing to conceive children purely to access the grant (Ibid).

The drafters of the document argue that South Africa's current development trajectory "scorns dependency" and yet, it is the "capitalist system that fosters dependency, taking away all means of production from the worker, and leaving him/her with no option than to sell his/her labour power" (Ibid). As such, young black women are oppressed by "a system of male domination, the legacy of apartheid and ... rampant neoliberal capitalism" (2011: 7).

These sections reveal the important class dimension of the Youth League's struggle for equal gender relations. An ANCYL activist revealed the primacy of class: "even in our theory, the reason why there is gender disparity is because of the class divide [which does make class] an overarching issue" (Sophie[9], 11 December 2011). The centrality of class is seen again in the document's call to infuse a "gender consciousness to [the] mission to attain economic freedom" (2011: 11). This call suggests that the Youth League sees its primary struggle as the fight to achieve economic freedom.

[9] Name has been changed to ensure confidentiality.

In exploring the relationship between violence against women and HIV/AIDS, the 2011 document engages with the topic on both a practical and strategic level: there is an urgent need to address the "often inadequate, gender sensitive and inaccessib[ility]" of services which should be provided to women who have been raped, and to investigate whether women are able (and empowered) to protect themselves against sexualised violence (Ibid). There is also a brief discussion of cultural and religious practices: this discussion confirms the need for continued focus on the "struggle for women's emancipation" (particularly in light of practices such as "polygamy, forced marriages and virginity testing") (2011: 11).

The nuanced reading of unequal gender relations is again confirmed by the 2011 document's call to evaluate the "responsiveness" of the Youth League's "organisational culture, norms and traditions" to the needs of women (2011: 15). The document asks important questions about the suitability of meeting times, the provision of childcare facilities and the safety of women (when returning home from meetings which end late at night) (Ibid). At the same time, the document is aware of the ways in which these questions work to entrench the belief that taking childcare is a woman's responsibility (Ibid). This is an important comment and challenges the idea that women are responsible for taking care of the children and the household.

The demands of the 2011 document demonstrate a nuanced reading of women's circumstances and experiences: the document calls for a comprehensive public early childhood development plan; sharing the burdens of parenting; a gendered social security system (that compensates primary caregivers); the decriminalisation of sex work, as well as initiatives to enhance the reproductive choice and health of young women (through improved education, services and access to health services) (2011: 15-19). Further demands include improved access to sanitary towels; a focus on addressing sexual violence, rape and HIV/AIDS; a decisive and gender-conscious leadership; challenging the neoliberal development paradigm, as well as a call to make the National Gender Machinery more effective in terms of advancing gender equality (Ibid).

These demands focus on the experiences and needs of women. The 2011 discussion document is the only text that engages with the experiences of being a man in a contemporary South African context. The text acknowledges that "although gender relations in our patriarchal society give men dominance and privilege, men also simultaneously experience the pressure of having to conform to rigid gender roles and expectations" (2011: 5). The

drafters (of this text) note that "men of different races, class, and age ... will have differing experiences with patriarchy" (Ibid).

This 2011 document also considers how economic oppression can impact on men: retrenchments and unemployment have made it "more difficult for men to conform to their patriarchal gender roles as 'providers' and 'breadwinners'" (which can lead to suicide, ... "family killings, involvement in crime, and domestic abuse") (2011: 7). These provisions are the only engagement with what it means to be a man in contemporary South Africa. This engagement with the category of men and the (seemingly unchallenged) shape of existing masculinities will be problematised in chapter four.

CONTEXTUALISING THE DOCUMENTS AND WHO THEY SPEAK TO

Interviews revealed that the purpose of the discussion documents was to "elevate gender issues," particularly in light of the history of the liberation movements in South African which have (for the most part) "prioritised class rather than gender" (Sophie, 11 December 2012). Sophie explained that "ideally, [the documents] speak to both males and females because we understand that patriarchy affects both males and females. [But I do think that] the 2011 gender discussion document sets a tone mainly for females ... in order to conscientise them ... [and] raise awareness among them" (Ibid).

The documents speak to the "different, material conditions of being ... a young [black] woman" in South Africa (Palesa, 11 December 2012). When one considers the "issues they speak about ... like violence, rape, HIV/AIDS – there's the assumption (which for the most part could be correct) that people most likely to be affected are black, working class women" (Ibid).

Despite this engagement with the lived experiences of women, two of the interviewees discussed how the documents are "very much on the surface" (Palesa, 11 December 2012). Nosipho explained that "there's nothing really radical, [or] new about the documents" (Nosipho, 11 December 2012). Palesa explains that "if we [are] to be honest and frank, the issue that we are trying to address here is an issue of female oppression. ... But we [the documents] say it's gender equality. ... I find it problematic that these documents are called gender equality documents, or gender documents on whatever" (Palesa, 11 December 2011).

These comments, and a reading of the documents, reveal a focus on 'women's issues' and experiences.[10] This focus on female oppression is justified on the grounds that "before we can even have gender equality, the main issue ... is women and their position, and we need to address that" (Ibid). The way forward (for these three young gender activists) is seen in the collective mobilisation of women, and developing a level "of collective consciousness" (Sophie, 11 December 2012). There is a call for women to organise based on "common denominators that they share" (Ibid). These common denominators are that "they are in the Youth League, that they are black and women, [living within] a patriarchal society, that they are poor and therefore oppressed by a class system" (Nosipho, 11 December). The Youth League documents on gender "aim to conscientise people, and [change] mindsets and actions" (Nosipho, 11 December 2012).

MOBILISING 'WOMEN' – A CRITIQUE

The documents call for the Youth League to become more responsive to women's needs (Discussion document 2011: 3). The documents' strategy to increase the organisation's responsiveness is to encourage women to identify and articulate their needs in spaces such as Young Women's Assemblies. These Assemblies would institutionalise a "separate space" for women within the Youth League (with the potential to become a "locus of gender activism") (Discussion document 2011: 20). This idea of a separate space is justified on the grounds that it would allow women a space to formulate their ideas "as women," and to advocate a strategy based on their collective experiences of patriarchy.

Ultimately, these Assemblies would encourage young women to "build gender consciousness, and [a] commitment to women's emancipation amongst young women and men in the ANCYL" (Discussion document 2011: 21). This discussion of institutionalised separate space for women within the ANCYL echoes the strategy of the feminist movements of the 1970s which organised women separately in an effort to raise consciousness and articulate women's issues (which had historically been sidelined) (Schulz 2008: 286).

This strategy is often critiqued for weakening the overall structure of feminist activism: Schulz explains that this critique is based on the experience of the 1970s in which different groups within the feminist movement fought to define the "direction, strategies and goals of

[10] This engagement with 'women's issues' is problematic: the idea that men are somehow divorced from and separate from the issues and struggles of women stands in marked contrast to the notion of gender as a relational category. This shall be explored in later chapters.

feminism" (Schulz 2008: 290). This often led to in-fighting within the movement which weakened its impact and activism (Weldon 2011: 122). A second critique levelled against this mode of mobilisation is how it can create new exclusions. For Deveaux, identity politics (where a constituency is mobilised on the basis of sharing some common identity) can allow a particular understanding and experience (of that category of identity) to "supersede others by setting up norms" for what it means to be and live as a member of that category, for example as a woman (Deveaux 1994: 240).

One response to this critique of identity politics would be to discard the category of identity entirely. This would leave little room for subjects to understand their conditions of oppression and for discussions about "agency, strategies of empowerment and political activism to emerge" (Deveaux 1994: 241-242). Audre Lorde, Patricia Hill Collins and bell hooks all point to the "possibilities of transformation which arise from our daily lives" and call for the subject's experiences to form the centre of inquiries into the "how and why of power" (Deveaux 1994: 243).

This practical need to unify women is an important consideration in this discussion: it is important to recognise that the category of 'women' is still used (and often necessary to use) to mobilise the interests of 'women' throughout the world. Nonetheless, any uncritical appropriation of the category of 'women' must be problematised. The following discussion responds to this caution.

Black feminists, such as Patricia Hill Collins, draw on identity politics (of being an African American in a particular context). She argues that in spite of the differences "created by historical era, age, social class, sexual orientation or ethnicity, the legacy of struggle against racism and sexism is a common thread binding African-American women" (Collins 1990: 343). This appears a similar strategy to that adopted by the Youth League: the ANCYL assumes a commonality of oppression among young black, working-class South African women. The experience of black women in South Africa (as in the case of African American women) is different from the experience of those who are not black but female: this appears to stimulate what Collins calls a "distinctive Black consciousness concerning that material reality" (Collins 1990: 344-345).

Collins acknowledges that "diversity among Black women produces different concrete experiences that in turn shape various reactions to the core themes" of being a black woman (Collins 1990: 344). This is an important note (particularly given the rise of a black middle

class, and the increasing visibility of black lesbians, intersexed and transgendered people) as many may argue that identity politics can essentialise the struggles, experiences and interests of, in this case, women. The work of Collins and other African-American feminists led to the development of the notion of intersectionality: intersectionality centres around the idea that power and identity is based on multiple intersecting categories such as race, gender relations, class and sexual identities.

Butler is critical of approaches which mobilise women on the basis of their identity as women (such as the strategy adopted by the ANCYL). She calls on feminist scholars to move away from a form of identity politics that "presumes, fixes, and constrains the very 'subjects' it hopes to represent and liberate" (Butler 1999: 189). She argues that the category of women is a "false ... signifier that disguises and precludes gender experiences internally varied and contradictory" (Butler 1987: 141).

It is important to consider the limitations of identity politics which requires a stable, identifiable and defined category of 'women' to begin political action. Butler argues that identity politics which insists on the coherence and unity of the category of 'women' effectively refuses the "multiplicity of the cultural, social and political intersections in which the concrete array of 'women' [is] constructed" (Butler 1999: 19-20). Butler questions what happens "when individual women do not recognize themselves in theories that explain their unsurpassable essences to them?" (Butler 1987: 142).

Butler calls for mobilisation beyond the "simple categories of identity" (Butler 1999: xxvi). This call to move beyond identity categories as the basis for mobilisation is echoed in Foucault's work: he explains that "juridical power inevitably 'produces' what it claims merely to represent" (Butler 1999: 4-5). As such, feminist scholars must interrogate the ways in which subjects who are "regulated by [political] structures are, by virtue of being subjected to them, formed, defined and reproduced in accordance with the requirements of these structures" (Ibid). Butler urges feminists to ask questions about how the category of 'women' (the subject of feminism) is "produced and restrained by the very structures of power through which emancipation is sought" (1999: 5).

Butler calls for any strategy of mobilisation to accept the inevitability of "divergence, breakage, splinter, and fragmentation" (Butler 1999: 20). The category of 'women' must recognise its own "essential incompleteness" and in so doing, assert the contested nature of the category (Butler 1999: 21).

All strategies seeking to challenge unequal gender relations must consider the extent to which they may contribute to an "unwitting regulation and reification of gender relations" (Butler 1999: 9). Butler argues that if the identity of 'women' is articulated "within available cultural terms," this effectively instates a "definition that forecloses in advance the emergence of new identity concepts" (1999: 21). As such, she calls for work to be done around open coalitions which are able to provide a space for identities of "multiple convergences and divergences without obedience to a normative telos of definitional closure" (Butler 1999: 22).

CONCLUSION

This chapter provided an outline of the discussion documents' treatment of unequal gender relations, and alerted us to the documents' understanding of the notion of gender as primarily denoting women's oppression (and the need for their emancipation). In an effort to unpack the implications of this conceptualisation of gender, the following two chapters will discuss the different discourses that contribute to this particular understanding of gender relations. This is in line with Hall's call to examine the ways in which certain discourses are able to "rule in ... acceptable and intelligible" and "rule out, limit and restrict" other ways of talking and constructing knowledge about the topic (Hall 1987: 72).

An exploration of the shape of the discourses at play begins by engaging with the Youth League's response to the Kenny Kunene's serving of sushi off the bodies of women: it will unpack the ways in which their (delayed) response suggests a particular conceptualisation of sex and sexual identity.

CHAPTER 2: THE SUSHI, THE SAGA AND THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCT

> "No, they don't get it. I mean, I found out about the idea of gender as a social construct at varsity. There [are not a lot of people] who go to varsity, and a lot of people may read [these] documents, and not fully understand what it means. When you're growing up and you're told to wear pink, that actually sets the tone for the rest of your life. People don't understand that."
>
> (Nosipho[11], 11 December 2012)

The drafters of the Youth League constitution and documents on unequal gender relations understand the notion of gender as about "women's subordination and male domination" (2011: 1). For the ANCYL, the pursuit of gender equality requires undermining patriarchy as a "system of domination," and challenging the ways in which women occupy subordinate positions in society. (2011: 1). There are two instances which appear to contradict this commitment to the pursuit of equal gender relations (and which must be dealt with separately). The first is the blunt sexism epitomised by the sushi saga, which forms the focus of this chapter. The second is the way in which the treatment of Caster Semenya demonstrated a upholding of the two sex system (captured in comments such as "in South Africa and the entire world of sanity, such [a hermaphrodite] does not exist"[12]) – which will be discussed in chapter three.

This chapter unpacks the blunt sexism of Kunene's decision to serve sushi off the bodies of half-naked women. The Youth League documents condemn sexism in all forms and this is why the response of the Youth League to this sushi incident is of particular interest. Their response, as will be discussed, stands in contrast to the provisions of their texts which deal with unequal gender relations: this chapter provides a deeper interrogation of the documents' provisions in an attempt to reconcile their textual provisions with the response of the Youth League to Kunene's decision to serve sushi off the bodies of half-naked women.

[11] Name has been changed to ensure confidentiality.
[12] Julius Malema (quoted in Schuhmann 2010: 102).

EATING SUSHI OFF WOMEN – IT WAS "HONEST MONEY AND WE WERE HAVING HONEST FUN[13]"

This section focuses on the Youth League's reaction to the serving of sushi off women's bodies. Their response suggests a need to interrogate the conceptualisation of gender relations within the ANCYL documents on gender relations, and unpack the ways in which the discourse on gender relations may be constructed (and with what implications for the pursuit of equal gender relations).

Sushi was served off the bodies of scantily-clad women at two events organised by Kunene: firstly, at his 40th birthday party in 2010 and then again at the pre-opening of his Cape Town nightclub, ZAR, in early 2011. It was reported that (then) ANCYL president, Julius Malema, (who attended both events) had defended Kunene, claiming that Kunene's new club, ZAR Lounge "belonged to the ANC" (Ibid). Touted as the "tycoon's [Kunene's] new best friend," Malema was "praised" by Kunene as "the only politician who had supported his first sushi party last year" (Nyelenzi 2011).

At the time, Zwelinzima Vavi (of Cosatu) was the only public figure to condemn the practice when it first took place at Kunene's 40th birthday party. His criticism of Kunene appeared to be more focused on the extravagance of the party, which was estimated to have cost R700 000. Vavi argued that such "lavish" parties thrown by political elite effectively "spit on the face of the poor" and "insult [the poor's] integrity" (City Press, 27 October 2010). It seems as though Vavi's main objection to the practice had more to do with the ostentatious display of wealth than with a criticism of the objectification of women's bodies.

Neither the ANC nor the ANC Women's League nor the ANCYL engaged with or condemned the practice in 2010. It was only after the pre-opening of Kunene's ZAR Lounge in early 2011 that the ANC and the ANC Women's League engaged with the practice: an ANC statement declared that the "ANC is not into nightclubs, or partying, but it is a revolutionary movement" (Times Live, 31 January 2011). Gwede Mantashe condemned "the act of serving sushi on a woman's body, as this act is anti-ANC and anti-revolutionary. This act is defamatory, insensitive and undermining of wom[en's] integrity" (Ibid).

The ANC Women's League released a statement less than a week later, in which it stated the League was "appalled" by Kunene's decision to serve sushi off the bodies of half-naked

[13] Kunene quoted in City Press, 27 October 2010. This comment seems to suggest that sexism, epitomised in the serving of sushi off women's bodies, is acceptable as long as the money funding the practice is ethically obtained.

women (Subramany, 2 February 2011). Spokesperson for the Women's League, Edna Molewa, explained that they were "appalled by this derogatory act" which constituted a "blatant attack on the dignity of all women in our nation" (Ibid). Molewa explained that serving sushi off women's bodies is "objectification. A woman's body is not a plate, it's not to be used in front of people like that, or paraded in public" (City Press, 5 February 2011).

These comments from the ANC and ANC Women's League led Kunene to commit to not "throwing or attending any further such sushi parties" as he has "nothing but respect for the leadership of the ANC, and the guiding principles of the movement" (City Press, 2 February 2011). It was only at this point that the ANCYL responded.

The sole response of the Youth League was a statement released immediately after Kunene's public apology. The document stated that the Youth League "welcomes the statement issued by Kenny Kunene on serving food from human bodies, a practice the ANC, its Leagues and Alliance partners had unreservedly condemned" (ANCYL 2011).

The Youth League statement explained that the serving of food on "human bodies" (not women's bodies!) "undermines the ethos of the movement" (ANCYL 2011). The statement declared that "the ANC Youth League and its leadership will together with the ANC continue to speak openly against practices that have the potential to undermine the ethos of our revolution" (Ibid). The Youth League claimed to have, on "more than one occasion, disapproved of such practices in the past and publicly voiced [their] disapproval" (Ibid).

This is simply not true. An examination of press statements (of the Youth League itself) and media sites reveal no such public disapproval. A search for "sushi" or "Kunene" on the Youth League website yields one result: the press statement released after Kunene's public apology (both on the 2nd of February 2011). An exploration of local media confirms that the Youth League did not engage with the incident until (presumably) under pressure from the ANC and ANC Women's League to do so. Cosatu general-secretary Dumisani Dakile pointed to this failure of the "youth league" to issue a statement or condemn the practice (in 2010) (City Press, 2 February 2011). He noted that all political activism must consider the "class and gender question" as well as the "national question" (Ibid).

This research aims to unpack how this lack of a response can be reconciled with the seemingly nuanced treatment of women's experiences as explored in the first chapter.

BODIES AND SUSHI

This discussion (and Kunene's decision to serve sushi off the bodies of women) points to the role women's bodies play "in sustaining patriarchy and capitalism" (Tamale 2011: 616). For Tamale, women's bodies "constitute one of the most formidable tools for creating and maintaining roles and relations in African societies:" she argues that "through the regulation and control of African women's sexualities and reproductive capacities, [women's] subordination and continued exploitation are guaranteed" (Ibid).

Connell and Messerschmidt argues that "bodies are involved ... actively, ... intimately and ... intricately in social processes" (2005: 851). Douglas suggests that "the limit of the body is ... signified by taboos and anticipated transgressions; the boundaries of the body become ... the limits of the social" (Butler 1999: 167). For Douglas, the boundaries of the body signify the "limits of the socially hegemonic" (Ibid). In this case, the female body was appropriated as a surface off which to serve sushi – an appropriation which appears to fall within the limits of the social (given the delayed response of the ANCYL to the incident).

Unpacking the ways in which the female body is represented and appropriated may offer insight into socially hegemonic understandings of unequal gender relations and desire. Kunene's use of the female body as a serving surface renders the female body passive and regulated by the food that is placed on it and eaten by the active male agent. How is it possible for this particular representation of the female body to take place (and not be immediately condemned by the Youth League) in the context of two discussion documents and a constitution that commit to the empowerment and emancipation of women in a South African context. How do we make sense of this disjuncture?

"GENDERED SEXUALITIES" AND "SEXUALISED GENDERS"

Beginning this discussion requires recognising the ways in which gender relations and sexual identities are inextricably bound up: for Tamale, both the notion of gender and sexuality play a crucial role "in maintaining power relations" and denote "power and dominance" (Tamale 2011: 1 and 29). She argues that they give each other "shape" and that any engagement with one "immediately invokes" the other (Ibid). A discussion of gender relations must recognise the ways in which "gender provides the critical analytical lens through which any [research] on sexuality must be logically interpreted" and how any discussion of gender inequality must

consider the ways in which "sexuality is deeply embedded in the meanings and interpretations of gender systems" (Ibid).

The work of Edwards (2005) and Tamale (2011: 30) suggest engaging with the concepts of "gendered sexualities and sexualised genders". These concepts allow a recognition of the intricate links that exist between gender and sexuality and move away from a simplistic approach that treats the two concepts "as if they were two distinct categories" (quoted in Ratele 2011: 406).

The first chapter looked at the ways in which the Youth League's strategies, policies and programmes to pursue equal gender relations focused on the lives, experiences and needs of women. This was an intentional strategy: the 2001 document explained that the struggle of the Youth League involves undermining "power relations defined by inequality between the sexes, and the gender roles ascribed to each" (2001: 1).

The Youth League explains that despite the commitment to "make the ANCYL a home for women," its members must never lose sight of the "bigger struggle [against] patriarchy, racial oppression and class exploitation" (Discussion document 2011: 18). We must consider the implications of the Youth League's focus on a "strong and united women's movement, and a leading role for women in the struggle for their own liberation" in order to ensure a "sustained assault on patriarchy" (2011: 21). Does this focus on women mean that the struggle for gender equality is equated solely with the pursuit of women's empowerment, and if so, with what consequences?

THE CONSTITUTION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

This focus on women is confirmed when we consider the ways in which the Youth League constitution engages with sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is classified as a breach of the ANCYL Code of Conduct. According to the 2011 discussion document, the constitution states that the "persistent sowing of sexism, and sexually assaulting and harassing (whether verbally or physically) women and children shall be intolerable acts within the organisation" (2011: 4). This demonstrates the "ANCYL's commitment to the struggle against sexism at all levels of the organisation" (Ibid).

The constitution also condemns offences that attempt to "cause grievous bodily harm, including rape or attempting to rape" as well as "sexual assault, sexual harassment whether verbal or physical, or the physical abuse of women or children, or in any other way seriously

offending the dignity of all members" (2011: 29-30). This condemnation demonstrates how issues of (traditionally) the private sphere have become an "organisation" issue rather than an "individual, private matter" (2011: 4).

"Rowdy and aggressive behaviour, and drinking during meetings, whilst on duty or during activities of the organization, unless of a social nature" is further condemned by the constitution (2011: 32). It is important to consider how this provision seems to suggest that rowdy and aggressive behaviour that is of a social nature, or contained within the private sphere is condoned by the constitution (which has problematic implications for any approach to unequal gender relations).

The constitution also condemns "abusive and disrespectful behaviour towards other comrades," "sexual harassment" and "persistent negligent behaviour that harms or threatens to harm the organization and/or its members" (Ibid). Of significant interest, in terms of the private/public divide, is the provision that "discipline ... should not be used ... as a means ... of interfering in the private lives of members where the norms of the organization are not directly violated, unless such conduct itself constitutes a violation or an offence affecting the organization" (2011: 34).

Although admirable in its caution to members against disciplinary processes being used to settle personal issues, this provision appears to allow instances of abuse (taking place within the private sphere) to be swept under the carpet in the interest of maintaining organisational unity. Fraser explains that the private sphere is "not a haven in a heartless world," and is often site of "egocentric, strategic, and instrumental calculation" (quoted in Benhabib and Cornell 1987: 7).

To a large extent, the constitution does acknowledge the (often) exploitative nature of the private sphere: it condemns sexual harassment as well as behaviour that is abusive, disrespectful, rowdy and aggressive. There is opportunity for future Youth League documents to unpack how families, and the private sphere, function as spaces of "usually exploitative exchanges of services, labor, cash and services [and] coercion and violence" (Benhabib and Cornell 1987: 7). This would include looking at "psychosexual relations in the domestic and private spheres within which women's lives unfold, and [how] gender identity [and gender roles] is reproduced" (Benhabib 1987: 95).

GENDER, AND GENDER ROLES, AS A SOCIAL CONSTRUCT

The documents reveal that the Youth League does acknowledge the oppressive nature of gender relations: the organisation calls for the undermining of a construction of gender which is based on "inequality between the sexes" whereby women and men are expected to perform differentiated roles on the basis of being either a man or woman (Discussion document 2011: 1). Sophie explains that the Youth League understands "gender as a social construct" (Sophie, 11 December 2012). This notion of gender as a social construct is not, however, explicitly stated in any of the three documents.

Understanding the concept of gender as a social construct means acknowledging that sex does not cause gender, and "gender cannot be understood to reflect or express sex" (Butler 1999: 142). Feminist scholars have, in the past, argued that "whatever biological intractability sex appears to have, gender is culturally constructed" (Butler 1999: 9)[14]. The sex/gender distinction points to the possibility of a "radical discontinuity" between sexed bodies, and culturally constructed genders (Butler 1999: 10).

This means that it does not follow that the construction of 'men' will accrue "exclusively" to (biologically) male bodies, nor 'women' to (biologically) female bodies (if we assume the stability of binary sex) (Ibid). The Youth League challenges the idea of a binary gender system: this system is based on what Butler calls the "mimetic relation of gender to sex," where gender either mimics sex, or is restricted by it (Ibid). The ANCYL's challenge to the fixity of gender roles suggests a recognition of the "constructed" nature of gender as "radically independent" of sex; that "man and masculine might just as easily signify a female body as a male one, and women and feminine a male body as easily as a female body" (Ibid).

Butler extends this notion of gender relations as constructed and argues that "the naturalized knowledge of gender operates as a preemptive and violent circumscription of reality" (Butler 1999: xxiii). She explains that gender norms, such as "ideal dimorphism, heterosexual complementarity of bodies, ideals and rules of proper and improper masculinity and femininity," establish what is considered to be real, and intelligibly human and in so doing, establish which bodies "may be given legitimate expression" (Ibid). Butler engages with bodies that have been labelled as "false, unreal and unintelligible" and points to drag as an illustration of the fact that reality is "not as fixed" as is often assumed (Ibid). In doing so, she

[14] This distinction follows the second-wave of feminism which in the 1970s disputed that women's capacity to bear children meant that women should be restricted to the private sphere, and domestic responsibilities.

exposes the "tenuousness of gender 'reality'" and the "violence that is performed by gender norms" in maintaining that 'reality' (Butler 1999: xxiv).

The concept of gender serves to organise power between and among men and women and is "an exceptionally violent force in itself" (Bennett 2001: 97). Bennett explains that individuals are "forced to access identity through becoming gendered (usually first at birth, then as a life-long process of direct and indirect initiation) (Ibid). This process rests on the "the proscription of roles, norms, and options for life" (Ibid). Unequal gender relations serve to legitimate political power – to do so, gender relations must appear "sure and fixed, outside of human construction and as part of the natural/divine order (Scott 1986: 1073).

This fixed binary opposition of male/female and masculine/feminine is rooted in the "refusal and repression of alternative possibilities" and ways of being: these binary oppositions are written and performed as the "only possible" way of being (Scott 1986: 1068). Work must be done (and is being done) to "disrupt the notion of fixity, to discover the nature of debate and repression that leads to the appearance of timeless permanence in binary gender representations" (Ibid).

The very existence of transsexual individuals testifies to the disjuncture between sex and gender. Transsexualism usually involves a sense of "anguish around one's anatomical sex – because of the way this connotes a gender" and a desire to have "hormonal treatment and surgery to make one's body as congruent as possible with the preferred sex" (Mbugua 2011: 238). Mbugua writes of how we are "accustomed to the ... rigidity of the binary system in the life-long assignation of gender:" society is '"comfortable' in our assigned genders and perceived sex – we would consider anyone not fitting the system as psychotic" (Mbugua 2011: 240). The "incongruence of anatomical sex and psychological sex ... bend gender and break binaries" and threaten the "natural order" of things (Ibid).

The experiences of transgendered men and women – seen as "gender outlaws" and forced into "hiding and invisibility" – testify to the ways in which individuals who do not fit into the binary of man/woman are subjected to "criticism and threats of violence" (Feinberg 1992: 135). For these individuals, their "self-expression is 'at odds' with their sex" (Ibid).

Gender is "not sex, [nor] a state of nature," but the "representation of each individual in terms of a particular social relation which pre-exists the individual:" this particular social relation is premised on the rigid and intractable "opposition of two biological sexes" (De Lauretis 1987:

5). The sex-gender system is a key discourse that contributes to the Youth League's understanding of gender relations.

Sophie explains how, at a Youth League gender commission, she was "speaking about gender as a social construct, saying that ... being gay and lesbian is a matter of sexual preference" (Sophie, 11 December 2012). She explained that "One lady calls an order on me – 'order, order, no, you're lying. Because gays and lesbians are a gender on their own'. She was trying to say that gays and lesbians are neither male nor female, they are something that is not classified yet. Obviously, she [the lady] didn't understand the complexity of the term, gender, but also *did not understand the term 'sex' – that sex is either male or female,* and gender is a social construct" (Ibid). This understanding of sex as "either male or female" suggests a conceptualisation of sex as biological, natural and immune from interrogation.

BUT "SEX IS EITHER MALE OR FEMALE"

The above discussions reveal how the Youth League documents on unequal gender relations implicitly acknowledge that gender relations are socially constructed. This is a critical starting point for any engagement with the pursuit of equal gender relations. The above quotation reveals, however, an understanding of sex (as either male/female) as intractable, something natural and outside of critical engagement.

It is important to note that the following discussion serves to highlight the ways in which the theoretical work of the Youth League can be deepened and broadened. Their current work on unequal gender relations stands in marked contrast to policies and programmes developed by youth wings of political parties on an international stage.[15] This research serves to highlight potential areas of future (and deeper) engagement in the ANCYL's engagement with equal gender relations.

One such area is the idea of sex as factic. The three documents establish only two subjects: woman and man. Woman is the main subject. All policies, programmes, goals and strategies which are outlined are to do with empowering women, and considering women's needs and interests. Beyond this focus on women, the only other subject considered by the document is men. The documents juxtapose man and woman as opposites: the documents appear to

[15] An exploration of the Swedish Social Democratic Youth League's engagement with gender relations reveals one section of "feminism" on their website. This section (a sum total of half a page) details three demands: to stop the objectification of the body through photo editing, for the right of foreign women to have an abortion in Sweden, and for women and men to receive equal pay for equal work (and to abolish taxation on household services). (http://www.ssu.se/english/feminism)

assume that if we are not talking about empowering women, then we must be discussing the experiences of being a man.

There is no consideration of an individual being anything other than woman/man. This particular binary of sex cannot be underestimated: this understanding that you are either a man or a woman (even if your gender, that is the performance of your sex, may vary) is pervasive in the documents. Although Scott explains that this is a common trend in contemporary work, she calls for an exploration of "why these relations [between the sexes] are constructed as they are, why they work, or how they change" (Scott 1986: 1057-1058).

This is of critical importance. Ingraham (1997: 365) argues that if a text posits "males and females, masculine and feminine, heterosexual and homosexual as opposites," then the text perpetuates a thinking that organises all areas of "difference as hierarchical and oppositional binaries". Her work is helpful when looking at the ANCYL documents: she argues that this binary understanding of difference often exists where "gender is understood as socially constructed" whereas sex is seen as a "biological fact" and able to "escape interrogation" (Ingraham 1997: 365-366).

This is achieved through casting the binary of sex (man/woman) in a "prediscursive domain [which is] prior to culture, [and as such, viewed as] a politically neutral surface on which culture acts" (Butler 1999: 11). Ingraham recognises that sex is a "socially constructed category" that is related to ways of "making sense of the body" and so, must be "scrutinized in relation to the interests that its definition furthers" (1997: 366). We must ask what interests are furthered, or privileged, by an understanding of sex as "the division of humanity into biological categories of female and male?" (Ibid). "What counts as normal, natural or a 'fact' comes out of ways of making sense" of social relations, that are already "ideologically invested in the existing social order" (Ibid).

She calls on feminist scholars to consider "what is and what is not said in any text" – an examination of what any "text assumes and does not speak" (Ingraham 1997: 359). An understanding of sex as "immutably factic" but gender as "acquired" and constructed (Butler 1999: 142) is a position held by the Youth League. By contrast, Wittig argues that the category of sex is "constructed in a specifically political way" to serve the purposes of reproductive sexuality: the "category of 'sex' is a gendered term, fully politically invested, naturalized but not natural" (Butler 1999: 143). Butler contends that the categories of sex, man and woman, are culturally constructed (Butler 1987: 137).

Foucault confirms that the very category of sex is regulative and calls for a critical engagement with the category of sex (Butler 1999: 122). "Man" and "woman" are "at once, empty and overflowing categories:" "empty because they have no ultimate, transcendent meaning, and overflowing because even when they appear to be fixed, they still contain within them alternative, denied or suppressed definitions" and ways of being (Scott 1986: 1074). It becomes of crucial importance to "treat the opposition between male and female as problematic, rather than known, as something contextually defined, repeatedly constructed" (Scott 1986: 1074).

Butler confirms the need to problematise sex: gender should not be conceived merely as the "cultural inscription of meaning on a pregiven sex" (Butler 1999: 11). Gender is the "apparatus of cultural construction" by which the sexes themselves are established (Butler 1999: 11). Whether gender or sex are seen as fixed or free is a "function of a discourse which ... seeks to set certain limits to ... any analysis of gender," and in so doing, "presuppose and pre-empt the possibilities of imaginable and realizable gender configurations within culture" (Butler 1999: 13). A hegemonic cultural discourse "predicated on binary structures" is at play, and is able to demarcate the "imaginable domain of gender" (Ibid).

SO, WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SEXUALITY?

The above discussion points to the ways in which the binary man/woman is embedded in these Youth League documents. The consequences of this binary for the conceptualisation, and understanding, of sexual identities will be drawn out in chapter three. This research recognises that gender and sexuality are inextricably bound up and interlinked and as such, all considerations and insights arising from this chapter will be necessarily carried into the following chapter, in which the theorisation of sexuality will be explored as unwilling (and possibly unable) to account for sexualities outside the heterosexual norm.

CHAPTER 3: THE BINARY IS JUST THE BEGINNING

"Most people in the Youth League are seen as heterosexual. Of course there are gays and lesbians. They're somewhere. They're there but you know, I can't boldly say that I know xyz is a lesbian".

Palesa, 11 December 2012

The previous chapter examined the ways in which the Youth League documents rely on the binary of man/woman. It unpacked how this binary of man/woman entrenches an understanding of sex as factic and so, able to escape interrogation.

This understanding of sex (as the binary of man/woman) is epitomised in the response of the Youth League to Caster Semenya and her "transgress[ion of] the norms of the two-sex system" (Schuhmann 2010: 96). Of particular interest is the response of the ANCYL, who declared that "even if a test is done, the ANCYL will never accept the categorisation of Caster Semenya as a hermaphrodite, because in South Africa and the entire world of sanity, such does not exist" (Ibid). This statement provides an entry point into exploring the implications of this rigid understanding of sex (the binary of man/woman) for the understanding of sexual identities. The consequences of holding sex outside the sphere of inquiry will be shown to have implications for perpetuating a particular form of dominant heterosexuality.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE MAN/WOMAN BINARY FOR SEXUALITY

Although the Youth League documents move from a position that acknowledges the constructed nature of gender relations, these texts rely on a binary understanding of sex (man/woman). We must consider the implications of this binary of sex (man/woman) for shapes of desire.

Butler argues that the "constructed" categories of sex, man and woman, feed into a broader discussion of "presumptive heterosexuality" which threatens that "you-will-be-straight or you-will-not-be" (Butler 1999: 148). Entrenching the binary of man/woman (whether this is an intentional strategy or not) works to limit the ways in which people can perform alternative sexual identities: this binary entrenches a necessary coherence between sex, gender performance and desire. Any deviation from this model is met with violence and discrimination (particularly against those whose desire does not match up to their gender

performance or 'biological' sex). The extent to which the Youth League engages with these considerations forms the core of this chapter.

The 2011 document provides that, within South Africa, "heterosexual behaviour [is] the only natural and acceptable behaviour" (Discussion document 2011: 10). Homosexuality "challenges established norms about gender roles and expectations" (Ibid). This research unpacks the depth of the Youth League's engagement with questions of desire and heterosexuality.

Interviews revealed that within the documents, there are "attempts here and there to raise the fact that [society] might not be [heterosexual]. I think, of course, more could be done. The organization itself doesn't at all want to interact with that reality" (Sophie, 11 December 2012).

When we consider the three documents' engagement with sexuality, the embedded nature of the binary of man/woman is revealed. The 2011 document engages with the topic of sexuality by discussing the issue of sexual violence, rape and homophobic violence. It provides that sexual violence is "the way in which *men* assert their power and dominance over *women* in a patriarchal society" (2011: 8). It is important to note that sexual violence can be perpetrated by women against men but for the most part, the reality is (as captured by the document) that structural violence does mean that women are targeted more. For this chapter, what is particularly significant is the way in which men and women are seen as the only actors in this exchange.

The document presents the rape statistics for South Africa (acknowledging that many rape cases go unreported owing to "embarrassment, stigmatisation, self-blame and fear of victimisation) and then begins its first discussion of "homophobia" (2011: 9). It understands homophobia as "sexual violence [that is perpetrated against] lesbian *women* and gay *men*" (Ibid). Homophobia is discrimination on the basis of sexual identification that extends beyond sexual violence, and encompasses a wide variety of acts. The document explains that homophobia is a "silent crime," a form of "culturally-sanctioned discrimination against lesbians and gays in the country" (Ibid). Even within a discussion that explicitly presents forms of sexuality and ways of being that move beyond heterosexuality, the main actors are women and men.

Framing the actors as men/women has important consequences for unpacking the Youth League's engagement with alternative sexual identities. The 2011 document (neither the constitution nor the 2011 document engage with sexual orientation other than heterosexuality) points to the reality that homosexual people suffer from a range of abuses on a daily basis. Interestingly, the constitution states that every member of the ANCYL shall have the right to protection against "harassment, victimization and/or discrimination based on race, ethnicity, sex or creed:" it contains no provision for protection against discrimination on the basis of one's sexual orientation, nor is violence (or abuse) on the basis of one's sexual orientation prohibited or engaged with on any level (2011: 8).

Existing academic work speaks to the need to unpack how heterosexuality "circulates as if taken for granted, naturally occurring and unquestioned" (Ingraham 1997: 357). Ingraham urges scholars to examine the "taken-for-granted order" of a text (Ibid): we must consider how gender relations and sexual identities are represented and "what that representation leaves out or makes unrepresentable" (De Lauretis 1987: 26). In this way, we will be in a position to interrogate the "represented discursive space of the positions made available by hegemonic discourse" and the "space-off, the elsewhere, of these discourses" (Ibid). We must unpack the ways in which sexual identities have been represented in these Youth League texts.

Tamale calls for any work on sexual identities to counter the "essentialism" embedded in past (and present) sexuality research (Tamale 2011: 11). Feminist scholars are urged to "read [the] multiple and contextual meanings" of sexualities and move beyond "binary oppositions and simplistic labels" (Tamale 2011: 11-12). For McFadden, it is crucial to consider how sexual identity is connected to the power of fully "owning pleasure" (quoted in Lewis 2011: 207).We must go beyond a discussion of bodies and sexual identities as the "sites of others' inscribed meanings," and consider how they represent "sources of African women's agency" (Lewis 2011: 207). There is, according to Tamale, a need to engage in conversations about "pleasure, eroticism and desire" and the positive aspects of African sexualities (Tamale 2011: 23).

The concept of sexualities must be understood as an "all-encompassing phenomenon" which touches on issues like "pleasure, the human body, dress, self-esteem, gender identity, power and violence" (Tamale 2011: 12). It is important to explore whether these Youth League texts speak about "pleasure, creativity, subversion, violence, oppression and living" (Ibid). Do the

Youth League documents include discussions of "desire, the erotic, emotions, sensuality, intimacy, commitment, power, relationship, negotiations, explorations, exploitation, expression, trust, personhood, belonging, identity, pleasure, entertainment, consumption, feminine propriety, respectability, spirituality, custom and ritual" (Nyanzi 2011: 48)?.

The 2011 document discusses taboo topics, such as the need to openly engage with the "extremely vulnerable women" who are involved in sex work, and who are subject to "persistent stigma and discrimination" (which in turn limits their access to important health services) (2011: 10). This document casts sex workers as vulnerable victims, and fails to assign them any agency whatsoever. Tamale draws on the work of Foucault (1984: 83) who theorised the human body as an "object of power, and the site at which power is resisted" (Tamale 2011: 163). This insight suggests how objectifying sex workers as "hapless victims" fails to consider how they may "wield some degree of power" and are able to "subvert [the construct] of a dominant male and subordinate female" (Tamale 2011: 160).

For many scholars, sex work is a "legitimate trade in which service providers deserve all the rights of any worker:" initiatives such as the International Committee for Prostitutes Rights were established to ensure that "sex workers enjoyed their full human rights" (Tamale 2011: 153). This work responds to the reading of sex workers as vulnerable passive victims. For Tamale, the claim that sex workers have no agency reinforces the "framework of heterosexual marriage and procreation" as the "appropriate activity" for women (Tamale 2011: 151).

The 2011 ANCYL text engages with alternative sexual identities by calling for increased campaigning against sexual violence and rape, as well as "the plight of lesbian women" (in particular those who are black/poor/at the receiving end of patriarchal notions about women's sexuality)[16] (2011: 17). The Youth League's call for change includes the demand to "publicly condemn violence against homosexual people" and the need to "raise awareness around issues affecting them" (2011: 18).

Conversations about alternative sexual identities are particularly important in South Africa, where many see a legitimate justification for homophobia in the claim that homosexuality is "un-African" and "ungodly" (Discussion document 2011: 9). Bev Ditsie explains how, after

[16] This focus on lesbian women suggests a reality in which those who engage in alternative gender performances (specifically lesbian women) are subjected to increased violence: this may be as a result of the ways in which this gender performance is seen as transgressing too far into a man's world and assuming too much male privilege.

publicly identifying herself as a lesbian, "Everywhere there was a whole petition to get me killed, to get people LIKE ME. ... I could not walk to the shops without hearing at least one person or some car passing by, ... saying "bitch, we're going to get you, you're a woman, you faggot" (quoted in Matebeni 2001: 53).

The 2011 ANCYL document also explores the phenomenon of corrective rape: since 1998, 39 rapes and murders of lesbian women have been reported (Ibid). Only one of these reported murders has resulted in a conviction, which many activists attribute to the reality that homophobic crimes "are still not classified as hate crimes" (Ibid). One of the text's strengths lies in its condemnation of the "limp-wristed response of ... state and political institutions," which have failed to condemn these acts (Ibid).

A later reference to alternative sexual identities can be seen in the ANCYL proposed strategies in their pursuit of equal gender relations. The ANCYL calls for the public condemnation of violence against *homosexual people*, and the need to raise awareness "around issues affecting them" (Discussion document 2011: 17-18). The document also suggests the introduction of a Hate Crimes Bill, so that "violence against *lesbians, gays, transgendered and bisexual* [people] can be prosecuted as hate crimes," (if they are targeted on the basis of their sexual orientation) (2011: 17-18).

The only other reference to alternative sexual identities is contained in the 2011 document's attempt to explain the failure of organisations to take a strong stand against acts such as corrective rape. The text explains that there is a "marked split between" organisations working with "*lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and intersex* (LBGTI)" individuals and those who are focused on acts of violence against women (Ibid). In this instance, the scope of alternative sexual identities is expanded to include intersexed individuals.

There appears to be a second binary at play: heterosexuality (what is considered normal sexual orientation) is juxtaposed to everything else that is not heterosexual (and covers a wide range of 'other' sexualities). The documents do not engage with the differences and similarities between these various alternative sexual identities.

Interviews with Youth League members revealed that those who explore a sexual identity outside of heterosexuality seem to be filled with "fear. Clearly if there's not that many who are willing to be open about their sexual preferences, it means they don't find that expression, they don't find that space. And that means we're not allowing them that space*"* (Nosipho, 11

December 2012). This seems to suggest that the experiences and needs of those outside the heterosexual norm are not fully engaged with. Palesa explains that "we know they're there. The ANCYL [at a later stage] will ... need to talk about it – not because they [the ANCYL] really have an interest in addressing sexuality which is outside the norm, but because it's the right thing to do" (Palesa, 11 December 2012).

This call for a more nuanced discussion of sexual identities is particularly important in light of the South African experience of colonialism and apartheid (Tamale 2011: 13). In colonial times, African bodies and sexual identities and practices were portrayed as "immoral, bestial and lascivious" and thus provided a justification for colonisers to "civilise the barbarian and savage natives of the 'dark continent' (Tamale 2011: 14-15). As such, the dominant understanding and portrayal of African sexualities was in terms of "deviance, disease and abnormality, and [as] in need of correction, control, punishment and cures[17]" (Nyanzi 2011: 477). Issues of "sexual wellness and ... eroticism and desire" were neglected (Nyanzi 2011: 478).

During apartheid, considerations of "pleasure, eroticism and desire" and positive aspects of African sexualities were further neglected (Tamale 2011: 23). The apartheid state fixated on "regulating, directing and shaping the most intimate parts of the lives of subjects" (Ratele 2001 quoted in Bennett 2011: 81). This "draconian policing of sexuality" focused on preserving the "purity" of the white "race" and responded to "fears of black overpopulation and the imperative of controlling black fertility" (Posel 2011: 131).

Although the ANCYL documents do consider alternative configurations of sexual identities (outside the heterosexual norm), the documents do not engage with the ways in which colonialism and apartheid's intensive regulation and policing of sexuality may have implications for how sexual identities are performed today. The documents do, as discussed earlier, acknowledge the ways in which heterosexuality maintains its dominance in South African society. There is, however, room for more work to be done around the history, nuances and complexities of alternative sexual identities in contemporary South Africa.

[17] Nyanzi writes that the portrayal of African sexual identities and practices in this manner revealed "more about the fears, fantasies and preoccupations with sexuality" of the European colonisers than anything else (Nyanzi 2011: 477).

This is captured in Nosipho's comment that "I am ... yet to see a transgender Youth League members or ... an openly gay Youth League member (male or female) They just aren't allowed that space – to express themselves in that way" (Nosipho, 11 December 2012).

THE BINARY (MAN/WOMAN) AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR DESIRE

Foucault's writing speaks to the complexity of any exploration of sexual identity. For Foucault, sexual identity (commonly understood as a "natural, private and intimate" matter) is in fact "completely constructed in culture according to the political aims of the society's dominant class" (De Lauretis 1987: 12). Sexuality is "saturated with power" (Butler 1999: 119): sexuality is "produced in the service of the social regulation and control of sexuality" (Butler 1999: 31). For Foucault, 'sexuality' is an "open and complex historical system of discourse and power" that produces "the misnomer of 'sex'" as a way to conceal and perpetuate power relations (Butler 1999: 12). De Lauretis (who draws on the work of Foucault) sees sexual identities and gender relations as a "set of effects produced in bodies, behaviors and social relations" (De Lauretis 1987: 3).

Butler (1999: 26) explains that, for Foucault, the "artificial ... binary regulation of sexuality" suppresses the "subversive multiplicity of a sexuality that disrupts heterosexual [and] reproductive ... hegemonies". Butler presents Foucault's work in *The History of Sexuality* and argues that '"sex' as a 'cause' of sexual experience, behavior and desire ... is [actually] an 'effect' (the production of a given regime of sexuality that seeks to regulate sexual experience, by instating the discrete categories of sex as foundational and causal functions within any discursive account of sexuality)" (Butler 1999: 31).

Existing work, particularly the writing of Judith Butler, unpacks the ways in which this binary of man/woman works to entrench a particular work of heterosexual desire. This binary provides the "framework within which heterosexual desire is articulated and reified as natural" (Butler 1999: 42). Butler's work is particularly helpful in unpacking some of the problematic implications of relying on a binary of sex (man/woman) for questions of desire.

Heterosexuality performs a key function: the "internal coherence ... of either man or woman requires a stable and oppositional heterosexuality" (Butler 1999: 30). This stable and oppositional heterosexuality is achieved through the binary of man/woman. Heterosexuality "requires and produces the univocity of each of the gendered terms that constitute the limit of gendered possibilities within an oppositional binary system" (Ibid).

Butler argues that "naturalized heterosexuality requires and regulates gender as a binary relation" in which the masculine comes to be differentiated from the feminine through the practices of heterosexual desire (Butler 1999: 30). In so doing, the "illusion of an interior and organizing core" is created which regulates "sexuality within the obligatory frame of reproductive heterosexuality" (Butler 1999: 173).

There is a key link between sex, gender relations and desire: in the construction of gender relations, 'intelligible' genders are those who maintain relations of "coherence and continuity among sex, gender, sexual practice and desire" (Butler 1999: 23). This construction requires coherence between "biological sex, culturally constituted genders, and the 'expression' or 'effect' of both in the manifestation of sexual desire through sexual practice" (Ibid). Butler explains that identities in which "gender does not follow from sex, and those in which the practices of desire do not 'follow' from either sex or gender" are prohibited, and regarded as unintelligible (Butler 1999: 24). This demonstrates the ways in which the binary of man/woman feeds into broader considerations of appropriate gender performances and legitimate forms of desire (heterosexuality).

The binary of man/woman and the notion of an "essential sex, and a true and abiding masculinity and femininity" works to conceal the ways in which "gender reality is in fact constructed through "sustained social performances" (Butler 1999: 180). The notion of sex or gender relations as essential and unchangeable conceals the "possibilities for proliferating gender configurations outside the restricting frames of masculinist domination and compulsory heterosexuality" (Ibid).

For Butler, drag captures the moments in which one is uncertain whether the body in question is a man or woman (Butler 1999: xxiii). In these moments, the "reality of gender is ... put into crisis" and we begin to realise that "what we take to be 'real' is in fact a changeable and revisable reality" (Ibid). Drag serves to explain how reality is not "as fixed" as is often assumed (Butler 1999: xxiii).

CONCLUSION

This exploration of the ways in which the binary of man/woman works to restrict alternative configurations of sexual identities is of key importance. Although the Youth League recognises that gender is constructed (and that one's gender does not necessarily flow from one's sex as man/woman), the perpetuation of sex/gender divide serves to reinforce an

assumed binary relation between man/woman and in so doing, limits the fullness of the discussion of alternative sexual identities. It entrenches a necessary coherence between sex, gender relations and heterosexual desire.

Nosipho (11 December 2012) captures some of the complexities of the engagement with gender: “I think it’s a general societal attitude – how we’re socialised, and in our homes. I think there [are] many people who come from homes where homosexuality is the devil. If ... you yourself are gay, and you see how people act around you, and how they act towards other gay people, you don’t wanna put yourself in a position where you could be hurt, or ridiculed, or made to be an outcast”.

CHAPTER 4: THE INVISIBILITY OF MASCULINITY

"If, let's say, we were to write a gender document that was addressing the needs of males in the organisation – it would look completely different".

Palesa, 11 December 2012

The ANCYL and its role in the struggle for Gender Equality (2001), *The ANCYL Perspective on Gender Relations and Women's Emancipation* (2011), and provisions of the ANCYL constitution focus on the empowerment and interests of women. This is a key component of any strategy that seeks to undermine gender inequality, but it seems that this 'component' is discussed at the expense of any exploration of masculinity, being a man, and different and alternative ways of performing one's masculinity.

The pursuit of equality (particularly equal gender relations) requires the involvement of men, and the sharing of the privileges that they accrue through patriarchy. It is only in this way that gender equality will become a feasible goal. It is important to note that in sharing power and privileges, men stand to benefit from the dismantling of patriarchy (for example, being liberated from rigid gender roles and expectations). The pursuit of gender equality demands examining the experiences and interests of both women and men.

WHAT *DO* THE DOCUMENTS SAY ABOUT MEN?

The only document that engages with the experience of men is the 2011 *ANCYL Perspective on Gender Relations and Women's Emancipation.* It argues that "patriarchy is a system of male domination" and that gender relations refer to "power relations defined by inequality between the sexes, and the gender roles ascribed to each" (2011: 1). The document acknowledges the ways in which gender oppression involves both "men" and "women" but claims that the term 'gender oppression' "neutralises the question of domination, and masks the unequal way in which men and women relate in a patriarchal society" (Ibid).

The text calls for an interrogation of the "power relations" that perpetuate the system of "women's subordination and male domination" (2011: 2). The document acknowledges that "men's different subjective experiences with the system (on the basis on different ages, races, classes and even sexual orientation" means that "all men [do not] benefit in the same and equal ways" (Ibid). The document explains that "rich, white men reap more benefits under [the] racialised, patriarchal [and] capitalist system (than black working-class men who work

under them) (2011: 5). The document argues that although the current shape of gender relations in South African gives men dominance and privilege, men also simultaneously experience the pressure of having to conform to rigid gender roles and expectations" (Ibid).

This is the only engagement with the idea that "men need to a part of [the struggle for equal gender relations]" (Nosipho, 11 December 2012). This pressure to conform to "rigid gender roles and expectations" plays out in how "men ... carry the burden of providing financially, being strong for their families, and expected by society to step up to everything generally" (Sophie, 11 December 2012).

Another (albeit brief) reference to men in the discussion document is as perpetrators of "sexual violence [as a] way in which men assert their power and dominance over women in a patriarchal society" (2011: 8). The document casts men as perpetrators of "violence and victimisation" against women who are involved in sex work (2011: 8). The 2011 text also engages with how men resisted discussions around sexual harassment (in the late 1990s) and the gender quota (in the early 1990s and through to today): in both instances, "strong resistance was waged by male comrades" (2011: 3, 4 and 11).

It is important to consider the ways in which the Youth League's commitment to "making the organisation a home for young women" engages with masculinity. For the most part, as illustrated above, a discussion of men and ways of performing masculinity are noticeably absent from these gender documents. The documents point to the gender roles and expectations (experienced by men) but do not seem to explore alternative shapes of masculinity (beyond encouraging men to cry, nurture, be vulnerable, be in touch with their emotions and communicate effectively). It is vital to unpack this invisibility (and lack of interrogation) of masculinity.

Phillips' work around the "invisibility of the white man" in the records of early 20th century Southern Rhodesia (2011: 109) provides a useful starting point. Phillips explores how, in this context, the white man played the "central, determining role [as] the subject who described and defined others but steadfastly refused to turn the narrative upon himself" (Ibid). Nonetheless, the white man is "visible [and his] presence pervades the whole of this arena: he can be detected through the censure of others" (Phillips 2011: 109). This invisibility of the white man can potentially be paralleled with the invisibility of men in the Youth League documents.

Gqola suggests that "those who belong to the valued category [whether this be men, whites, heterosexuals, citizens] can periodically (tokenistically) engage with individuals from the oppressed group ... without changing their/our status as privileged, or interrogating the violated and reviled who they/we fashionably co-opt" (Gqola 2011: 626). This chapter will explore how masculinity is able to remain hidden, invisible and immune from interrogation within the Youth League constitution and discussion documents on gender.

UNDERSTANDING MASCULINITY

Ratele (2011: 413-414) explains that masculinity "cannot be reduced to sexuality, ... equated with the roles men play, ... the male body, ... or male identity". The idea of being a man refers to "many ideas (of men and women) about what turns a male person into a man" (Ratele 2011: 414).

Both masculinity and femininity are "gender projects" and are constructed through "power relations," that is the overall "subordination of women and the dominance of men," the gendered division of labour, and the "practices that shape and realize desire" (Connell 2005: 233-234). As such, masculinity is a "configuration of practice within a system of gender relations" in which members of the privileged group, usually men, use violence to "sustain their dominance" (Connell 2005: 241). The construction of masculinity takes place in a complex field of power relations, in which there is a continuing process of "mobilisation, marginalisation, contestation, resistance and subordination" (Ratele 2011: 409).

There are many "shapes of manhood" (Ratele 2011: 408). The shape of masculinity varies between different groups and historical moments (Ratele 2011: 414). Existing "gender orders construct multiple masculinities:" the shape of masculinity "differ according to the gender relations in a particular social setting" (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005: 835-836).

The fact that the documents do not explore the complexities of masculinity within South African society, or even ANCYL organisational culture, suggests that there may be a dominant masculinity at play – a form of masculinity that is able to silence alternative ways of being a man (by presenting these alternative masculinities in particular ways).

For example, let us consider how the 2011 discussion document frames its exploration of alternative sexualities and alternative performances of masculinities. The 2011 document explores the idea of "gay, bisexual, transgendered and intersex (LBGTI)" individuals on two occasions: once as victims of hate crimes (perpetrated on the basis of sexual orientation) and

secondly, as evidence of how activism is split between groups fighting for women's rights and those struggling for the rights of gay, bisexual, transgendered and intersex (LBGTI) individuals (Discussion document 2011: 10 and 17-18).

This is the extent to which the documents engage with alternative performances of masculinity (through alternative configurations of gender relations and sexual identities). This suggests a superficial treatment of these alternative ways of 'being a man'. Men are either presented as violent perpetrators (of acts such as sexual violence or victimisation of sex workers) or as an alternative Other to the norm of heterosexuality (in performing these alternative sexual identities).

This suggests a situation in which a particular shape of masculinity exists and is able to present itself as the dominant form of 'being a man' and in the process, "silence other masculinities" (Ampofo and Boateng 2011: 422-423). These other masculinities are placed into "opposition opposition to itself in such a way that the values expressed do not have currency or legitimacy, and present a version of how men should live, and how putative real men behave as the cultural ideal" (Ibid). As such, although a number of masculinities exist, "a particular version of masculinity has supremacy and greater legitimacy in society:" this form of masculinity is hegemonic masculinity (Ampofo and Boateng 2011: 423).

HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY

The idea of a multiplicity and "hierarchy of masculinities" was brought to light by "homosexual men's experience with violence and prejudice from straight men" (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005: 831). Empirical research confirmed the "plurality of masculinities and the complexities of gender construction for men, and gave evidence of the active struggle for dominance" among these masculinities (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005: 832). Hegemonic masculinity is distinguished from other masculinities: it is normative and "embodie[s] the currently most honoured way of being a man, it require[s] all other men to position themselves in relation to it, and it ideologically legitimate[s] the global subordination of women to men" (Ibid).

In order to fully understand what hegemonic masculinity is, it is important to consider the practices by which hegemonic masculinity is created. The first key concept is "hegemony" which refers to the "cultural dynamic by which a group claims and sustains a leading position in social life. At any given time, one form of masculinity is culturally exalted" (Connell

2005: 236). Hegemonic masculinity can therefore be defined as the "configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy (Connell 2005: 236-237). A hegemonic masculinity is hegemonic to the extent that it is able to stabilise patriarchal power (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005: 853).

This theory of hegemonic masculinities draws on a Gramscian conception of hegemony. Although Gramsci's work focuses on the ways in which a dominant social class is able to establish and maintain hegemony, his writings on hegemony provide insight into the ways that hegemonic masculinities may function within society.

Litowitz explains that hegemony refers to a condition in which the "supremacy of a social group is achieved ... by physical force ('domination') [and the] consensual submission of the very people who were dominated ('hegemony') (Litowitz 2001: 518). Any form of long-lasting social control requires power at the level of "force ... and consent, authority and hegemony" (Litowitz 2000: 519). Hegemony is "insidious and complicated" and involves "subduing and co-opting dissenting voices through subtle dissemination of the dominant group's perspective as universal and natural, to the point where [that group's] beliefs and practices become an intractable component of common sense" (Ibid).

Fiori (1970) claims that Gramsci's originality as a Marxist thinker lay in his thinking that "the system's real strength does not lie in the violence of the ruling class, or the coercive power of its state apparatus, but in the acceptance by the ruled of a conception of the world which belongs to the rulers" (quoted by Litowitz 2000: 527). The acceptance of the philosophy of the ruling class comes to emerge as "common sense," and the masses come to "accept the morality, the customs, the institutionalized rules of behavior" of the society in which they live (Litowitz 2000: 527).

Hegemony requires "the establishment of an entire way of life as standard and expected, the identification of the dominated with the dominators, and the subtle establishment of the prevailing ideology as natural and inevitable, indeed commonsensical[18]" (Litowitz 2000: 528). This speaks to the ways in which one group is able to claim and sustain a dominant (and leading) position in social life, and exalt "one form of masculinity" (Connell 2005: 236).

[18] This acceptance of a particular conception of the world by the masses speaks to the ways in which women come to willingly engage in their own suppression: as such, this reality demands activism that moves beyond education, and comes to demand an interrogation of societal structures that perpetuate patriarchy.

Hegemonic masculinities come into existence in "specific circumstances and [are] open to historical change," where older forms of masculinity can be displaced by new ones (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005: 832-833). Connell explains that hegemonic masculinity is "not a fixed character type, always and everywhere the same" but rather is rather the masculinity that occupies the hegemonic position in a "given pattern of gender relations" (Connell 2005: 236).

A second important concept is "subordination" and specifically, the "gender relations of dominance and subordination between groups of men" (Connell 2005: 237). This speaks to the "dominance of heterosexual men and the subordination of homosexual men" in ways that include "political and cultural exclusion, cultural abuse, legal violence, street violence, economic discrimination and personal boycotts" (Ibid). Oppression "positions homosexual masculinities at the bottom of a gender hierarchy among men" (Connell 2005: 238). Gay masculinities are the most conspicuous subordinated masculinity. It is important to note that there is not one shape of homosexual (or alternative) masculinity: dynamics such as race and class play out in particular ways.

Connell also points to the third key concept of "complicity" and explains that the number of men "rigorously practicing the hegemonic pattern [of masculinity] in its entirety may be quite small" (Ibid). This concept of complicity points to the ways in which these men still gain from the "overall subordination of women" even if they are not "the frontline troops of patriarchy" (Ibid). In this manner, masculinities may be constructed in ways that perpetuate the "patriarchal divide," without actively acting out the hegemonic pattern of masculinity, and as such, are "complicit" (Ibid). Complicity ensures that "the interests" of men are prioritised ahead of those of women, who continue to be subordinated under patriarchal systems, attitudes and structures (Connell 2005: 240)[19].

The primacy of sexual conquest for many shapes of hegemonic masculinity is of particular importance. Ratele explains that "sexuality is a major preoccupation of the dominant form of masculinity in Africa: ... for men who ardently subscribe to the aggressive configuration of masculine heterosexuality, the point of relating to women is to fuck them" (Ratele 2011:

[19] Transgender performances challenge this particular function of hegemonic masculinity. Engaging with, and being in full support of, transgender people works to protect them as well as to achieve a general acceptance of various gender performances (which will assist heterosexual men and women to become aware of and step out of their complicities with patriarchy).

402). It is about "possessing: the more women a man possesses and the more sought-after he appears [in the minds of other men], the more a 'man' he is" (Ibid).

The importance of heterosexuality for hegemonic masculinity can be seen in how same-sex female desires are often 'attacked, maligned and not fully represented in social life [or] the popular imagination:" for Ratele, this is "aimed at controlling all female sexuality and at subordinating female bodies and desires to men's commands" (Ratele 2011: 404). Zanele Muholi's work explores the "existence and resistance [of] lesbians or women loving women ... [and the ways] our very existence disrupts dominant (hetero)sexualities, patriarchies and oppressions" (quoted in Ratele 2011: 403).

There is "concerted erasure, stigmatisation, criminalisation, and assaults" of and on women engaging in sexual relations with women, specifically in the form of "corrective rape" (Ibid). In South Africa, where discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is constitutionally prohibited, there is currently a "backlash of crimes targeted specifically at lesbian women, who are perceived as representing a direct and specific threat to the status quo" (ActionAid researchers quoted in Ratele 2011: 405).

SO, WHAT DOES THE HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY OF *THE YOUTH LEAGUE* LOOK LIKE?

At its core, hegemonic masculinity refers to the "things males (for the most part, but also females) do that support the subjugation of girls and women as a group" and the "male domination of females" (Ratele 2011: 415). It is important to note that hegemonic masculinities can be constructed in ways "that do not correspond closely to the lives of any actual men" (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005: 838). These models of masculinity may "express ... ideals, fantasies and desires" and articulate "loosely" with masculinities that exist in everyday local circumstances: in so doing, they still contribute to "hegemony in the society-wide gender order as a whole" (Ibid).

Generally, hegemonic masculinity includes men "having multiple concurrent sexual partners and not reflecting about it; demonstrating self-composure and not disclosing too much feeling; exhibiting arrogance and not being too concerned with others' feelings; toughness; and driving at high speeds" (Ibid). The practices and institutions "that define this sort of manhood has become hegemonic" as they are usually "deliberately or unconsciously encouraged by society" (Ibid).

Nosipho, a young female Youth League activist, explains that "there are men [who go] all out to prove that he's a man, be [it that he] has five girlfriends or that he talks about women in a very degrading manner. If there were to be a gay man who walks past him, that attitude of how he'd be all like stay away from me. Some of them even treat sexuality like it's a disease, that you can catch it" (Nosipho, 11 December 2012). This confirms how the shape of hegemonic masculinity within the Youth League reflects a general feature of hegemonic masculinity as it is marked by "the number of women with whom [men have] sex, the sexual attractiveness of their female partners, the claims about the number of 'sexual rounds' they can go with women" (Ratele 2011: 416).

In addition to this focus on sexual prowess, this particular shape of hegemonic masculinity relies on the "denial of male sexualities other then heterosexuality" (Ratele 2011: 407). Ratele explains that the "system of gender domination needs women and men not to mobilise against its structures, to remain acquiescent and not [to] rock the patriarchal boat" (Ibid). Ratele argues that the existence of male-to-male African sexuality makes "those who swing that way objects of fear and hate within the dominant sexual system" (Ratele 2011: 408).

Men who "eroticise men instead of women engender a potential crisis in ruling ideas of true masculinity" and their behaviour indicates that there is "neither one, homogenous, untroubled masculinity" nor masculinity identity (Ibid). Notwithstanding the reality that there are "many shapes of manhood," most societies are organised to "support the predominant form of manhood – the heterosexual from" (Ratele 2011: 408).

Sustaining a "given pattern of hegemony requires the policing of men (as well as the exclusion and discrediting of women)" (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005: 844). This policing of men often employs violence "among men:" "terror" is used a way of "drawing boundaries [and] marking exclusions in heterosexual violence against gay men" (Connell 2005: 241).

Nosipho explains that "I know with men (who are a little more feminine but not necessarily homosexual), they are pushed to the outskirts – they are made to feel like they are the Other. And therefore, they feel that they need to – try to be one of the boys. ... There was this one guy – more on the feminine side, not necessarily homosexual. Because of how people perceived him to be, I've always seen him to be pushed to the outskirts. ... Because of how he's seen to act socially, he's pushed to the side and he's kept at bay because he makes others

uncomfortable" (Nosipho, 11 December 2012). For Nosipho, "you have to be masculine – if you're not, there's the door" (Ibid).

It is important to note that, within hegemonic masculinities, the "same behaviour that receives active or tacit support when expressed by boys and men is almost always vehemently discouraged or at least frowned upon when engaged in by girls and women" (Ratele 2011: 415). As such, the "gender-differentiated development of males and females" forms a certain type of dominant masculinity (Ibid). Ratele (2008) claims that hegemonic masculinity is a "mesh of social practices productive of gender-based hierarchies, including violence that supports these hierarchies, that is, the unequal relations between females and males as groups" (Ratele 2011: 415).

This dynamic plays out in the ANCYL. Sophie explains that "there are many women in the organisation who are sexually harassed: upon being sexually harassed, can be de-campaigned on the basis [of having had] sexual interactions with males in the organisation, [and] cannot lead because of those things (like if they've dated someone in the organisation). They would say, no she's a whore, we can't be led by her. The quickest way ... to de-campaign and incriminate a woman is to say that she's had many sexual relations within the organisation. [Even] females would go against her when you say that – once you say that, she probably won't lead – she'll be frowned down upon [by] both males and females" (Sophie, 11 December 2012).

The hypocrisy is revealed when Sophie discusses how if a man were to have lots of sexual partners, "it's normal. In fact, it's celebrated in the organisation." (Sophie, 11 December 2012). She explains that the "state of the organisation is that it is very sexist. Sometimes more sexist than outside in the world. It's very conservative" (Ibid).

It appears that one of the central ideas defining "the hegemonic, ruling or dominant configuration of masculinity" in some parts of Africa is "sexual activity ... sexual domination ... and sexual prowess" (Ratele 2011: 416). This is contrasted within the dominant style of "heterosexual womanhood" which is defined by "expressing passivity, submission and availability to men" (Ibid). This is epitomised by "how a woman dresses, sits, satisfies her man and the power of her male partner" (Ibid). For Connell, the concept of masculinity is "inherently relational:" masculinity does not exist except in "contrast with femininity" (Connell 2005: 232).

This discussion of heterosexual womanhood, and the ways in which this may be discussed within the documents, is therefore of paramount importance. Connell and Messerschmidt warn that we cannot analyse masculinities "by looking only at men and relations among men" (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005: 837). Studies on masculinities must take a "consistently relational approach to gender" (Ibid). The analysis of masculinities cannot neglect the study of women, and the ways in which their behaviour, practices and performances of gender may be regulated in order to serve a particular shape of hegemonic masculinity.

The previous chapters revealed how the Youth League documents confirm this style of "heterosexual womanhood" by casting women in the "tired polemics of violence, disease and reproduction" (Tamale 2011: 30). For the most part, the document casts women as oppressed, disempowered victims who need to be transformed from the status of "victimhood" into "agents of change" (Discussion document 2011: 2). Patricia McFadden explains that a "fundamental premise of patriarchal power and impunity is the denial and suppression of women's naming and controlling their bodies for their own joy and nurturing. Girls and women are persistently reminded that they are the chattels of men in societies" (quoted in Ratele 2011: 406).

As the chattels of men in society, women's sexual identities and the performance of their gender are regulated. The previous chapters revealed how the idea of an essence of woman, which rests on the binary of sex (man/woman), allows this form of hegemonic masculinity to "discipline female sexuality, to drive females into 'servicing' heterosexuality and [perpetuating] masculine domination" (Ratele 2011: 405-406). This is achieved through "homophobic violence, threats of assault, psychological abuse, discrediting of women and men (who support same-sex sexuality and the proscription of homosexual love)" (Ibid).

Men and women who have sexual preferences other than heterosexual desires "generate anxiety and disorder in the dominant order of masculinity because they identity around acts other than those that uphold the order of gendered sexualities" and complicate "the picture of sexual relations of men to women" (Ratele 2011: 416-417). "Men who are attracted to men (or both), and women who are attracted to women (or both) – by the mere fact of their existence – question and potentially mess up the power ([and] apparent universality and naturalness) of ruling heterosexual masculinity" (Ratele 2011: 417).

A particular form hegemonic masculinity appears to exist within the Youth League at this moment. This shape of hegemonic masculinity is constructed (similarly to the discourse of

gender relations) through a particular conceptualisation of sex (sex/gender) and desire. This particular way of being a man, and the embeddedness of heterosexuality (both encouraged by the theorisation of sex as factic and immune from interrogation) allows men a space to perform their masculinity in a particular way, a way that regulates (often violently) the performance of sexualities outside the heterosexual norm.

NATIONALISM AND ITS CONSEQUENCES FOR MASCULINITY AND FEMININITY

McClintock writes of the ways in which all nationalisms are "gendered ... invented ... and dangerous" (1993: 61). Traditionally, nationalist discourse portrays the nation as a heterosexual family, ruled by a patriarch, by men. Women are excluded from the domain of the public and their contribution to the "construction and maintenance of national communities and national identities" is minimized (Sinha 2004: 215). Women are traditionally constructed as "symbolic bearers of the nation" and in so doing, are "denied any direct relation to national agency" (McClintock 1993: 62)[20].

For Sinha, the discourse of 'the nation' is "implicated in particular elaborations of masculinity as much as of femininity" (Sinha 2004: 216). Nationalism works to consolidate "dichotomized notions of 'men' and 'women' and 'masculinity' and 'femininity'" (Sinha 2004: 222). In this manner, we have '"fathers' and 'mothers' and 'sons' and 'daughters' of the nation, all with their own gendered rights and obligations" (Ibid).

The nation is modelled as a "brotherhood or fraternity" (which does not include all men) and relies on the "exclusion of homosexuals and men otherwise constructed as deviants" (Sinha 2004: 223). As such, the imagery of nation as family provides "symbolic recipes for the healthy containment of sexuality within the community of the nation" (Posel 2011: 139).

The discourse of nationalism is an important site for the production and enactment of masculinity, often against and through the "self-conscious rejection of the feminine or feminized" (Ibid). The construction of femininity (within nationalist discourse) relies heavily on the image of "motherhood (both in the cultural representation of the nation as 'mother'

[20] Yuval-Davis and Anthias discuss five ways in which women have typically been "implicated" in nationalism: firstly, as "biological reproducers of members of national collectivities," secondly, as "reproducers of boundaries of national groups" and thirdly, as "transmitters or producers of a national culture" (McClintock 1993: 62). The fourth conception of women is of them as "symbolic signifiers of national difference" and finally, as "active participants" in the national struggle (McClintock 1993: 63).

and in women's roles as 'mothers of the nation')" and subsequently, women as objects of "national reverence and protection" (Sinha 2004: 24). Nonetheless, women have been able to successfully mobilise the construction of motherhood as a means to "stake their claims" in national politics: women in the ANC were able to deploy the focus on motherhood "to raise general concerns about women's emancipation" (Ibid).

It is crucial to consider the ways in which resistance to apartheid also "influenced constructions of masculinity," and womanhood (Bennett 2011: 83). '"Struggle' masculinities encouraged young men's overt and visible heterosexuality in the name of commitment to the overthrow of the regime" (Ibid).

Within the Youth League, and the South African context specifically, nationalism framed the strategies and actions adopted by the ANC, and by default its youth wing (the ANCYL). Nationalist discourse required "unity" from all genders, ages and ethnic groups within the anti-Apartheid struggle (Kimble & Unterhalter 1982: 14). All political action was focused on the dismantling of the Apartheid state: the major aim of opposition politics throughout the 20th century was "to mobilise [all, including] women for national liberation" (Hassim 1991: 65).

The 2011 discussion document explains that during the struggle any attempts to fight for equal gender relations was "seen as largely influenced by Western feminism ... which had little resonance for movements" operating within apartheid South Africa (2011: 2-3). Women's issues, concerns and interests came to be sidelined in the national struggle. Women who sought to raise issues that pertained to them were seen as diverting from the nationalist struggle and so, were accused of "not understanding, not being sufficiently committed to national liberation [and] being different" (Hassim 2004: 445).

Women's issues were seen as separate from and dangerous to the national liberation struggle (Hassim 2004: 446). Attempts to raise women's issues and experiences were seen as "non-political" and as a "distraction against the key struggle" (Discussion document 2011: 2). As such, the extent to which women could "legitimately raise issues related to sexuality, reproductive rights and [bodily] integrity" was largely curtailed (Discussion document 2011: 2-3).

In addition to casting women as embodiments of a particular form of femininity, research reveals how this nationalist discourse was "saturated with references to masculinity" which

may account for the underlying structural exclusion and sidelining of women and their gender-specific interests (Erlank 2003: 653). It is often noted that "masculinity and nationalism articulate well with each other" (Waetjen 2001: 122). Dominant constructions of political actions and actors were essentially masculinist: Hassim refers to how the youth comrades of the ANCYL were seen as "*amaqabane* … that is the young lions who roar in anger ... [those with the] characteristics of warriors" (Hassim 1991: 70). Erlank's discussion of Anton Lembede's description of the political struggle as a process of the rebirth of a "young *virile* nation" illustrates the "gendered" nature of discourse that underpinned nationalist activity in the early 20th century (Erlank 2003: 653).

The masculinist nature of nationalist discourse is further evidenced in the 1944 preamble of the ANCYL. The preamble speaks about the "consequence of successive segregationist legislation as the *emasculation* of an entire community" (Erlank 2003: 665). Although full membership was extended to women in 1943 (Ibid), the "metaphoric construction [of language employed in the ANCYL] weighs against … the sexually-inclusive nature of the organisation's membership (Erlank 2003: 665)[21].

We must ask questions about the degree to which dominant conceptions of masculinity and femininity have moved away from this conception of masculinity (epitomised by a young, virile warrior, characterised by strength, leadership and sexual prowess). This next chapter will examine the extent to which the contemporary shape of masculinity (and femininity) has moved away from this particular shape of masculinity (crafted and constructed as necessary during the struggle to displace the system of apartheid).

This discussion of nationalist discourse is crucial to understanding the ways in which masculinities and femininities have been constructed. There appears to be a continuation of the nationalist discourse of the Youth League of the struggle, in which hegemonic masculinities were constructed through sexual prowess and positions of leadership and authority. Women, by contrast, were (and possibly still are) expected to perform a femininity

[21]The Freedom Charter also suggests this masculinist nature of nationalist discourse. This document is seen as the "guiding programme of the Youth League" (ANCYL constitution 2011: 4). This document refers to South Africa's people living in "brotherhood," in which "the rights of the people shall be the same, regardless of race, colour or sex" (Ibid). This masculinist reading is seemingly confirmed when we consider that the Charter states that "all laws which discriminate on grounds of race, colour or belief shall be repealed," indicating a (possible) blind spot in terms of fighting for equal gender relations (Freedom Charter 1955).

which is submissive to the leadership of men, sexually submissive and as embodying a "static and fixed" culture (Lewis 2011: 210).

CONCLUSION

This chapter has demonstrated the opportunities that are available for further research within the Youth League: it is crucial to explore the theorisation around sex (the uninterrogated binary of man/woman) in line with emerging transgender/intersex scholarship. The consequences of conceptualising sex as factic serve to perpetuate the binary of man/woman: this perpetuates a particular shape of hegemonic masculinity which relies on and consolidates heterosexual desire as the dominant (and legitimate) shape of desire.

The final chapter of this research will demonstrate how the binary of man/woman (perpetuated by failing to acknowledge the constructed nature of the category of sex) has practical consequences for the Youth League. Interviews with young ANCYL feminist activists will be presented to draw out the ways in which the assumption of the fixity of sex (potentially) has problematic implications for the Youth League's commitment to the pursuit of equal gender relations.

CHAPTER 5: SO, WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE YOUTH LEAGUE?

"And today, we find that Youth League members (and ANC members ...) always want to be the man, always want to be the head of the household, even in the organisation. It's almost automatic that men have to be head of the household, and women come second. They nurture. We're supposed to nurture – we're not supposed to be leading any programme or anything. And that is something we get from history".

Nosipho, 11 December 2012

This research has interrogated the ways in which the Youth League texts engage with the concept of gender relations. The ANCYL documents provide a detailed exploration of the interests, needs and experiences of women, and the pressing need to empower women. The previous chapters have demonstrated how the documents engage with gender roles and expectations without examining the binary categories of sex (perpetuated by a belief that all individuals are either male/female regardless of how they choose to perform their gender). This research has unpacked the ways in which this binary entrenches a particular form of heterosexual desire, regulated by (and serving the interests of) a particular shape of hegemonic masculinity within the Youth League.

This chapter seeks to unpack the ways in which this particular conceptualisation of gender relations (constructed through the discourses of the (uninterrogated) binary of sex, heterosexual desire and hegemonic masculinity) plays out in Youth League organisational practice.

EXPERIENCING THE YOUTH LEAGUE'S COMMITMENT TO GENDER EQUALITY IN PRACTICE

Interviews provided insight into the organisational culture of the ANCYL in which "many people think that [gender equality] is a joke, especially men. They see it as something like 'oh, is that what they want? Let's just give it to them'. Just to pacify us, and to keep us quiet. ... There isn't a true understanding of what it [gender equality] is all about" (Nosipho, 11 December 2012). These interviews point to a reality that extends beyond the individual experiences of the interviewees: these young feminist ANCYL activists reveal the complexities of pursuing equal gender relations. The interviews reveal the ways in which a theoretical commitment can be undermined by pervasive sexist attitudes and an unwillingness to engage in discussions around patriarchy, male privilege and unequal gender relations.

Interviews revealed that many men (and some women) within the Youth League do not understand how patriarchy and unequal gender relations affect them: men "don't think that it does [affect them]. They're very comfortable. Of course, they benefit more than they are oppressed and we probably shouldn't expect those who oppress people to oppress and liberate us at the same time" (Sophie, 11 December 2012).

These attitudes are confirmed in discussions around the gender quota. For Nosipho, a "lot of people just do the bare minimum, the 50/50 gender quota. [For a lot of men, the attitude is] five females, five males. That's it. What else do you want me to do? I'm not going to change the way I think." (Nosipho, 11 December 2011). This reluctance towards the gender quota can be best understood by unpacking the ways in which men see the gender quota as "threatening their hegemony in the organisation" (Sophie, 11 December 2012). For Palesa, Youth League male comrades "are just protecting their own privilege" (Palesa, 11 December 2012).

Sophie speaks about when she was "to be chairperson of Joburg (in SASCO), the first female in 21 years of SASCO's history, they [the other members] raised many questions about 'can she lead?'. I know that the main [issue] was 'can we be led by a woman?" (Sophie, 11 December 2012). Palesa explains that she has experienced ANCYL members telling her that she has "become such a fine leader" but at the same time, "eish, she's irritating because she's a feminist" (Palesa, 11 December 2012).

These interviews also provided insight into the real-life experiences of gays and lesbians within the organisation. Sophie explains that the documents say that "the role of gays and lesbians in society must be embraced by gender activists, as it challenges historic gender roles and stereotypes. So what you think a man is is not necessarily what a gay person is, and what you think a woman is and should be is not necessarily what a lesbian woman is and behaves like. ... Historic gender roles are not necessarily scientific or ... set" (Sophie, 11 December 2012).

In practice, however, "we are a society which is still, for the most part, very homophobic" (Palesa, 11 December 2011). Sophie discusses how she has not "seen an openly gay man lead the organisation. [And] we don't really speak about it [the inclusion of alternative sexualities] (Sophie, 11 December 2011). Sophie explains how, during a Mafikeng university's student

representative council (SRC) elections, "a gay and lesbian society ... came to SASCO[22] and said 'let's join our lists and contest together. Give us space on your lists and we'll win SRC elections'. SASCO said no (because the leadership at the time was homophobic). The gay and lesbian organisation contested, and they won the election 100% ... all the seats. ... It was so embarrassing to us [that] it was our comrades who would do such a thing. That's how backward it is" (Ibid).

The following excerpts reveal the ways in which the Youth League's theoretical commitment to equal gender relations plays out in practice, and points to the ways in which heterosexuality pervades the organisation (and society generally). These comments suggest that there is limited space to engage with sexual identities (outside of heterosexuality). This speaks to the ways in which Julius Malema (then president of the ANCYL) engaged with Caster Semenya, and declared that "in South Africa and the entire world of sanity, [hermaphrodites do] not exist"[23]. This statement (and the interviews above) suggests that the Youth League (as with the majority of organisations operating within society) requires a coherent sequence of female sex, female gender and heterosexual desire.

Interviews also reflect the ways in which conversations around unequal gender relations are highly contested. Sophie explains that in reality, there is "really no space to speak about [the pursuit of gender equality] openly. ... If you try to organise women, it is said to be a faction. You are going against organisational principles. You are creating an organisation within an organisation" (Sophie, 11 December 2012). Feminist activists are "frowned down upon [and called] all kinds of things" (Ibid).

Sophie recognises that "it's not going to be easy. When I say that the youth organisations are about to enter into a gender war, I literally think that is what is going to happen. I do think that there are those who are going to oppose it [the fight to gender equality] vehemently, and there are those who are going to be the drivers. ... In the next five to ten years, I think it's going to be pretty intense but I think it is going to be necessary" (Ibid). These comments confirm the need for the Youth League to continue engaging with the concept of gender.

[22] Sophie explained that members of SASCO (South African Students Congress) are "Youth League members mostly" (Sophie, 11 December 2012).
[23] Julius Malema (quoted in Schuhmann 2010: 102).

WHAT DOES THIS REVEAL ABOUT THE COMMITMENT TO GENDER EQUALITY?

These interviews about the organisational culture of the Youth League suggest that a particular shape of hegemonic masculinity informs attitudes and conduct within the organisation. This research has explored how this form of hegemonic masculinity necessarily relies on a particular reading of sex (as the binary of man/woman) and the necessary coherence between sex, gender performance and desire. Hegemonic masculinity works to regulate and constrain the possibilities of claiming a sexual identity other than heterosexuality, and works to ensure a correlation between sex and gender performance.

The documents do implicitly acknowledge the constructed nature of gender (in their recognition of the construction of rigid gender roles and expectations). It is important that future theorisation moves beyond the problematic of gender roles within a patriarchal society, and begins to consider how dominant gender norms continue to regulate, constrain and dictate the performance of individuals' genders and sexual identities.

Future work by the Youth League should move to an exploration of the ways in which the binary of sex (man/woman) has implications for legitimate (and exalted) forms and shapes of desire and masculinity. Emerging work on transgendered and intersex individuals encourages discussions of these issues: this body of scholarship urges researchers to unpack the interests served by conceptualising sex as factic and immutable (and the implications of this particular understanding).

Failing to interrogate this sex binary (in which masculine and feminine are juxtaposed as opposites) works to entrench a particular form of heterosexual desire as the only legitimate shape of desire. Heterosexual desire feeds into the construction (and maintenance) of a particular hegemonic masculinity (constructed by the struggle and unchallenged by contemporary feminists) in which sexual prowess, leadership and dominance determine the exalted shape of masculinity.

It is of key importance to consider how this form of hegemonic masculinity establishes a form of heterosexual womanhood, which exalts everything a woman should be (by considering what the inverse of the form of hegemonic masculinity is). This form of heterosexual womanhood casts women as passive victims who are discouraged from assuming leadership positions, and who are trapped in a matrix of domination and oppressed through violence, reproduction and sexuality.

This hegemonic form of masculinity (constructed through the requirements and experiences of young men and women in the struggle) remains dominant, and is maintained through the three ANCYL documents and their unwillingness to interrogate the ways in which men are understood, and the forms of masculinity that are exalted.

MAKING SENSE OF SUSHI AND SEMENYA

When we begin to engage with the implications of conceptualising sex as factic (and outside interrogation), we see that Kenny Kunene was simply acting out the hegemonic shape of masculinity within the Youth League – sexually powerful, and a leader (in business). The delayed response of the Youth League then begins to make sense. This example provides insight into the kinds of subjects who, in Hall's words, "personify the discourse" of gender relations within the Youth League (Hall 1992: 295). Men such as Kunene come to exemplify the exalted form of masculinity within the Youth League, and women (such as those off whom sushi was eaten) epitomise the form of dominant femininity that is encouraged (whether implicitly or explicitly) within the ANCYL in contemporary South Africa.

The example of Caster Semenya, and the Youth League claim that "in South Africa and the entire world of sanity, [hermaphrodites do] not exist,"[24] makes sense when we consider the Youth League's uninterrogated reliance on the binary of man/woman. This binary means that anyone who deviates from these categories (whose sex is not so clearly defined as one or the other) threatens to undermine and undo the structure of heterosexual desire, and in so doing, the ways of being a man.

The ANCYL responses to these two gender controversies (one a case of blatant sexism and the other an example of a rigid understanding of sex) suggest a need to deepen theorisation around gender relations within the Youth League. There is a space for work to be done (within the Youth League) on the binary of man/woman, the norm of heterosexuality and the current shape of hegemonic masculinity. It is only through deeper theoretical work, which builds on the strengths of the existing ANCYL work on the real-life experiences and interests of women, that the Youth League will be in a position to "promote gender equality in all spheres of life, especially among the youth" (ANCYL constitution 2011: 8).

[24] Julius Malema (quoted in Schuhmann 2010: 102).

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