Faculty of Humanities

Wits Centre for Diversity Studies

A Podcast Original: Feeling out Black Contemporary Masculinity in South Africa

A research report submitted by

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DECLARATION

I declare that:

A Podcast Original: Feeling out Black Contemporary Masculinity in South Africa

is my original, unassisted work, and all of the research material used or directly cited quotes have been listed and acknowledged in-text and on the list of references. I am submitting this thesis for the degree of MA in Coursework and Report in the field of Diversity Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand. This work not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university.

Signed this ___14____day of__ March_____2023 _____

Vuyiswa Samukelisiwe Nomvula Mkhwanazi

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"It's the possibility of having a dream come true that makes life interesting." – Paulo Coelho

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DEDICATION

This is dedicated to my future self who will look back proudly on this moment.

This is also dedicated to God uMvelinqangi and the ancestors, idlozi elihle la kwaMkhwanazi.

Sibonga wena Spheshu,Madubandlela,Somlomoti,Sodilakazi, Nkwaliyenkosi, Ndonga, Shamase, Mwelase, Sontuli, Somkhele, Lele, Khowa, Mayanda, Dlebhu wabeSwazi , we' owaguy' wamis' intamo. Mashukumbeya, Mthendeleka. Mtubatuba wena owawulobolela amadoda, wena owathenga istimela NineMali nina Bakhwanazi, Veyane, Mpangazitha Mpandeyamadoda, Mpande ayiphikiswa oyiphikisayo uyazithwala, Gwagwa liyagwagwa umbane wezulu, owaciba ngomkhonto eSikhwebesini kwapheph' inkosi yamaNtungwa, Owasingath'ihwahwa kodwa wangaledlulisel' mlonyeni, Mgidla, Lomafu, Nkwenkwezi, Sikhumba ka Mthethwa kaMantewane,Gagisa

[clan names]

ABSTRACT

This research report provides detailed account of the ways in which “Podcast and Chill with MacG” possibly surfaces affective identifications and attachments in its representations of black masculinity. The theoretical explorations are performed with the Millennial and Gen-Z aged masculine audience in mind as they would be the main consumers of this podcast. This study uses affect theory as its theoretical framework - particularly as it is offered by Sara Ahmed in conversation with Tomkins’ work. The study has taken on a qualitative approach. Data collection occurred through purposive sampling of three sixty minute [or longer] episodes of the podcast. The specific episodes feature the following people as interviewees or guests: media personality Jub Jub, comedian and actor Mpho “Popps” Modikane as well as radio personality and reality television star, Dineo Ranaka. The data is analysed and interpreted by means of critical discourse analysis which is focused on studying and analysing spoken and written texts for the purpose of revealing discursive sources of bias, inequality, dominance and power. This paper utilises a culturally responsive relational reflexive ethical framework. The key findings of this paper are that the podcast guest embody one of the following Jungian archetypes: fallen hero [Jub Jub], jester [Mpho Popps] and rebel [Dineo Ranaka]. Furthermore, the fallen hero and jester embody affects of elevation and pride, as well as anxiety respectively. The rebel subverts expectation by rejecting to embody shame and instead uses that rejection as a feminist rallying cry that works to summon a caring masculinity.

Key words: masculinity, affect, elevation, anxiety, shame

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Podcasts have been in existence for just over a decade. They are used for and are listened to for a variety of reasons ranging from education to commercial endeavours to even pure entertainment (Heshmat, et.al, 2018). Podcasts, which typically occur in an audio digital file, can be streamed online or downloaded onto mobile and desktop devices. Research has focused on the traits of podcast services and their influence on topics like education or their influence on listeners' online shopping habits (Heshmat et.al, 2018). While it has achieved this, research is yet to fully explore their role in helping listeners construct their subjectivities. In attempt to account for this, this research aims to discover some of the ways in which a podcast programme called "Podcast and Chill with MacG" possibly surfaces affective identifications and attachments in its representations of black masculinity. As described by their website the programme launched early 2018, in Johannesburg, South Africa. It began with a single weekly podcast, named Podcast and Chill with MacG.

The very first episode of the podcast was released in July of 2018, hosted by MacG, The Ghost Lady and Lenn Moleko, who was its co-host until 2020, after which Sol Phenduka was introduced to the podcast. In early 2019, Podcast and Chill: Celebrity Edition premiered, featuring conversations and interviews with South African Artists, Celebrities and Entertainment Personalities ("Podcast and Chill Network | Official Website", 2022). Its target demographic appears to be Gen Z and millennial aged audiences. Considering the fact that podcasts are primarily based on language, that discourse is communicated through language and that subjectivities are constructed through language and carried on by discourse, critical discourse analysis is particularly suitable method of analysis for this endeavour (Hosseini & Sattari, 2018). This will be expanded on in a later methodological section of the proposal. However, links and associations to this method of analysis will be made note of through dispersed mentions of discursive bodies. Additional sections covered herein include the problem statement, research aim and question, the rationale, the theoretical framework to be used, a literature review, an ethical consideration as well as an analytical section.

Problem Statement

Theoretical investigations concerned with aspects of subjectivity such as masculinity, gender and social identity within articles of mass media have argued that cultural media products like magazines tend to supply and make legitimate particular gender identity representations and role expectations (Stevenson, et.al, 2003; Waling, 2017). Thereafter, the cultural frames provided in these products mediums offer audiences accessible and publicly sanctioned reference guides to consider when building their own identity in a process of meaning-making (Stevenson, et. al, 2003; Waling, 2017). As a symbolic and useful resource for self-construction, mass media products can have oppositional influences – either

negative or positive – on one's perceptions, values, attitudes, behaviour and ultimately identity (Allen, 2007).

For instance, media products can help structure values and attitudes about a particular culture or formulation of masculine identity that favours one over the other. Malinga and Ratele (2016) note the case of global and South African magazines directed to a masculine audience such as FHM, Men's Health and GQ. They go on to state that these magazines often reproduced dominant discourses on masculinity that predominantly focused on consumerist realities, ideals and accessible aspirations for the middle class. Unfortunately, this translates into a sense of marginality for men who cannot or do not fit into that mould and thus gives birth to masculinities that are resistant. These resistant masculinities are founded on values of physical strength, unrestrained materialism, attitudes of a fatalistic nature and respect acquisition by means of violence (Malinga and Ratele, 2016).

Ultimately, resistant masculinity is an attempt by black men to defiantly declare their masculinity and to withstand oppression in a society or landscape that seeks to dispose from them any sense of masculinity and manhood (Gray, 2018). For these men to develop resistant masculinities can mean that they have suffered an absent representation in the fictional world. This absence signifies the level of importance with which they are to be considered in the real world (Steinke &Tavarez, 2017). The lack of representation in a mediated space that is meant to represent reality to an extent is called symbolic annihilation – a concept coined by Gaye Tuchman in 1978. Being the core focus and/ or the visibly represented figure offers men the opportunity to imagine a possible self and thus help construct themselves accordingly. The possible selves theory explains how this comes to be. The theory explains that audience members may be influenced by the stereotypical images that used to represent them. This influence can be first observed through the audience members comparing themselves to their "media-image equal" and thereby making moves to match up to that image as close as possible (Steinke & Tavarez, 2017).

Research Question and Aim

The question that the emergent research strives to answer is:

- How does the "Podcast and Chill with MacG" audio programme operationalise and channel affect in its contemporary construction and dissemination of black masculinity in South Africa?

The study aim is to discover some of the ways in which the Podcast and Chill with MacG" audio programme possibly surfaces affective identifications and attachments in its representations of black masculinity.

Rationale

Whether it is transgender, female or male identities – and subsequently masculine and/ or feminine subjectivities – studying these identities and/or subjectivities involves exploring the power dynamics within the modern gender landscape (Srivastava, 2015). Herein specific hegemonic ideals of masculinity and manhood affect non-binary gender identities, women alongside their diverse expression as well as the various ways of being men. Engaging with gender in this manner further explores the naturalisation of the "masculine" or "man" category that has granted men the status of the ungendered and history's universal subject (Srivastava, 2015). As described by Connell, masculinity is the practices in which people engage male ordered social gender expectations and roles with the consequences expressed through culture, the body and the individual's personality (Dunlap & Johnson, 2013). It is predominantly men who engage in these practices but women occasionally partake in them as well. Thusly, culture functions as both the reason and consequence of masculine behaviour.

Granted that masculinity is founded in difference, and femininity is further undervalued, it is not to be considered a static identity characteristic (Ferber, 1997). Instead, it is to be understood as a dynamic construct that is assembled within social interactions and eventually alters those interactions (Dunlap & Johnson, 2013).These interactions are guided and/or supported by discursive formations that explicitly or implicitly outline the expected behaviours to be undertaken in these interactions by the respective parties present in those interactions (Graves & Kwan, 2012).Discursive formations regarding masculinity work to structure it as a superior and dominant identity. These discursive formations gain their origin from several locations. . These locations are sites such as popular culture and media, educational, health, religious and family institutions. Furthermore, these locations help construct not only the physical and behavioural life of its concerned subjects but their emotional lives as well. Specifically, media representations assert an influence on the emotional and cognitive lives of audiences and because of these media encounters, audiences are occasionally inspired to act and/ or are motivated to alter aspects of the world or themselves (Cavalcante, 2008).

To factor in the emotional lives of the audience means to think about emotions in the sense that they are values as well as ideas that communicating judgements regarding something (Schmitz & Ahmed, 2014). For Ahmed, emotion's ability to relay ideas, judgements and value is an expression of affect. That is, emotions have a constitutive ability, and this capability is understood to be affect. This – affect as constitution or a component thereof – integrates well with Nelson's (2016) assertion that affect plays a significant role in manufacturing dispositions and ways of seeing the world and the subsequent interactions with it. Affect has and is the ability to preserve, amass and thus structure subjectivities. Henceforth, exploring masculinity from the perspective of affect may help understand the production of newer gender configurations which form part of the perpetual linkages of gendered processes of becoming (Reeser, 2016)

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Affect Theory

There are two overarching strands or approaches to affect theory. These follow the path of either the representational model or non-representational model. The representational model sees thought, experience and affect as capable of being re-presented, which is, to be discursively described. That is to say that the meaning of affect comes because of the order's symbolic structure (Zembylas, 2020). In contrast, the non-representational model moves to find meaning not in the world's representations but what actively occurs in the world. Herein affects gain meaning from their enacted practice or as it takes place. Because of its flow, it evades discursive representation as it is always changing from one form to another (Thorpe & Rinehart, 2010; Zembylas, 2020). However, the flow does not mean that it cannot be captured. Though the non-representational model argues that affect cannot be re- presented, affectual geographers and scholars that work form this model consistently evoke moments, such as smiles and laughter, that evidence affects (Pile, 2010). In evidencing affect they use language to do so. People live through and within language and when they use language, they do more than merely re-present the world with it. They are looking for a way to move past that which is purely tangible, extensive, and perceptible (Buser, 2014).

Henceforth this research adopts the representational model as it is rather difficult and borderline hypocritical to work with a non-representational model that does the work of representing [through language] but states that it does not do so. Furthermore, this paper takes on Michels (2015) stance on the idea that affects are not free-floating. Rather, they emerge from the assemblage of human and non-bodies, discursive entities and all other entities that constitute everyday circumstances. Tomkin's approach to affect is the adopted framework for this research and it will be put in conversation with Ahmed's perspective on affect – both of which are representational approaches. According to Tomkins (1995), affects are correlated sets of physiological responses [on the internal neurological level and the external facial level] to intrinsic occurrences such as perceptions as well as memories and extrinsic occurrences like sporting events. Several affects were identified by Tomkins and with this work physiological reactions are then specified and discursively. Split into two categories of intrinsic reward, thus positive, and intrinsic punishment, thus negative, these affects are hyphenated in structure so as to communicate points of arousal from the lowest to the highest degree (Tomkins, 1995; Stanley, 2017).

The positive affect categories contain the affects of interest-excitement as well as enjoyment-joy. The negative affect category contains disgust-contempt, distress-anguish, fear-terror, shame-humiliation, anger-rage as well as the auxiliary affect called startle-surprise (Stanley, 2017). These affect categories impel the person experiencing them to either prolong the action that is inspiring a pleasurable encounter [via the intrinsic reward] or to halt the action causing the unpleasant experience [via the intrinsic

punishment] (Tomkins, 1995). Tomkins (1995) also perceives affect as significantly contagious partly due to its inclination to create affirmative facial feedback loops wherein the same affect is produced to a greater extent in both the person experiencing it and the individuals bearing witness to it. Tomkins' approach lends a vocabulary that describes an affect [enjoyment-joy] and the consequence thereof [prolonging the encounter]. This research will investigate how the podcast inspires affect through the words it will use that are related to that affect ["good, I love that"] and how that is used to discourage or encourage a specific formation of masculinity.

These related words act as signs of the affect. In a case explaining William Hague's mobilisation of fear in his speeches regarding asylum seekers in Britain in the year 2000, Ahmed (2004) explicates that words like "swamped" and "flood" were used. They created the associations between a sense of no control and the asylum seekers and incited anxieties of being overwhelmed by others' potential proximity. Furthermore, Tomkins speaking of affect as contagion implies circulation which is where Ahmed's articulation finds its place. Ahmed (2004) contends that affect is produced because of the circulation that occurs. What is being circulated is emotion, which performs a certain work that mediates the relationship betwixt the social and psychic as well as between the collective and individual. In mediating relationships and circulating between signs and bodies, emotions play a vital role in the "surfacing" of individual and collective bodies (Ahmed, 2004). In this way, they act like a symbolic discourse that refracts from the element that is symbolised onto that which is signified (Mumby, 1989). Like Ahmed, this research's interest lies in the way emotions, and by extension affect, involve objects and subjects without being necessarily owned by them. More specifically, like Reeser, "my interest is the ways in which texts narrate or invent relations between affects and masculinities, not the ways in which humans actually experience the gender of affect or the relation between language and affect in scientific terms" (2016,p. 111).

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

Masculinity Studies

Masculinity is not a natural or organic attribute but a socially constructed and collaborative gender identity. Masculinity is also understood to be a fluid and non-universal as there are numerous types of masculinity that exist (Morrell, 1998). These types are not to be confused as fixed archetypes but configurations that are produced in specific situations in perpetually changing relationship structures (Morrell, 1998). In other words, every society has its own understandings and configurations of masculinity that do not remain fixed in time but change as even the society itself changes. Morell (1998) cautions, however, that there is not an equal distribution of social power in every masculinity that exists per society. There are subversive and subordinate masculinities among marginal groups that may appear as oppositional to the dominant masculinity. This caution draws on Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity.

"Hegemonic masculinity refers to that which constitutes a 'real man' or forms of 'successful masculinity.'" (Morrell, et.al., 2012, p.24). These norms of ideal masculine behaviour are informed and bound by culture. They further pressure its target audiences to conform to them through self-imposed or peer-imposed means. Mooney (1998) provides an alternative understanding of hegemonic masculinity which stipulates that it is fundamentally a cast of oppressive ideas set by the ruling class that function to control young white people, white women and black people. This was in reference to their observation on white urban South African youth gangs that were prevalent in the 1950s and 1960s. These youths were countercultural in nature and endorsed violence as a means to assert their counterhegemonic ideal (Mooney, 1998).

Mooney's (1998) interpretation however, does not necessarily provide clarity on whether violence is to be primarily and exclusively associated with the prevailing hegemony of the time, whether violence was a behaviour collectively expressed by men regardless of positionality as per the hegemony or if violence was to be regarded as a tool that men used to oppose the hegemony. Donaldson (1993) answers, at least with the regards to the first point, by stating that hegemonic masculinity is brutal, exclusive, internally differentiated on a hierarchical structure as well as anxiety-provoking. Included in its defining traits are the likes of compulsory heterosexuality, homophobia, misogyny and racism – the latter three being forms and expressions of violence as well (Donaldson, 1993). While it is important to note that masculinity is not always associated with male bodies, this paper will solely focus on instances where masculinity is paired with a male body.

With the aspects of hierarchical differentiation and racism in mind, Connell's conceptualisation of hegemonic masculinity is a useful point of departure for framing the generation and composition of

black masculinities. When perceived through a hierarchical relational lens, black masculinities are constructed through the binary of black femininity as well as through Western constructions of masculinity (Moolman, 2013). Black masculinity is contradictory by definition due to the fact that the colonization [of black and/ or African countries] denied black men the right to access masculinity. It reduced black men and assigned to them statuses of savagery and perpetual childhood (Moolman, 2013). The reduction of black masculinity did not end here. Fast forward to the advent of Apartheid whereby the late 1950s, and similar to the white urban countercultural youth gang, black masculinity retained its image of the savage but was defined by the more modern label of violent (Dube, 2016).

These are not constructions black men created themselves, instead they were imposed upon them. That which they did create centred on aspects of self-control, wisdom and on an eschewal of violent behaviour (Dube, 2016). Without offering cultural specificity, Dube (2016) writes that this construction was learned when young boys in the countryside were undergoing rites of passage that signified the transition from childhood to adulthood. They later carried these constructions to the urbanised areas to share among other black men. This self-imposed construction could have been a response to the aforementioned construction of violent black masculinity. Without the intention of discrediting their attempts, it appears that the creation of an opposing masculinity in response to an externally imposed and inflammatory was an exercise in restoring dignity. This construction did not maintain as it later changed in the early 1970s in the wake of the black consciousness movement. Marked by the slogan "black man, you are on your own." black masculinity, underwent an identity and construction change that was signified by loss and emasculation (Dube, 2016).

Unfortunately, that which did maintain was the perception of black masculinity as violent. Langa, Kirsten, Bowman, Eagle and Kiguwa (2020) write that popular discourse often imagines the black man as a feared figurehead of violence. Citing Barker (2005) and Jensen (2008), Langa et.al (2020) state that when depending on class and racial stereotypes, people were inclined to align young black South African men with violence, crime and gangsterism. All be it that black men are portrayed as pervadingly aggressive and violent, this notion rejected by young black men. A Gauteng study, particularly located in the black township of Alexandra, was conducted with a number of young black men (Langa, 2010). The men featured in this study refuted and subverted the automatically assumed associations between black men [and masculinity] and violence. They did so through highlighting educational and economic aspirations that were rooted in legal modes of acquisition (Langa, 2010).

Given that these young men were located in a township, one might hastily believe that negative constructions of black masculinity only befall those of a lower economic classes. Iqani (2017) promptly dispels this as they outline that alongside black lower and/ or working-class masculinities, middle class black masculinities are negatively portrayed as well. While they may not be ready perpetrators of violence, they are depicted as a greedy, materialistic and selfish group that have betrayed the black

struggle and thus cannot be trusted with social democracy (Iqani, 2017). As previously illustrated, depictions of black masculinities as simultaneously physically menacing and morally deficient or deviant are not novel phenomena (Levon, et.al., 2017). Black men have been persistently connected with moral decadence and/ or social ills such as gender based violence and the explosive rates of HIV and AIDS in South Africa.

Academia has been complicit in these depictions in that it has largely focused on the negatives of black masculinities resulting in what Dube (2016) calls over-signification. This is in reference to Dube's reflections on projects concerning the crisis of masculinity. This crisis refers to the process of negative real or perceived change that adversely affects men. While it is inclusive of all racial categories there has been an overemphasis on the negative characteristics as they pertain to black South African men. This is problematic because near identical negative responses have also been exhibited by white men as they too have been resistant to change especially on global level (Dube, 2016). If anything, the term "crisis in masculinity" typically reflected white British and America men's troubled contention with change. Over-signifying by isolating otherwise racially inclusive or black-exclusive terms and emphasising them onto black people gives rise to two problems. The first is that it yields too great a symbolic meaning and view of black experiences and the second is that it places too little an emphasis on the positives of black men's masculinity practices, experiences and articulations (Dube, 2016).

Affect

Generally speaking, masculinity in the social sciences and humanities is theorised in two distinct ways and that is through exploring the manner in which masculinity forms men's social actions and behaviours through a consideration of gender relations, subjectivity as well as material and discursive practices that work to make them legible (Waling, 2019). The second way is through the application of various model sets and categories of men and masculinity that determine whether they reject or uphold a specific model of masculinity. In this instance masculinity is constructed as either numerous or a singular governing body to which men are obligated to and/ or expected to adhere. This second offering opens room for a poststructural reading of masculinity to manufacture spaces for imagining actual changes occurring in how men are positioning themselves in different societal relations, spheres and mediums. While a wealth of research may tell us how it is that men might perform masculinity in a variety of social situations and cultures, we can still do more in the areas that investigate how men might actively reflect on and *feel* through such engagements hence the inclusion of an affective turn in this research (Waling, 2019).

Departing from the previous touchpoint on Tomkins' view on affect, attention is called to the fact that affects are social as well as individual responses. Not only do they occur within the private sphere of the individual, but they also bear an impact on one'ssocial reality through facial and physical responses communicated to the public that in turn are communicated back from the public and internalised by the

individual (Gibbs, 2011). This is to the extent that affect is understood to be pivotal to human sociality wherein a self-contagion is possibly preceded by social contagion. This is in reaction to what Gibbs asserts as "the phenomenon of contagion within the organism is an indirect consequence of the similarity of one's own responses to social activators. Since it is known that the smile of the face of another is a specific activator of the smile of the one who sees it, the awareness of the smile in the self may release another smile either on the basis of the similarity of the smile in the visual and the smile in the proprioceptive modality, or on a learned basis, since one's own smile was often preceded by the smile of another." (2011, p8.).

However, Bertelsen and Murphie (2010), who are advocates of the non-representational model, offer three different approaches to affect. They understand affect to be a field within which everyone is entangled and consists of nonhuman dynamics and forces like climate change or a capitalist economy. It is the movement of pre-personal or impersonal forces wherein people are entrapped and are subsequently directly impacted. The second approach locates affect within the individual as it relates to emotions and feelings (Bertelsen & Murphie, 2010). Affect is an embodied experience within the individual and thereby registers neurological involvement. This understanding is in opposition to Massumi's (2002) approach to affect which is put in contrast to emotion as cited by Cavalcante (2018). Massumi, who is also of the non-representational inclination, contrasts affect with emotion which he uses interchangeably with feeling. Herein, emotion is an affect that has been rendered knowable and recognisable. It can be identified by name and discussed. Emotion is both individually and socially intelligible in that the individual can recognise it within themselves and can communicate the emotion to an outward or public other and reasonably expect to be understood (Cavalcante, 2018).

Cavalcante's assertion that emotion is both individually and socially intelligible are compatible with Tomkins' and Ahmed's argument of affect bearing a social component and proving essential for human sociality. On the other hand, affects themselves are unintelligible states that evade detection and description. While they are registered and felt, they emerge in the body in manner so fast that the mind struggles and sometimes fails to be consciously aware of them (Cavalcante, 2018). Bertelsen and Murphie's (2010) third offering is an intersection of the two previously mentioned approaches where affect stands at a crossroad of extrinsic forces and individual emotional states. This approach understands affects as a simultaneously occurring operation between the inside and the outside of the body. Working from the inside affects are processes of becoming and passage where sensations are felt, experienced and eventually pass. From the outside they are forces that directly impact the body from the external and cause an intrinsic stir. Unlike Massumi, Ahmed and Tomkins, the outside does not necessarily consist of social others of which to help create or further the affective experience.

While the focus of this research is the way media [podcasts] encounter operationalise affect, it is important to remember that affects as well as emotions can excavate themselves deeply and amass in

ways that make them indistinguishable to us. For instance, consuming a romantic tragedy may generate mixed and incomprehensible feelings where there with regards to romance there is the desire and expectation that the protagonist will soon pair up with their romantic interest and live happily ever after. Whereas on the tragic end there is the expectation that moments of grief and loss are to follow. Combining the two may inspire ambivalence due to the expected romantic fulfilment as on end hand the audience may be of the view that it is better to have loved and lost than to not have loved at all. On the other hand, they could be of the view that the desire and subsequent acquisition of love inevitably leads to loss so one is better off simply desiring but even that is uncomfortable position. This dynamic is referred to as affective disorientation and so with this in mind, it is important to account and/ or accommodate for instances of ambiguity and disorientation when handling the matter of affect and media (Cavalcante, 2018).

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

Research approach

The study will take on a qualitative approach particularly since the data to be gathered and analysed is not quantitative – there are no numbers and graphs to be explored (Fossey, et.al., 2002). The purpose of the research is not to establish facts that can be generalised across the board but to understand the flow of a particular meaning-making process and to gain an in-depth perspective on a topic that is not too well understood. While podcasts have exploded in popularity over the years, they are still an emerging mass media product thus research on them is still in its infancy (Boling & Hull, 2018). The intention is to obtain rich meaning during the data interpretation phase and qualitative research approach allows for this (Fossey et. al, 2002). "Podcast and Chill with MacG" is arguably a programme still well in its toddler years having been in existence for short of 5 years. It has been selected as an object of study because of the type of banter and ridicule found therein that are affiliated with certain kinds of homosociality and masculinity (Franzen, et, al., 2020). For example, it utilises humour which has been shown to function as way to construct self-regulating subjects that align with hegemonic hierarchies and to preserve the gender order. Henceforth, this research looks at how the banter articulated in the podcast can inform the masculine audience's formation of their subjectivity by scrutinising the social interaction in the recorded case.

Sampling and Data collection

Data collection occurred through purposive sampling. This is the deliberate and non-random choice of particular podcast episodes due to the qualities or content that they possess (Etikan, et,al., 2015). This technique is generously flexible and accommodative in that it does not rely on underlying theories for support and does not demand that there be a set number of material with which to be dealt. The researcher is in a privileged position to decide the parameters of the research in terms of what gets to be known and the materials that can make that known (Etikan et.al, 2015). Purposive sampling is also most suitable for this research as it aligns well with studies that are qualitative in nature. It cannot accommodate for quantitative approaches. The data will occur through contemporary cultural representation in the form of three sixty-minute podcast episodes. The specific episodes feature the following people as interviewees or guest: media personality Jub Jub [Molemo Katleho Maarohanye], comedian and actor Mpho "Popps" Modikane as well as radio personality and reality television star, Dineo Ranaka. The episodes speak directly or indirectly to masculinity like through the mention of their capitalist status, their navigation strategies through their social world and their own interactions and relationship with men.

Data Analysis

The interpretive lens through which the data is analysed comes by way of critical discourse analysis. Critical discourse analysis is focused on studying and analysing spoken and written texts for the purpose of revealing discursive sources of bias, inequality, dominance and power. It examines the way these sources are reproduced and maintained within a particular socio-historical and political context (Sheyholislami, 2000; Liu & Gua, 2016). Critical discourse analysis aims to unearth "the influence of the ideology on discourse, the counteractive influence of discourse on the ideology, and how the two elements derive from and serve for social structure and power relations" (Liu & Gua, 2016, p 1076). Critical discourse analysis assumes that it is the properties of interactions betwixt social groups with which we are dealing (van Djik, 1993). While the focus is on social power, purely personal power is ignored barring the instance where personal power is performed by individuals of the dominant group in realisation of their collective social power. Social power is premised on privileged access to highly apprized social resources such as status, position, wealth, education and group membership (van Djik, 1993). Social power is made intelligible through discourse which in turn helps manufacture identities. Thereafter, individuals take up the discourse as they see fit – if at all – to make it intelligible to them. Thereafter, if taken up favourably without resistance to the suggested discourse, they endure its disciplinary consequences such as formations of identities like those of masculinity and their subsequent representations (Ainsworth & Hardy, 2004).

Representations of oneself and others are mutually constructed through semiotic resources as well as linguistic resources and it is because of this that language is placed as a discursive phenomenon to a great degree (Zotzmann, & O'Regan, n.d.). Additionally, identity is a material phenomenon that is being enacted in real settings of space and time [which includes the digital and/ or online realm] and as an effect of actual occurrences. Identity does not occur in a vacuum free of context. It requires individual embodiment through performance and display through apparel or property owned like cars (Zotzmann, & O'Regan,n.d.). These subjectivities, however, are not embarked upon on equal grounds – they differ in their positionality and accompanying access to economic, linguistic, social and cultural resources. These variations then grant them non-identical levels of recognition (Zotzmann, & O'Regan, n.d.). Evidently then, identity constructions find themselves are permeated with ideologies and power relations, henceforth critical discourse analysis presents as a suitable choice for the analysis and conceptualisation of the emergent research findings.

Ethical considerations: the importance of ethics

Research ethics can be described as either a method of resolving on how to analyse and behave when faced with a complex issue or as a discipline that investigates conduct standards. Regardless of description, both approaches emphasise one's conduct and/ or behaviour (Cumyn, et, al., 2019). The narrative surrounding ethics in research is fraught with disgraceful moments that society retrospectively

agrees should have been prevented (Hornblum, 1998). If we wish to grant leniency on ourselves, we can view this as a result of society's naivety as it was facilitated by the citizenry's trust in figures of authority such as researchers. Viewing this from a critical perspective, there have been severely concerning implications of classism, heterosexism, racism, sexism and power in past research endeavours especially those that involve human participants (Hornblum, 1998). Past instances have resulted in the need for an ethical framework and/ or position that rigorously works to support and protect populations it may affect whether human participants are involved or not. Due to the weight of this responsibility, researchers need to be models of integrity in both the ethical and scientific sense (Cumyn, et. al., 2019).

This project undertakes an aspirational ethical position and in particular that of CRRR, or more elaborately, culturally responsive relational reflexive ethics (Lahman, et.al,, 2011). Because of the way in which ethical situations can remarkably vary in the emerging research process, it is especially important that researchers have thought through the position they aspire to take prior to commencing with the research. Ethical dilemmas that arise throughout the research process have been termed situational ethics, important moments in ethics as well as ethics in practice (Guillemin & Gilliam, 2004). Aspirational ethics, then, are the highest standard of ethics that rise above the minimum requirements that the researcher attempts to achieve. Of course, researchers' aspirational ethical standards could vary depending on morals, culture, values and culture and internally processed and judged without any mandated checks (Southern, et.al, , 2005). The following is a list, although not exhaustive, of aspirational ethics positions: situational ethics and ethics in practice, feminist ethics, virtue ethics, caring ethics, relational ethics, covenantal ethics and narrative ethics (Guillemin & Gilliam, 2004; Southern, et. al. 2005; Lahman, et. al., 2011).

Culturally responsive relational reflexive ethics implies a position that acknowledges that researchers will not be able to grasp the perspectives offered by the various cultures with whom we will interact either interpersonally, textually and/ or archivally. Furthermore, it implies that researchers need to be as malleable and accommodating as possible and open to the idea of observing ethical issues from the participants' perspective [if there are any] to the most possible extent (Lahman, et. al., 2011). While the Three Rs of ethics [responsiveness, relational and reflexivity] that CRRR employs are inter-related they will be handled separately moving forward.

Ethics as culturally responsive

Due to our own personal immersions in it and inseparability from it, culture as a construct cannot be easily and readily understood (Schwandt, 2007). Lahman and D'Amato (2007) describe culture as the beliefs and values that a select group of people share and are subsequently contemplated upon and enacted this very group. Rather than being a coherent object that is self-enclosed, it is a material circumstance of traditions, lifestyle, customs and rituals that are inferred (Schwandt, 2007). Cultural

responsiveness means that the researcher is first aware of the culture in which they are embedded and thereafter attempts to understand the culture of others. Given that it is at the intersection of the varieties in which people are nested, culture encompasses relations as they pertain to but are not limited to age, ability, gender, class, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation. Describing it as varieties highlights the complexity of human lives wherein differences and similarities are simultaneously acknowledged and honoured (Lahman, 2008).

A cultural space could be that of cyberspace particularly social media. These are tools that are web-based and/ or computer mediated. They exist to help users share, exchange or cocreate information and ideas in the form of pictures, videos, audios and texts in virtual community networks such as Twitter, blogs and YouTube (Golder, et. al., 2017). Based on personal observation, Spotify shares similar qualities in that people can co-create music playlists available to the public. They can also make available their own songs and podcasts on the site. This paper's data primarily come from Spotify and alternatively it will be retrieved from the podcast's YouTube channel. Sites such as these make it invariably easy to collect data however it does raise a few concerns. When site users post their creations, they typically do it with no expectation that their content could be used for research. While it is publicly available, it may be intended for an audience limited family, friends and acquaintances (Golder, 2017). Hence there is a need to cautiously consider the impact of verbatim reporting on this site data no matter the extent of the site's publicness.

Ethics as relational

Ellis (2007) describes being relational as the recognition and subsequent valuing of the mutual connectedness, dignity and respect between the researcher and the researched whether it is the people with whom they directly or indirectly interact as well as the communities in which they [researchers included] live and work. In a relational ethics framework, researchers need to or are encouraged to balance their obligation of care for inferred and/ or indirect and direct participants with the research itself (Ellis, 2007). Relational researchers are said to be actively seeking out the good. That which is deemed good ought to be guided by fundamental principles that do no harm and will be executed in varying ways as it relevant to the ethical situation's context. This could look like attempting a position of care, to describe instead of judging or labelling when writing up research, understanding that ethics goes above and beyond what a regulatory ethics board recommends, to carefully consider whether or not the good is justified in light of an emergent risk as well discussing your research with others and allowing them to read it regardless of the participatory status (Ellis, 2007).

Relational ethics do not occur at the expense and rejection of other kinds of ethics, rather it is a frame upon which a researcher can construct their ethical position that accounts for care and compassion in the search for just solutions in the face of ethical dilemmas (Lahman, et. al., 2011). An instance of relational ethics could occur in the form of the typical ethical concerns of confidentiality, anonymity

and informed consent of which the latter is unquestionably centred in research ethics (McNamee, 2001). Acquiring informed consent is essential to a research project's preliminary stages and need to be negotiated and obtained as early as possible in the project. Research participants would need to intimately understand the reason of the research, what participation will involve and the manner in which the data will be used (Hammersley, 2014; Williams, et.al., 2017).

William, et. al. (2017) mention two schools of thought on informed consent but only explicate on one as it particularly relates to web-based sites described previously. One school is of the position that data that is posted on open and public platforms that are without membership or password restrictions are in the public domain and thus pose no need for informed consent from individuals who have posted. The need to gain informed consent only becomes relevant when the aforementioned restrictions are present. Given the fact that the data will be obtained from a public domain, this need not be a significant ethics concern for my research. Conducting research on a public domain presents challenges related to confidentiality and anonymity: "safe data collection and storage may depend on platform security; that participants may want to be credited for their information and therefore not want to remain anonymous; and the possibility of breaking confidentiality when reporting findings." (William, et. al., 2017, p33). Current ethics guidelines stipulate research should protect the identity of participants as well as securely store their information and not share who said what thereby establishing anonymity and confidentiality. However, given that the data used is publicly available and that the producers [host and interviewees] are known, this too does not pose an ethical concern.

Ethics as reflexivity

Reflexivity is an ability to be or the process of being critical of one's intellectual suppositions for theory building and emergent research (Payne, 2000). This inquiry holds the potential of aking more explicit and known the suppositions that underpin the research. Furthermore, it reorients priorities from contemplating on the veracity of the research conclusions to meditating on the conditions and assumptions that made possible those conclusions and thereby determining their veracity through this (Payne, 2000). It also orients priorities to focus on discussing a given research method's ethical implications and encourages us to express sensitivity towards philosophical assumptions and subsequent rhetorical and textual approaches oppositional to what the researcher originally selected (Payne, 2000). In the context of qualitative research reflexivity is necessary to enhance the study's trustworthiness and validity (Lahman, et. al., 2011). Reflexivity can also be a means to examine the research process completely. It involves a continued meditation while executing the research process in order to improve upon it as it progresses. This is recommended to not occur in isolation but in relation and conversation with other researchers as you read professional accounts on methodology and as you converse and consult with your contemporaries and supervisor – all of which I intend to do (Lahman, et. al., 2011).

CHAPTER 5

JUB JUB:
A FALLEN HERO'S RISE TO REDEMPTION

To Make a Hero You Will Need the Following

Derived from the Greek compound of "arche" which translates to a creative source that can not necessarily be seen and "tupos" which translates to an impression of sorts (Henderson, 2017), archetypes are understood as repeated patterns common to the human experience. Such is the reason that we find them playing pivotal roles in legends, myths, multiple works of literature as well as dreams (İşleyen, 2020). Additionally, archetypes find application in images, symbols, and situations. For example, the wintertime can represent death, deficiency and overall troublesome times whereas the summer can represent growth, prosperity or abundance. Popularised by Carl Jung, archetypes are argued to have originated from what he termed the collective unconscious. This is a primeval trove of myths and dreams further containing universal images and themes that we have since inherited from our ancestors (İşleyen, 2020). Several recurrent archetypes or archetypal characters have been observed such as the mother, the explorer and the hero – the latter being the most common of archetypes (Henderson, 2013).

Archetypal heroes showcase significant psychological facets of the human condition such as those of glory, achievement, and strength. Archetypal heroes have similar life patterns of coming across unanticipated challenges that they eventually overcome through sheer wisdom and determination (İşleyen, 2020). The hero achieves this despite the enormity and difficulty of the challenge, and it is this very feature that defines their status as a hero. Characteristic of their journey, a hero is brought forth through a miraculous yet humble birth, an early instance that evidences a superhuman quality, their rapid ascent to power or prominence as well as their triumph over evil forces and possible descent thereafter (Henderson, 2013). Grand as a hero may be made out, they are not always without flaws. If anything, it is their flaws such as their prideful nature that may be the challenge to overcome or the reason for their tragic descent (Feist & Feist, 2006). More definitively, the term hero refers to a person who possesses great strength and courage. They are further celebrated for their valiant exploits and are known to the larger community as either noble and courageous individuals or highly accomplished individuals (Goethals & Allison, 2012).

It is through this archetypal heroic lens that we observe an episode featuring Jub Jub who is a prominent media personality and subsequently falls in the second category of heroes. Jub Jub [Molemo Katleho Maarohanye] rose to fame in the year 2006 with his debut album *The Rare Breed* (ZAlebs, 2021). A song called *Good Time Of Your Time* on this very album received great airplay and was regularly broadcast on musical channels and programmes on television. This led to him performing the song at the 2006 Metro FM Music Awards. Jub Jub then released his second studio album *My Shine* which also gained massive popularity and featured arguably his most famous song *Ndikhokhele*. The song is his take on the popular gospel hymn of the same name and translates to "lead me, Father." (ZAlebs, 2021). In 2009 Jub Jub founded his record label named after his first album, Rare Breed Entertainment, and closely collaborated with Sheer Music (ZAlebs, 2021). It is the overarching aim of this section, then, to explore Jub Jub's representation of masculinity through his narrative formulations that make account of his experiences as a man in the public eye.

A Hero Amongst Men

Jub Jub walks us through a journey of his meteoric rise to fame in the form of a story as he is prompted by the host to share an account of his life prior to his incarceration. In addition to being tools of social influence that are traditionally directed towards others, stories can be tools used to precipitate or indicate a change in the self (Allison & Goethals, 2014). Specifically, narratives of heroic efforts share knowledge through the provision of scripts or mental modes for how an individual could or ought to live their life. Heroic stories achieve this through an energising mechanism that works to inspire an emotional reaction that Algoe and Haidt (2009) refer to as elevation. Elevation is an emotion that is contradictory to that of disgust. It is a combination of awe, admiration and reverence. The host, MacG, exemplifies this elevation through his remark, "*because I looked at you on TV and thought 'this nigga is a fucking rock star!' I wanted to be like Jub Jub, bro*." MacG's expression of elevation can be likened to or signify aspiration. Aspiration is a cultural capability that is in the presumptions and norms of what comprises a good life and of what is subsequently achievable (Izugbara & Egesa, 2019).

A good life is a life that has meaning and value for the individual pursuing it. Additionally, it includes a focus on the things that offer a sense of direction or purpose to the individual. These facets continue to hold the same level of significance even in hostile and dire circumstances (Izugbara & Egesa, 2019). To define the concept of the good life is intentionally abstract to provide room from the multiple meanings it could encompass. Notions on what a good life is

are not concrete scripts. Rather, they are matters perpetually in contest (Loukianov, et.al., 2020). These various meanings bring attention to the socially constructed nature of our understanding of what a good life is. The social spheres wherein interactions occur form the production, sustenance, development, and contestations of "good life" understandings by endorsing specific interaction and linguistic choices while obstructing others (Loukianov, et.al., 2020). On the issue of linguistic choices, Khotso (2019) writes that language can be operationalised in a way that classifies, objectifies, constructs, abuses, constrains, alienates, silences, intimidates and/ or even individualises people. Therefore, language links the social spheres and the subsequent interactions that occur therein.

Debbarma (2014) offers a definition of the good life that endorses a more concrete and less abstract way of understanding. This definition entails the good life as a life that could be rationally desired by every person. In a modern society, most people consider a happy life to be a good life, however this is not always a lived reality. This is because there are people who have led what may be considered a good life, yet they are not necessarily happy with it. This, the argument of goodness not necessarily aligning with happiness, is supported by Robbins' (2008) assertion that subjective wellness or well-being, as it pertains to a good life, does not necessarily equate to a cultivation of the qualities and traits that capacitate a person to live an authentically good life. Happiness – particularly in modern capitalist societies – has become closely linked with the possession of goods, money and wealth (Debbarma, 2014). For the purpose of this text, we will consider a good life in the context of economic means. That is to say, a good life means to have the financial capability to comfortably sustain oneself, and others under their care as well as the affordance of particular luxuries. These arguably enable a person to ultimately live a good life. Consequently then, these possessions are also often required to prove the strength of one's adherence to masculinity. To be a good man one ought to be in a position of high status and power; be mentally, emotionally and physically fit; and repudiate any and all things that are linked to femininity (Schermerhorn & Vescio, 2020).

This however, presents a rather interesting problem in the context of South Africa. South Africa is one of the most unequal societies in the world (Posel, 2010). This is largely due to the everlasting legacy of Apartheid. Enforced by legislation, Apartheid was a race-based system of segregation (Atmore, 2013). Under this legislation, it was required of every South African to undergo racial classification. This classification became binding across every aspect of that individual's private and public life (Posel, 2010). A white classification offered and entitled an individual to a lifetime of political, social and economic privileges and opportunities. Whereas

a black classification resulted in the exclusion from these opportunities. By doing this, apartheid ensured an enduring circular logic that spoke to a particular socio-economic status and privilege being regarded as key indicators of racial superiority while simultaneously advancing the idea that racial superiority warrants this elevated socio-economic position (Posel, 2010).

Ratifying racial hierarchies to this extent entitled whiteness to denote relative affluence, privilege and subsequently the means to afford and lead a good life. Thereby leaving blackness to denote an unworthiness of the same quality of life. While South Africa is no longer under Apartheid legislation, these stark socio-economic differences remain persistent in this fashion. This subsequently leaves black men in a precarious situation where their masculinity is under threat of limited recognition, if any at all. Should we agree with Mooney's (1998) assertion that masculinity is a set of ruling class [oppressive] ideals that function to control younger white people, women [without reference to race] as well as black people and therefore, black men, then Connell's provision of black men as an example of a marginalised masculinity would be supported by that stance. This is because, as they argue, marginalisation exists in relation to the dominant group's authorisation (Matlon, 2016) which is in respect to white men. However, Morrell (1998) argues otherwise with regards to black men's subordinate or marginal masculine status. Instead of the one hegemonic masculinity that is purported by Mooney, Morrell offers three categories of hegemonic masculinity: a white masculinity that speaks to the economic and political power of the white dominant class; an African masculinity that was rurally based, located in and propagated through indigenous and cultural institutions such as customary law; and a black masculinity that was birthed from an urbanisation and development context that was culturally and geographically distinct from the rural notions.

Jub Jub is symbolic of the third offering. He was born and raised in Orlando East in the township of Soweto (ZAlebs, 2021) and hails from a working-class background. While masculinities remain contested, a masculinity idealised by working class boys and men is one that involves being streetwise, the ability to attract multiple women and appearing cool (Langa, 2010; Ragnarsson, et al., 2010). Appearing cool involves displaying symbols of economic status such as owning special brands of cellular phones, sporting fashionable items and wearing sunglasses. Granted podcasts are typically consumed through audio, MacG's podcast also offers a visual option for consumption and therein Jub Jub can be seen wearing black sunglasses and a golden watch – items which speak to his economic status. Being seen to attract multiple women works to enhance a man's social standing as women function to indicate both financial

and sexual power (Ragnarsson, et al., 2010). Jub Jub exemplifies this when he recounts stories of his youth and early career. He speaks to the fact that the successful launch of his first album saw him positioned as a man of financial means which resulted in him amassing a large feminine following subsequently impliying his sexual power. He moves to support that implication with this definitive statement: "*Yeah dawg, my mom would find condoms laying around the yard*."

Having acquired this new celebrity status, Jub Jub had definitively attained a *good life* as celebrities symbolise success, achievement, reputation, and high societal recognition (Masaviru, 2016). In addition to this celebrity status that Jub Jub holds to this day, he is involved in an entrepreneurial exploit. He makes a display of this by offering the two hosts a sample of the vitamin solutions he sells that are administered through intravenously This is not a business of his own imagining but a consequence of purchasing a franchise. Upon hearing that Jub Jub obtained a franchise MacG exclaims, "*That's money, dawg*!" MacG's excited remarks are a further indication of the elevation. To enhance his position as a figure worthy of elevation, Jub Jub mentions that the starting price of his vitamin solutions is R6000. This hints at his advanced economic achievement and alludes to his successful participation in a capitalist consumerist culture and thus his successful attainment of an idealised masculinity. Herein, masculinity is positioned to be in relationship with capitalism which yields specific consequences for black masculinity. Structurally, blackness represents exclusion and so when an individual black man acquires significant wealth or becomes a celebrity in the same way that Jub Jub has, he begins to signify the alternative means through which all other economically disempowered black men can assert their capitalist identity (Malton, 2016). Elevation is arguably intensified when the hero in question is an underdog who is subsequently called to a higher purpose and triumphantly pursues it (Goethes & Allison, 2014).

Given South Africa's abundant economic challenges and widening gaps of inequality, Jub Jub represents triumph over these obstacles. He is a black man, who against all odds, obtains an economic status that is otherwise unattainable for many others. There is the understanding that valuing money within and of itself is a good thing to have. This valuing of money, which is in opposition to general breadwinning, grants black men the ability to symbolically participate in the highest degree of economic accomplishment like that of the celebrity or wealthy (hooks, 2004). In doing so they achieve the ability of having the assertion of the capitalist identity offer value unto their otherwise marginalised identities (Malton, 2016). It further enables these men

to express their agency amid an oppressive structure even if expressing their agency stands the chance of hindering any opportunity for resistance.

Furthermore, this elevation is heightened by the charismatic quality of the hero. Charismatic people are perceived to possess God-like traits as they are regarded to be imbued with either supernatural or particularly exceptional qualities and/or powers (Goethes & Allison, 2015). Jub Jub positions himself as a person of exceptional qualities by commenting on people's means of entry and subsequent stay in the entertainment industry. He purports that people gain entry due to either one of these three reasons: as a means for success using sex, as an occurrence of chance where the individual involved has no real talent to share except that of good fortune but later uses this to their advantage or as an illustration "*of your pure God-given talent."* Jub Jub speaks of himself as possessing this God-given talent and makes it clear that there is no room for ambiguity or nuance in this regard as one can only fall in a single category.

The psychological function and/ or desire to label and cement heroes as such reflects our tendency to identify with people we regard as role models and/ or behavioural guides (Goethals & Allison, 2012). People often employ conceptual systems, cultural symbols, or other systems of representation, such as archetypal heroes, to make meaning of their world and establish its coherence (Ragnarsson, et.al., 2010). This identification serves to assimilate and incorporate one ego into another. Identification is a change in attitude or belief that is premised on a self-defined sympathetic cord that is shared with or recognised in another individual. This is to the extent that that individual's opinions and viewpoints are adopted and integrated into one's own psychological real estate to be as similar as possible to that individual (Goethals & Allison, 2012). From a media consumption perspective, it is a process of imagination through which the audience assumes the character's perspective, goals, and identity (Eden, et.al., 2017).

Jub Jub actively participates in this process on behalf of the audience by appraising the programme as one where people are unmasked and have their true nature revealed. This implies that even Jub Jub himself has gone on the show to make transparent and reveal his true character as opposed to what might be perceived of him in the media or public. Therefore, anyone who may find resonance with what he says shares with him the additional aspects of his identity or performance thereof. In the continued spirit of identification, Jub Jub claims that both he and MacG are societal write offs. In response to MacG's gratitude for Jub Jub's participation on the show, Jub Jub says, "*You are a write off. That's why I don't take interviews or anything like that. He's a write off. I am a write off. So we're gonna understand each other*."

This is a powerful discursive rhetorical strategy that simultaneously enables two things: that both men are equipped to thoroughly understand each other thereby communicating that they are kindred spirits. Finaly and Eatough (2012) write that we often use the phrase "kindred spirit" to describe feelings of being accepted and understood by others, in conjunction with an awareness of collective passions and interests. While that exact phrase was not used by Jub Jub, he hinted at it through highlighting his and MacG's shared status as write offs. Henceforth, his appearance on the programme communicates that the two share a kind of solidarity which typically comes with mutual exchange and meshing. With the mutual exchange arrives a sense of reciprocity as well as loyalty and the subsequent siding with the other person against all adversity (Finlay & Eatough, 2012). This agreement is demonstrated through the lack of challenge or counterarguments offered by the podcast hosts in response to Jub Jub's utterances. On the other hand, the meshing arrives with a sense of commonality – a comfortable fit of shared existential issues alongside collective interests, passions, and views (Finaly & Eatough, 2012). Given MacG's earlier remarks that conveyed elevation, Jub Jub finding kinship in MacG communicates that MacG – as well as his audience base – is deserving of the same regard. In the event the audience internalise and enmesh themselves with Jub Jub [and his heroism] to the fullest degree possible, could result in a staunch loyalty towards him even if he has fallen in the eyes of most other members of society (Allison & Goethals, 2014). The second function of such the discursive rhetoric is a deliberate positioning of self as 'write-off', as an embodied figure that speaks from the margins. It is this rhetoric that interacts with the project of redemption to which we now turn.

The Road to Redemption

Public figures and the images they present of themselves to the world are on the receiving end of close scrutiny. An image is defined as a source's perception as it is held by an audience (Meng & Pan, 2013). These perceptions are textured by the actions and words of the source as well as by the deeds of other relevant and/ or associated actors. When public figures have their actions closely monitored, they need to govern themselves accordingly and commit actions that the public understands to be acceptable. Doing this ensures that they maintain a positive image (Meng & Pan, 2013). In 2010 Jub Jub and Themba Tshabalala were involved in a fatal vehicle accident thereby marking the beginning of his fall. Jub Jub and Themba Tshabalala were drag racing their Mini Coopers in Soweto, along Mdlalose Drive in Protea North when one of the cars drove into a group of teenagers (Chauke, 2011; Sapa, 2012). This crash resulted in four schoolboys - Prince Mohiube, Mlungisi Cwayi, Andile Mthombeni and Phomello Masemola -

being killed and two others – Frank Mlambo and Fumani Mushwana – suffering permanent brain damage (Enca, 2017).

During the trial that determined their conviction, it was found that both Jub Jub and his co-accused Themba Tshabalala, were under the influence of cocaine and morphine at the time of the accident as blood samples were taken shortly after the accident (Times, 2012; BBC News, 2010). Themba Tshabalala was the one found to have alcohol in his system and it was his car that ploughed into Jub Jub's which then ran into the slain and injured pupils. They were charged with and subsequently found guilty of four murder counts, two attempted murder counts, illicit drug use, driving under the influence of drugs as well as racing on a public road (Chauke, 2011). They were each ultimately sentenced to twenty-seven years in total yet set to serve twenty-five years instead (Nkosi, 2012). In 2014 they had their sentences appealed and reduced to ten years with two years being suspended resulting in a culpable homicide charge instead. This earmarked a redemptive turn in the Jub Jub's fallen arc. In 2017 they were paroled and have remain integrated in the public since. They had spent a total of five years in prison (Enca, 2017). In that same year Jub Jub founded the *Jub Cares Foundation* which serves as his version of a philanthropic exercise where he gives back to the community through visiting schools and providing motivational speeches to the children through the foundation (ZAlebs, 2021).

Starting the foundation can be viewed as a strategy for image restoration. The idea of image restoration was popularised by Benoit's invention of the Image Restoration Theory. Herein, the theory details a variety of strategies that an organisation or individual can employ in order to minimise the damage done to their image in the event a damaging instance has occurred. The theory is founded on the premise that the act needs to be offensive and that the accused needs to be held responsible for it (Grimmer, 2017; Masaviru, 2016; Meng & Pan, 2013). Embedded in this theory are the following strategies: mortification, corrective action, reduction of the act's offensiveness, evading responsibility and denial. A denial strategy involves eliminating any affiliation between the accused and the offensive act thereby claiming that there is no threat offered to the image.

A strategy of evading responsibility involves an attempt by the accused to manipulate the public's perception by renouncing any responsibility of for their actions through one of four ways: provocation, defeasibility, claims to an accident and/ or through appeals of positive motive and intention (Grimmer, 2017; Masaviru, 2016; Meng & Pan, 2013). Using *provocation* allows the accused to claim that they were coaxed into the action. Invoking *defeasibility* permits

the accused to blame ignorance and factors beyond their control for the act. Claiming a defence *of accidental occurrence* provides the accused with an escape to not be held accountable for the act and *appealing to positive intention* grants the accused an evasion of responsibility by saying that they had good motives that resulted in unintended negative consequences.

A strategy of *offensiveness reduction* involves an attempt by the accused to minimise the perceived damage caused by the offensive act. They do this by emphasising their good qualities through the manufacturing of a complete and informed perspective with which the accused ought to be evaluated (Grimmer, 2017; Masaviru, 2016; Meng & Pan, 2013). There are six sub-strategies found herein: *bolstering, minimization, differentiation, transcendence, attacking the accuser and compensation*. *Bolstering* entails the accused using their good traits and past deeds in hopes it will lessen outrage and help their cause. *Minimization* refers to the accused's attempt to rationalise to the audience that the act is not as terrible as it is made out to be. Exacting *differentiation* means that the accused is comparing their mistake to a worse mistake thereby lessening the offensiveness of their action. *Transcendence* speaks to the accused's attempt to justify the offensive act by placing it a wider perspective where the audience would feel that the action, although unusual, was justified (Grimmer, 2017; Masaviru, 2016; Meng & Pan, 2013).

Attacking one's accuser involves diverting attention to the accused's prosecutor. Finally, the sub-strategy of *compensation* involves the accused paying some kind of remuneration like money to the victim. The fourth image restoration strategy of *corrective action* involves the accused implementing steps designed to prevent a repetition of the same act by employing corrective measures. Lastly, the fifth image restoration strategy of *mortification* is where the accused claims full accountability for the offensive act (Grimmer, 2017; Masaviru, 2016; Meng & Pan, 2013). Image Restoration Theory functions on the assumption that communication is goal oriented and that maintaining a favourable public image is one of the most important goals. Thusly, it is in the best interest of the accused to restore a positive image by exacting one or several of the strategies outlined above and their selection should be based on the audience, the offensiveness as well as the credibility of the wrongful act (Grimmer, 2017; Masaviru, 2016; Meng & Pan, 2013).

Prompted by both podcast hosts, Jub Jub provides a detailed account of his substance abuse. He frames or begins his discussion in the following way, "*Me being fatigued. Doing show to show back-to-back.... I believe that every artist in South Africa's got that something. It's either*

too much coffee or too much sugar. Too much violence… Til this day, I have not met anybody that does not have a craving of some sort or an addiction of some sort especially the ones in the industry." This a significant topic because it was his indulgent substance use that landed him in prison in the first place. Observed is an attempt to reduce the offensiveness of his presumably past drug use. Particularly using transcendence, Jub Jub's statement retroactively works to justify the substance abuse that resulted in his intoxicated drag race that ended the lives for four and injured two high school pupils several years prior.

Furthermore, by naturalising this drug use Jub Jub arguably aims to elicit forgiveness from the audience. Forgiveness restores an individual and allows them to move beyond their past violation thereby enabling the individual to release themselves from guilt and shame (Kewley, n.d.). Forgiveness means to willingly abandon your right to indifferent behaviour, negative judgement and resentment toward the transgressor who unjustly injured you. Simultaneously, you ought to foster undeserved qualities of love, compassion, and generosity towards the transgressor (Ambrose, et.al, 2012). Forgiveness is not meant to release the transgressor from accountability, condone or excuse the offense, re-establish trust or facilitate reconciliation. It merely means to forego retribution or negative feelings. Obtaining forgiveness allows the transgressor a chance at redemption.

Redemption, as Meyer (2019) describes is, is the process of correcting an injustice resulting in a restoration of balance. For redemption to take effect, its seeker needs to acknowledge their wrongdoing and provide an explanation of the reason behind their wrongdoing. Jub Jub places emphasis on the latter. He does this by relaying the fact that he ultimately used cocaine to maintain his energy levels to continue performing at his peak – travelling from one appearance to another in a short amount of time yet still delivering the same level of excitement to all his fans and audiences. It is important to note that Jub Jub never but once directly speaks to the accident. In passing, he mentions that all proceeds collected from the remix of his song *Ndikhokhele* – post his prison release – are forwarded to the families of the victims of his accident thereby exemplifying a compensation strategy to further reduce the offensiveness of his transgression. Rarely, if at all, does he offer a full and complete admission of wrongdoing and guilt.

Focusing largely on the substance use itself reduces the offense of his actions. This works to somewhat alter the way the public may remember the consequence of his actions. Forgiveness, and ultimately redemption, is difficult to acquire when the seeker cannot circumvent reminders

of the act and they cannot escape these reminders if they do not inspire a different viewpoint of their violations. The inability to effectively attune the emotional content of a violation severely decreases the ability to forgive it (Ambrose, et.al, 2012). Therefore, people are more inclined to forgive a violation to the degree that they develop benign associations concerning the transgressor's act. Jub Jub is a fallen masculine hero who is on a mission to redemption. Bearing in mind the earlier discussion on kindredness, masculine audiences specifically may internalise and exact this strategy as it relates to their own struggles and potential failures in achieving their specific masculine ideal. Social Identity Theory posits that individuals derive their self-concept from their knowledge about their membership to a social group (Kewley, et. al., n.d.). Tied in with this knowledge is the emotional significance and value affiliated with that membership. Masculinity is an easily threatened and tenuous social identity that is constantly under tensions where one needs to perpetually prove it through the performance of masculine characteristics (Ratele, 2014; Schermerhorn & Vescio, 2020). Berdahl, Cooper, Glick, Livingston, and Williams (2018) write that men experience ongoing pressure to publicly demonstrate to others [and themselves] that they are "real men". Given the fact that manhood is a status that is obtained socially, it depends on the views of others and their deference which then renders manhood – and ultimately masculinity – as tenuous and conditional.

The issue of performance is drawn from Judith Butler's performativity theory (2011). Hers was the intention of understanding and providing a framework that helps us explain and understand how individuals' daily roles, performances and decisions are influenced by social habits and norms (Ubisi, 2020). Gender performativity theory is founded on the idea that gender is manufactured through the continuous and recurring dialogue practices and actions that function to create the phenomena it both constrains and regulates (Sheerin & Linehan, 2018). This performance requires that masculinity demonstrate its dominance which is a significant aspect that heavily contributes to its precarity (Berdahl, et.al, 2018). In numerous cultures across the world, men become men through dominating and/ or controlling others, by resisting control from others and by "making things happen" (Berdahl, et.al., 2018, p. 426).

The act of asking for forgiveness, subverts one's dominance in a given situation. It leaves you at the mercy of the person from whom you are seeking forgiveness thereby rendering you under their control. Jub Jub exemplifies an awareness of this hence the decision to embark on a strategy that transcended and naturalised the reasons behind his transgression. These efforts were further enhanced by a compensatory and perspective change strategy that all in all worked to reduce the offensiveness of his actions. Having done this functions to restore a power balance

in his favour. Reducing the offensiveness of his actions leaves little in the way for audiences to manage and control. There is barely material from which they can justifiably and logically withhold a desired resource from him. This ensures that even in situations where he rightfully ought to be in a disempowered position, the dynamics are manufactured in such a way that his dominance and control are minimally or temporarily but inconsequently challenged.

CHAPTER 6

MPHO "POPPS" MODIKANE, THE JESTER: A SUBVERSIVE MASCULINE

What is Humour?

As far back as ancient Egypt and imperial China, the role of the jester in royal courts has indeed been one of general humour but also political critique and ridicule to some degree (Morreall, 2015). These functions of using humour not just to entertain but also to comment on broader society and politics at large has continued into contemporary states with political comedy, newspaper political cartoons and so on. Humour has been a strong feature of much social protests and activism against corrupt political states on the African continent as well (Kuhlman, 2012; Obadare, 2009). The concept of humour is a rather larger terrain to traverse. It has meanings that differ greatly across various social circumstances and cultures (Graham, 2010). This is to say that what may be considered as humorous in one context may be understood rather differently in another. Humour, much like comedy, is a subjective activity (Harm, 2015). For example, Edwards (2015) cites a study by Romero, Alsua, Hinrichs and Pearson (2007) that reiterated the point made by Mulholland (1997) in their discussion on cross-national variations related to using humour in business contexts. Herein it was discovered that the pulling of legs amongst Australian people made Asian people feel rather uncomfortable, particularly when this was occurring in business context. Romero, et.al. (2007) found the same sentiment to hold true within different regions in the United States. This contextualised understanding of humour also reflects in the inconsistent definitions that are offered for it.

Miczo and Welter (2006) understand humour to be verbal or nonverbal behaviour with discordant elements that aim to elicit positive emotional or mental responses from the targeted audience. On the other hand, Berger (1976) defines humour as a particular kind of information that establishes an incongruent meaning or relationship and is subsequently presented in a way that elicits laughter. Alternatively, Martin (2007) offers the suggestion that humour ought to have a multi-dimensional definition that encapsulates the elements of cognition, perception and reactions that further include anything the actor does or says that is perceived as funny. Meanwhile Cooper (2005) argues that humour is the mutual and deliberate behaviour that is enacted by one person with the goal of amusing or influencing another person or group of

people. Finally, Critchely (2002) offers their definition, which is that humour is the result of the production of discord between the way things exist and the manner which they are represented. Common in these definitions is the explicit or implicit mention of context and purpose and how those are the two elements that help define and make apparent the humour or the intention thereof. It follows Edwards' (2015) assertion, citing Hughes (2005), that it is theory that defines humour and that these definitions vary according to the focus and perspective of the individual manufacturing them. Additionally, while humour may struggle to find an apt and all-encompassing definition, at its core, it covers laughter related phenomena such as ridicule, satire, wit, sarcasm, irony, and comedy (Edwards, 2015) – the last of which will be the focus of this piece.

Comedic Landscape in South Africa

Donian (2021, p 2) observes that "humour is thus a broad category under which all methods of funniness fall, and comedy is a particular instantiation of that category." Comedy in South Africa has a rather interesting developmental trajectory. During apartheid, comedy was constrained by numerous oppressive state apparatuses that functioned to supress dissentient content from public view. One such example is the Publications Act of 1974 which censored artwork or media that the state considered to be pejorative to the Afrikaner or seen to be injurious to social relations (Donian, 2022). In addition to this, the State of Emergency issued in 1985 permitted the government to control and mediate press coverage on anti-apartheid sentiments and news. This subsequently affected the expression of comedy such that it ideologically functioned to explicitly personify the mores, values and perspectives of Afrikanerdom and the wider Apartheid regime. For example, in 1988 veteran comedian Mel Miller was arrested without charge and subsequently beaten after a plain clothed policeman attended his show at the Carlton Hotel in Johannesburg and objected to the comedian's material (Seirils, 2011).

Comedic performances were predominantly presented by Afrikaans speaking white people for an Afrikaans speaking audience and was rarely inclusive of English. Comedic representations positively portrayed Afrikaans people as heroic and wholesome characters while negatively portraying Black people as inferior and barbaric (Botha, 2012; Britz, 2017). Evidently, comedy was used a naturalising device of white Afrikaans people's superiority over black people further justifying their oppression. It arguably worked to quell any reservations that the dominant class might have held with regards to black people's oppression. In addition to this,

black people [and other people of colour] were excluded from participating within the mainstream media. This is due to the fact that the comedic scene was restricted to radio, a few films and television programmes as well as a limited number of theatrical plays and performance spaces (Donian, 2022). This exclusion barred them from the possibility of offering counter-representations as well as insights to their lived experiences as an oppressed class and their opinions on and critiques of the oppressive class. In the sporadic moments where black people were specifically catered to, the Apartheid government incentivised early-career white filmmakers to produce content in indigenous languages spoken by their target audience to actively control the films and other media's ideological messaging – particularly in the 1970s and 1980s (Donian, 2021).

The dawn of democracy, however, saw a change in this as an immediate turn took effect in the comedic infrastructure of post-Apartheid South Africa. Particularly in 1997, South Africa saw an explosion in black comedic talent such as Tumi Morake, Kagiso Lediga, Loyiso Gola and David Kau (Donian, 2022; Seirlis, 2011). While not specifically attributed to these comics, previously marginalised voices gained notoriety and could offer their social critiques, views, and commentary. Further to this meteoric rise in comedic talent, South Africa saw an increase from twenty-seven established comedians in 1997 to a figure going over one hundred (Donian, 2022; Seirlis, 2011). More recently, comedians are now in great demand for advertisements, corporate promotions and functions as well as television shows. Comedians often participate in a subgenre of comedy known as stand-up comedy. It usually is a live performance that involves re-enacting a humorous idea to a live audience. Like a theatrical performance, it is a direct artform that attracts instant disapproval or approval from the audience (Mark, 2022).

While there is no training required to perform comedy [stand-up], it is not meant to suggest that it is an easy profession to be a part of. It requires highly difficult and specialised skills that are developed through practice (Lintott, 2020). Because of this lack of specialised training, it makes it the most accessible and democratic of art forms. For the South African context this is especially significant given the time in which the artform rose to prominence and the expressive avenues and career opportunities it made available. Within and of itself it presents as a symbolic edification of the possibilities now made apparent for marginalised and previously excluded social groups. One such a way it was made accessible was through the comedic talent show called "So You Think You're Funny". Herein, a nationwide search was launched for South Africa's next comedic superstar (Mpho Popps, 2023). This chapter's focus,

Mpho Popps Modikane, exploded into popularity after appearing on this show allowing him to establish a global comedic career as well as a local acting one.

Theories on Humour: to be Superior, to be Incongruous and to be Relieved

One of the oldest analytical themes for investigating humour is the superiority or disparagement theory (Edwards, 2015; Mark, 2022; Raskin, 1985). It is a socio-behavioural theory that deals with the relationship between the listener and the speaker. It captures the imagination that we the observers are better than the observed and subsequently subject them to subservience using humour. Herein, humour is used either as a kind of resistance or mechanism of control thus reinforcing a sense of self-superiority (Edwards, 2015; Mark, 2022; Raskin, 1985). Arguably, this theory is applicable in cases where humour is trafficked to poke fun at instances of vanity, duplicity, and hypocrisy (Harm, 2015). Given the contextual nature of humour, ridiculing cases wherein people behave in inappropriate or socially frowned upon ways evidence humour's function as tool for social control as well (Donian, 2021). In addition to being used to serve interests of the white middle class, humour – through comedy –was also engaged to entertain Afrikaans citizens by diverting them from reality and providing a temporary escape that was intended to slow their awareness of the conditions of South Africa.

One can then imagine that the initiation of superiority humour, for this function, can serve an inharmonious function as it could work to reify hostility towards a targeted group. This strategy was employed during the Apartheid regime as detailed in the section above. However, in as much as it may be a tool of social control, it can be also utilised as a form of social protest. Donian (2021) describes that despite the nationalisation of the media and widespread censorship, political comedy was still possible. For instance, using satirical humour, playwright Robert Kirby scripted and performed in several venues that functioned to expose the inherent racism in the façade of white liberalism. This scorn was in response to the countrywide revolt against the Apartheid government that came because of the Soweto Student Uprising of June 16 in 1976.

A second analytical tool to understanding humour is incongruity theory. This theory suggests that when something is originally understood in one, often serious, sense suddenly becomes understood in a completely different and typically ludicrous sense. Herein the original expectation is not met and is consequently burst thereby resulting in a rather delightful experience that co-occurs with laughter (Edwards, 2015; Mark, 2022). Laughter is an affection

perceived to arise from the abrupt transformation of a strained assumption into nothing. In Freud's theory, laughter provides relief for tension that accumulates because of the anxiety that is provoked by incongruity (Edwards, 2015). On the issue of relief, a third theory on humour called the arousal or relief theory, incorporates the assumption that laughter is a relinquishing of repressed humour (Edwards, 2015; Mark, 2022). This theory specifically places focus on the recipient individual's humour and their psychological feelings. Herein responses to humour are purported to serve a psychological release for nervous energy. Harking back to Freud, his development of relief theory was premised on the belief that humour is a clandestine manner of expressing urges that are socially forbidden as well as repressed aggression discharged through laughter (Edwards, 2015).

The Jester and His Relationship with Power

Mpho Popps, being the comedian that he is, would render him a jester. The jester, or fool, is an archetype responsible for enjoyment, curiosity, and liveliness. By his own admission, Mpho Popps refers to himself as a DJ of emotions with the ability to inspire his desired affects [that usually skew positive] in his audiences. More explicitly he says, "*I'm not just a comedian, I'm an emotional DJ. That's what I do, right? When I'm stage I make you think, I make you laugh. I make you gag. There's so many things that I do, right? So therefore, I know how to control emotions*." The jester uses their gifts to explore the world around them, to create out of a pure sense of enjoyment, to find delight in life for its own sake without illusions and without care, thought nor concern for the judgement of others (Al-Qadi, 2022). Their mantra is to be grounded in the present. Their contribution to people's lives is resilience. They encourage people to get back and to make another attempt at whatever it was that they were pursuing (Al-Qadi, 2022). Additionally, the jester is known for their ability to critique power as they are counterpart to the king or authoritative power (Zueva-Owens, 2014).

However, this is a rather perplexing statement. In them being this counterpart, they cease to function as an independent character and are bound with as well as inserted into the established order. While they may be the only person allowed to critique power in full view of everyone without need to hide their identities (Zueva-Owens, 2014), they do so still within prescribed boundaries that do not appear to upset the status quo. Their behaviours and utterances, particularly when speaking unfavourably of the authoritative power, are sanctioned acts of transgression that would otherwise be punished if enacted by another person. Theirs is a privilege that is simultaneously contingent and precarious if not traversed carefully. Their

position permits them to speak uncensored to an authoritative power as well as hold up a mirror to that power to make it confront its own shortcomings (Zueva-Owens, 2014). Though, they are to do this under the guise of comedic riddles, metaphors, and verse even if the message is clear to the audience.

The jester's council is not privy to direct language, and this functions to signify his position as a separate almost non-member of society (Zueva-Owens, 2014). Their "jestered" language, so to speak, places them outside of societal convention, relationship frameworks and norms. Given that jester traffics in comedy, comedy as a medium typically requires departing from the norm whether that be a norm of conventional dress, appropriate action or enacted stereotypical features (Harms, 2015). For comedy to be deployed successfully, it requires an element of foolishness which (Harms, 2015). describes as unconventional rationality. This creativity is a result of a transgressive and undifferentiated quality of the jester. It is this quality that then offers them the ability to offer illuminating insights (Harms, 2015). Arguably, they suffer an ostracization of sorts. While it allows them to be a proxy for the authority's subordinates to release their frustrations and opinions on the state of governance, it also allows the authoritative power to actively thwart any utterances that they might deem to threatening to their power. The jester's unserious nature or public perception thereof operates as a downplaying of everything that they may say, particularly that with which the authoritative power may not completely agree. Should there be concerns and fears about potential uprising on the ruled people's end, the jester's inherent lack of legitimacy undercuts any capacity to directly affect a change.

Blackness as an object of Fear

"You need a black person that crosses over – not just black and white – across all the races… You can put me anywhere and I will fit in. It's about understanding people and that's why I'm an NTB [non-threatening black]. I don't think it's a looks thing."(Mpho Popps, interview with Mac G)

As the jester uses comedy in service of their role, comedy can be the means through which to critique and overthrow power structures. However, given the jester's precarious position, comedy may not necessarily posit as a corrective norm. Rather, it perpetually plays with the terms of norm and perversion (Boyle, 2015) thereby indicating a maintenance of hegemonic ideals. It begs the question then, of what results the critiquing of power is meant to yield. As it stands, it comes across as an act of lip service. It provides the illusion of influence over a presiding power structure but with no real means to effect it.

Power, as conceived by Mumby (1989), is a configuration of interests that compose a certain institutional infrastructure. It is not necessarily an individual's possession nor a relationship betwixt individuals. Defining power in this way offers the advantage of shifting from viewing power solely as an overt behaviour and rather viewing it as a structural aspect of institutions. It is in this way that power becomes innately associated with the production of meaning in institutional contexts (Mumby, 1989). That is to say that a specific social group will have their interests served through their integration into the meaning creations in pedestrian life. When these specific interests are integrated into the meaning of reality, they are reflexively – through discourse – mediated and reproduced . MacG questions how it is that Mpho Popps has managed to avoid attracting controversy throughout his career and calling him "the token black guy". Mpho Popps responds, "*You need a black person that crosses over – not just black and white – across all the races… You can put me anywhere and I will fit in. It's about understanding people and that's why I'm an NTB [non-threatening black]. I don't think it's a looks thing*."

At this utterance of being a non-threatening black, Mpho Popps points to something pivotal – the significance of *blackness as an object of fear*. Blackness, and in particular black men, are often constructed and considered to be dangerous perpetrators of violence (Langa, et.al, 2020). Applying a generous understanding to the word "violence", this can come to mean any real or perceived harm or threat incurred by a white figurehead specifically as it relates to their position as a white figurehead. Herein blackness and masculinity would take on a metonymic function, and more specifically, a visual metonymic function. Metonymy is a figure of speech wherein a single vehicle entity is used to describe a target entity (Whitted, 2014). A word would be used to describe another word, concept or phenomenon that is closely related to it, for example, the word "tears" would indicate a state of sadness or joy depending on the preceding context. Enacted on or through a black male body, visual metonymy invites attention to and makes a spectacle of the racial difference endured by the subject (Whitted, 2014) wherein they are acutely aware of their own positions.

Mpho Popps demonstrates an acute awareness of the anxiety that his blackness may inspire when in front of an audience. This anxiety operates in an antagonistic fashion. Posed in Mpho Popps' direction, it is a concern that he may be negatively stereotyped and subjected to discriminatory, distant, and hostile treatment based on his race and gender (Applebaum, 2017). When posed in the direction of the [non-black] audience it may be experienced as a concern that they could be seen to behave in ways that will be evaluated as racist by him. However,

given his jester status that may not be too much of a concern for them. They may understand him to be for their entertainment and thus be in the driver's seat in determining his continued success as a comedian. Mpho Popps suggests this when he says, "*In entertainment there's pressure to be hot. You're as good as your last show*."

Striving to be and ultimately achieving this non-threatening status indicates a successful execution of strategic empathy and a reverence or sustained support for white fragility. Whiteness is chosen as the confronted force because of how he privileged it in his statement, "*You need a black person that crosses over – not just black and white – across all the races*", further indicating its apparent and irrevocable tie to control, imperialism and superiority (Dar, 2019). White fragility names the ubiquitous practice wherein white people respond with a variety of defensive behaviours that compensate for even the faintest hints of distress caused by challenges to their racial innocence or world views (Applebaum, 2017). Strategic empathy refers to when a speaker, usually an educator, needs to tactically enmesh themselves in the subjective universe of their contemporary even as they may implicitly disagree with what their contemporary is saying (Applebaum, 2017). It functions as an act of comfort for it aims to alleviate white audiences' discomfort. It communicates an investment in white innocence that preserves the status quo and absolves white people from accountability when presented with statements that speak to their complicity in maintaining white supremacist power structures.

In Foucault's (2003) offering of power, he understands it as firstly, a macrosocial phenomenon as well as an occurrence that operates through multiple sites on a local level. Secondly, it moves in multiple directions and is not a repressive control tool that is held by a single set of social institutions or class over a subordinate demographic. Herein, where there is an opportunity for power to mobilised also lies another opportunity for resistance (Foucault, 2003). This opportunity for resistance places additional stress on the essentiality of power being local in nature. Considering these in tandem, it is therefore important to note then, that the most significant aspect of power is that it is primarily relational (Stoddart, 2007). Because of this, power then designates a relationship between a set of partners. For the select partner that wishes to exercise power, and social power at that, they need to use discourse to achieve this, which is often regulated and details the persons or institutions who are permitted to speak on a specific topic, the kinds of knowledge subjugated in producing a particular truth and the behaviour permitted in service of this (Foucault, 2003).

Specifically, whiteness has a repertoire of socially endorsed discursive practices that work to aid in their escape of uncomfortable situations (Applebaum, 2017). These practices encompass a public broadcasting of emotions such as guilt, anger and fear as well as behaviours such as silence, leaving the environment and augmentation. These actions work to restore white comfort and demonstrate a manifestation of white privilege that leaves them fragile and incapable of meditating on their role in oppressive structures. Henceforth, if discourse and its subsequent practices acts as a means or site where social power can be exercised, then it also means that it offers up a space where resistance can arise and thus challenge that power. Yet Mpho Popps appears to offer no such challenge. He describes himself as "a chronic people pleaser" consequently linking it to his success as a comedian and self-imposed pressure in his role as a provider. His material and financial success are linked to his participation in upholding a system that ironically renders him a threatening entity. Wherein to overcome this he needs to appeal to white sensibilities such as privileging white comfort and innocence.

Herein we witness him enacting a form of racial and gendered passivity that could easily be interpreted as a continued support of the aforementioned power structures. Tanassi (2004) however, would caution to not recognise passivity as compliance but rather a kind of agency and subsequent resistance. It is difficult to agree with this perspective because the option chosen did not work to alleviate the anxiety he avowedly experiences. It further does not necessarily put a mirror up the dominant class and their problematic ways. Perhaps it can be viewed as a restricted agency that positions him to tend towards a fate that he deems to be more acceptable. However, can it really be any kind of agency or resistance when the path chosen is the one advised or preferred by a dominant class? Being an agent means to be able to exercise a certain amount of control and subsequently transform the social relationship within which we are located (Sewell, 1998). Campbell and Mannell (2016) would agree to an extent and further petition that there be a recognition for nuance and "tiny wins" through what they call distributed agency. This is a kind of agency where we are to look at what is realistically achievable for real life people in their real-life situations. Distributed agency recognises agentic action as fluid and contingent on several factors where a person may have agency in some moments and a lack of agency in others (Campbell and Mannell, 2016).

Distributed agency implicitly recognises the mechanism through which social power operates. Social power functions on the two alternative mechanisms of coercion and consent and that is why sites and opportunities of resistance are possible (Stoddart, 2007). Coercion refers to the capacity for violence, as possessed by the authoritative power, that is then used against those

who are resistant to adhering to or accordingly participating in a specific social order. Herein, a person has limited to no means of agency. Contrastingly, hegemonic power – the kind wherein consent is involved – works to persuade social classes and their constitutive individuals to submit to social norms and values of a particular system that is often viewed as innately exploitative. It relies on voluntary participation instead of a threat of a consequence of punishment in the event of disobedience (Stoddart, 2007). Arguably, participating in and helping hegemony realise itself may be seen as a form of distributed agency wherein they enact their consent to the structure. It is this voluntary participation then that makes hegemony come across as a common-sense guide that directs our conceptualisations of the world.

Hegemony sees reality as an inheritance of the past and should be absorbed without critical thought and in doing so it reproduces a perceived social homeostasis (Stoddart, 2007). Mpho Popps suggests this understanding when he says, "*It's about understanding people and that's why I'm an NTB.*" Here he also suggests a social imaginary between blackness and whiteness. The term social imaginary refers to the way people understand their social existence, how matters are to flow between them and their contemporaries, expectations whose incumbent fulfilment is taken for granted and the far-reaching normative images and notions that underpin these expectations (du Plessis, 2011). The notion of a social imaginary speaks to a social homeostasis brought on by the encapsulation of the way in which human beings strive to produce a coherent picture of the world – a coherence that offers them a means to make sense of their lives in it (Griffiths & Prozesky, 2010). We as people always have a social imaginary because of an existential need to have our lives make sense – whatever sense that may be or how it looks. The dynamic in a social imaginary – through assumptions, symbols, and practices – is always in the direction of coherence.

If any aspect of the dynamic [images, expectations, and norms] conflicts with the established imaginary then individual's emic experience will be fractured, incoherent and anxious (Griffiths & Prozesky, 2010). Mpho Popps insisting on appearing non-threatening is reminiscent of a social imaginary where white safety is prioritised. This is reflective of white power and privilege where should a person of colour seek recognition [ideally of a positive kind], they are to do so in a way that ensures the composure of white safety (Steele, 2021). Whiteness constructs itself as a normative way of being to an extent that it becomes silent and invisible ultimately rendering itself incapable of interrogation. This points to whiteness' desired illusion for security and safety that is reinforced by their privilege. "Privilege is having value, or something thereof, based on your group membership or social category and not your

actions. It is further denied to people who do not belong to that particular social category" (Johnson, 1997, p21). More specifically, the privilege referred to in this section is called unearned entitlements. Unearned entitlements refer to the things that everyone should and deserves to have (Johnson, 1997). This is something like someone feeling a sense of safety in public or working in an organisation where they feel that they are valued, have a sense of belonging and can contribute. This can also mean to rightfully expect to have your sensibilities reasonably catered to. However, it is the very inclusion of the word "reasonable" that can complicate this to an extent. When whiteness establishes itself as a power not to be questioned or challenged, within its own mind this logically tracks with the world order it has come to establish. The entry of a person or entity who does not embody whiteness raises cause for concern. They present as an event that threatens or may cause a perceived loss of their privilege [to remain uninterrogated and to have their psychic security safeguarded protected by virtue of the knowledge of their existence]

Mpho Popps demonstrates an understanding of this through his self-labelling as a non-threatening black [person]. Understanding his position, he may be more than likely using or relying on incongruity in his humour work. As previously stated, male blackness functions as a metonymy to violence [of breaching the safety parameters of whiteness]. Mpho Popps wears this on his body as he navigates himself throughout the world. His audiences come to expect this. It is then in his tactful avoidance of seemingly controversial comedic set ups and shows, that he subverts expectation and eases the anxieties of his audience and subsequently his own. Herein he undergoes a transformation in the psyche of the audience as having initially appeared as dangerous to non-threatening and elicit laughter from the audience as it provides relief for tension that has accumulated because of the anxiety that was provoked by the incongruity.

It is further important to note that he does not necessarily complete the "NTB" label with the word "person.". It suggests a misrecognition of his humanity as he has been subjected to a process of othering. Othering is a "process of differentiation and demarcation" (Harmer & Lumsden, 2019, p16) that works to establish an in-group *us* and out-group *them* wherein the former possesses that which the latter is deficient in. Fundamental to this process is the categorisation that occurs which is established by the dominant class (Strani & Szczepaniak-Kozak, 2018). It is them who construct the boundaries and further reserve inferior traits to other classes. Additionally, they demote these out-group classes to a lower category thereby establishing a hierarchical categorisation that results in the assumption that difference from the hegemonic class symbolises subordination (Huggans, 1997; Strani & Szczepaniak-Kozak,

2018) . Essentially, the other is formed through or by exclusion and difference. In neglecting the "person" behind the label, Mpho Popps unconsciously echoes the exclusion of his humanity – and by extension his masculinity – from the sphere of blackness. In not contesting his otherness, he harks back to a sentiment where black masculinity is viewed to be inferior to white masculinity (Langa, et. al, 2020). Much of this section has neglected this aspect of his identity – his masculinity – to emphasise the manner in which his personhood appears to be completely stripped when confronting non-black or racially mixed audiences. It gestures back to his jester status as an extra member of society who is ultimately not to be taken seriously. Whose body may present as threatening but due to the negation of his gender and subsequent personhood, acts as an instrument of humour and laughter. It delivers the message that should you desire to navigate yourself successfully in a world that is hostile to blackness – and black masculinity at that – you ought to do so in ways that do not call attention to your personhood which is inextricably linked to anxieties that may lie beyond your influence..

CHAPTER 7

DINEO RANAKA, A REBEL WITH A CAUSE:

A CALL FOR CARING MASCULINITIES FROM AN UNLIKELY SOURCE

The "S" in Society stands for Script

Socialisation – a detailed and in-dept process of cultural learning – commences early in our lives with continued reinforcement throughout our lifespan (Mosher & MacIan, 1994). Young girls and women in particular are accosted with reiterative social and cultural messages that stress the significance of being considered romantically desirable (Park et. al., 2011). Achieving this romantic desirability speaks to a success in an adequate performance of their femininity thereby acquiring a positive self-esteem that is bolstered by social acceptance. Park et. al. (2011) evidence this in their study regarding heterosexual women's exodus and/or aversion from STEM fields when their objective is to obtain the status of romantic desirability. Granted that these women were of university attending age, their aversion to these fields is a result of the fields' traditionally masculine association. That is to say that pursuing a career in STEM is stereotypically in the purview of men and women who pursue these careers run the risk of occupying a role that poses a potential conflict with their romantically oriented ambitions and threatens their success (Sanchez, et.al, 2012). Evidently, this signifies a set of unspoken yet widely understood rules of social convention and norms. These rules of convention work to organise the behaviour that is to be expected from people when they engage in specified circumstances (Bicchieri & McNally, 2018). However, the extent to which an individual adheres to these conventions is dependent on the manner in which they interpret the circumstance as well as the behaviour of the concerned actors involved.

Subsequently, that interpretation is facilitated and guided by the individual's decoding of the circumstance in which they are immersed, their perception of the actors' appearance and the patterns of speech and behaviour found therein (Bicchieri & McNally, 2018). Often times the starting point to which people would refer in order to know which mannerisms to perform hails from a social script. A script is a collectively shared norm that provides the foundation upon which people can base their interactions with each other in a way that offers coherence (Graves & Kwan, 2012). The idea of a social script hails from the concept of script theory which explicates on and stresses the role played by ideology in the differential socialisation processes

for women and men (Mosher & Thompson, 1988). This ideology provides an outline that directs general behaviour with respect to the spheres of socio-cultural relations, gender relations and even sexual relations. Socio-culturally, such a script would merely outline general instructions of sanctioned behaviour in ordinary relations (Romaniuk & Teran, 2021). With respect to gender, a gender script outlines the behavioural patterns expected of people occupying a specified gender in relation to themselves as individuals and in concert with each other (Graves & Kwan, 2012). Finally, sexually speaking, a script in this realm offers recommendations that inform the concerned individuals on the established obligations and expectations placed on them as they interact in romantic relationships, participate in dating norms and the beliefs regarding sexual relations and relationships as they occur between men and women as masculine and feminine entities respectively (Avery et. al., 2021).

The domains of masculinity and femininity are universes of symbolic meaning that are derived from explicit and implicit polarity where the affirmation of one universe entails the denial of another (Gherardi, 1994). As one of the most powerful symbols, gender cocoons all the symbols that a society or culture uses to account for the biological differences it puts forward as the reason for variations in the treatment of different genders. Differences in gender provide the foundation for which representations and metaphors work to codify meanings that are denotatively unrelated to gender – or even the body. For example, "an inner symbolic coherence ties the masculinity to the public, to production, to the word, to command and opposes it to the female, the private, reproduction, silence, obedience and so forth" (Gherardi, 1994, p595). Specifically for women, the social, gender and sexual scripts expect them to perform behaviours that see them wishing to evoke pleasure in the masculine [in whatever way that may come to fruition], to desire affection and love rather than sex and to passively wait for a partner rather than actively seek one out (Frith & Kitzinger, 2001). These prescriptions deny women's own desires and the impact that this may have on them. Furthermore, these prescriptions fail to register women's ability to enact agentic action where they can be the pursuers, as selective participants or as complete abstainers from these practices.

To be Rebellious is to be Agentic

Dineo Ranaka positions herself as a rebel against the patriarchal notions and avenues available to her as a woman. The rebel, archetypally speaking, describes a person who firmly believes in independence, freedom, revolution and outrageousness. Rebels do not abide by social norms and the expectation for them to do that is experienced as a compromise to their personality and

identity (Kravchenko & Snistar, 2019; Singh & Gunjan Gupta, 2020)Dineo exemplifies this when she says, *"I am not bound by societal norms. I've always wanted to have two or three kids and I'm not going to slow down the plans I have for my life because it's not working out with one guy*." This statement is in response to a question posed to her by MacG, "*on behalf of South Africa*" he claims, with regards to her three children having three different fathers. Her response implies the idea that the social expectation is that a woman ought to bear children for one man and strive to remain romantically or otherwise attached to him to some degree – a reality that she clearly and intentionally does not live nor believe in creating.

From a Western perspective, the family unit is of a nuclear structure comprised of the mother, father and child or children (Grief, 2006). This alludes to a marriage between the parents, or in the very least, a stable and long-term commitment between them where they are also equal DNA contributors to the children. It is a neat unit with a linearly defined and self-contained structure which adheres to values of individualism and independence (Russel, 1994). By contrast, the South African family system functions on principles of collectivism and interdependence (Siqwana-Ndulo, 1998). It further includes extended family members such as cousins, aunts, uncles, friends and even colleagues. Black South African families in particular are associated with bigger familial groups that further include children who are informally adopted as well as other members who do not share any marital or blood relation to the original and/ or adopting family (Sithole & Falkof, 2019).

Regardless of these antagonistic principles and values, a layer of commonality can be found in the intimate intertwining of family lives with other life areas (Huinink, et.al., 2011). Confronted with expectations of participation and engagements in the labour market and education settings, families furthermore lay the foundation that paves the way for social engagement in additional contexts like romantic relationships. Rebellion against society often begets rebellion against the family as the family is habituated and situated in social convention (Dhara, 2022). In her iteration of the family, Dineo adopts an approach that sees childrearing as an independent enterprise. She is the singular figurehead responsible for the formation, birth and caretaking of her children. She essentially fulfills the role of both mother and father, so to speak, as the children primarily live with her. She is not tethered to any of the fathers of her children or any man to be exact. Though, it is important to note that she is not a single parent. By her own admission and exclamation of pride, she co-parents well with all the fathers of her children and holds them in the highest esteem as fathers.

However, because the children predominantly live with her, she arguably symbolically undercuts the fathers' roles as providers and almost exclusively takes on that task. As fatherhood is linked with manhood (Morrell, 2006) there generally lies a consensus that a good father, and subsequently a good man, financially provides for their family. This positions men as the household head thereby allocating them more power as this model privileges financial provision as a form of care and prioritises that over other forms of provision (Hunter, et.al., 2017). Dineo being the main or consistent adult in the household communicates that she occupies this provider role thereby violating and easily transgressing the boundaries that work to stipulate where her power ends and the man's begins.

Rebellion is often witnessed as a weapon against society. It occurs when the concerned individuals experience social norms as a heavy pressure that is too oppressive for their own taste. This ultimately leaves them with no alternative mechanism of survival other than to stand against the circumstance and deviate from the status quo (Dhara, 2022). For Dineo, when she says, "*I've always wanted to have two or three kids and I'm not going to slow down the plans I have for my life because it's not working out with one guy*" she recognises this pressure. Particularly, it is the kind of patriarchal pressure that would tie her to one man who may not have the same life aspirations and visions as she does thereby hindering her in her own pursuits. Patriarchal pressure affects more than her relationship with a man or men. It encompasses a whole world that organises itself around competition and domination (Denis, 2007). She embodies feminist rhetoric that aims to determine how it is men subordinate women and how it is that women can be liberated from that subordination (Green, 2007). She recognises the fact that by adhering to social norms of having children by one man regardless of her desires, she may as well consent or acquiesce to this domination over her and her subordination to him. Through her rebellion she enforces her own agency which is divorced from the need for social acceptance.

"The concept of agency is understood as the capacity for one to act in a particular environment. One of the major concerns in feminist inquiry is women's agency regarding the choices they make to engage in a problematic culture. In feminist thinking and inquiry, women's and girls' capacity to make agentive choices is often debated, in particular considering sexual agency, their engagement with practices of femininity, and their adherence to or rejection of patriarchy. Structuralist accounts of agency are generally understood as something individuals possess positioned in 'opposition to structure, as a quality that is outside the social order and can be

brought to bear on it to resist its authority'" (Harris & Dobson, 2015, p.146). Gill (2007) somewhat agrees with the structuralist perspective and sees agency as an internal trait that can resist cultural and social influence whereby an individual has complete control over their life choices.

Contrastingly, an absence of agency is where an individual is influenced by the hegemonic socio-cultural forces. While there are feminist works that aim to imbue women with the fullest autonomy possible Gill (2007) contends that this has resulted in notions that do not account for cultural influence and increasingly fetishize choice. By neglecting the aspect of cultural influence these fetishized framings of choice can ignore the complexities that shape how it is that power can function. Henceforth, Gill (2007) offers a view of agency that is relational which accounts for the ways in which women are affected by cultural pressures. Herein agency is produced by numerous relations of force and constraints. It is a conditional possibility which conciliates and is produced by encounters with subjectivity and discourse. Rather than being a pre-existing condition, it is made possible by individuals' interaction with society (Gill, 2007).

The Whore to your Madonna

It then begs the question of what this interaction might yield for the individual in pursuit of their agency within a patriarchal context. Dineo remarks on the devaluation that society casts towards the person in reference to her own experience regarding her children's multi-paternal status**.** She says, "*Society has a tendency of saying 'ya, your value has gone down' No I have got a line of guys waiting to be with me. The value has gone up. The price has gone up*.". Herein she remarks on the fact that her aforementioned status positions her rather unfavourably. She suggests that because she is an unmarried mother of three children – with as many fathers – she would not be considered a desirable woman. She would barely register as a viable contender for masculine attention yet her lived reality proves otherwise. By speaking of an increasing or decreasing value, Dineo hints at a scale of femininity. Granted that femininity is a marginalised subjectivity, however within its space lies a hierarchy of femininities where those on the higher steps experience what one can understand as an access point of power. Meaning that because they adhere to patriarchal notions of what femininity entail as closely as possible, they are offered 'protections' from patriarchal ridicule, scorn and unfavourable evaluations.

Hoskin labelled this position as the emphasised feminine which is "femininity that is defined by its compliance with subordination and accommodation of male desires which is central to

men's dominance over women" (2019:=, p.687). The emphasised feminine is aided by patriarchal femininity which explicates "the normative feminine ideal as they cut across dimensions of sex, gender, race, ability and class" (Hoskin, 2019, p.687). These femininities are marked as vulnerable, demure and submissive. Traditionally, femininity is granted to white women where black women, much like the figure of the sapphire in American media, are characterised as unfeminine with defined traits of aggression, hostility and an exacting quality that renders them as controlling figures in their sexual and social roles particularly in their romantic relationships (Avery et. al., 2021; Warren-Gordon & McMillan, 2022). However, they can mitigate these negative evaluations by approximating themselves as closely as possible to notions of white femininity. Dineo's comparison between herself and the women she implies that society would deem more valuable is eerily reminiscent of the Madonna-Whore complex.

The Madonna-Whore dichotomy originates from Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic complex wherein he was convinced that men experienced sexual desire and affection for their primary maternal caregivers (Baraket, et. al., 2018). Therefore, they experience anxiety over these feelings and resolve to organise women into two distinct categories of women that they admire and thus love and value as well as women that they objectify and/or desire sexually and therefore hate and devalue (Baraket, et. al., 2018). The feminist perspective of the Madonna-Whore dichotomy argues that it is a reinforcement of patriarchy. Wherein the traditional and stereotypical societal attitudes that continue the idea that women are either feminine by acting in gender prescriptive ways such as being sexually demure and receptive [and are thus virgins] or they are behaving in typically masculine ways by being overtly sexual and sexually assertive and are thus *whores* (Gala, et.al., 2020). Women are encouraged to be the Madonna so as to reap the benefit and reward of a long-term relationship coupling such as marriage (Baraket, et. al., 2018).

Herein these women would benefit from benevolent sexism where they are found suitable and worthy of men's provision and protection. Thusly, long-term coupling will also denote an air of respectability to the Madonna that is not offered in any way to the *whore.* On the other hand, women who are promiscuous and/ or *whores* will suffer the fate of eternal singleness which is an unideal state that will further communicate that there is something wrong with this woman as no man wants to take her. It would subject them hostile sexism which perceives women as competitors who desire to achieve control and dominance over men almost imbuing these

women with an air of masculinity themselves. –It would achieve this impact because a a woman who demonstrates her sexual assertiveness signifies a potential authority and power over men (Baraket, et. al., 2018). The label of the Madonna appears to aim to inspire an affect of admiration while that of *whore* apparently aims to inspires an affect shame unto the accused woman, so as to caution the woman against exhibiting such deviant behaviour.

Shame is an infamously painful emotion (Fischer, 2018). It is the consequence suffered when one threatens the security of the collective anchors found in our social world (Bergoffen, 2018; Holmes, 2015). Shame develops when one gains entry into the wider social world and it subsequently occurs when an individual feels that they are unfavourably evaluated by themselves or others (Britt & Heise, 1997). It functions to alert the individual experiencing it to their loss in dignity. It also functions to help them recognise how it is that they have fallen short of societally and/or collectively established ideals (Bergoffen, 2018). Shame is, "radically social insofar as it is a mechanism that normalizes behaviour to conform to the social constructs and norms of particular communities. In this capacity it circumscribes behaviour as it threatens a negative affectivity. This aspect of shame makes it a mode of connection to others. And yet it is deeply isolating insofar as it is ultimately a judgment both by and of oneself apart from a world of others." (Holmes, 2015, p.419).

However, shame is not a mechanical servant to these ideals. Rather, shame is an affect that is connected to an individual's sense of self and functions as the self's voice in a manner that is ambiguous and embedded in its own person and otherness (Bergoffen, 2018). This is to mean that shame simultaneously acts as an internalised structure of policing – thereby establishing its own identity as an entity to which we answer – as well as an extended and intimate arm through which society enforces its own rules. Therefore, on the account of shame being its own enterprise, shame wields its power as a disciplining device on the condition the individual believes in the ideals against which shame works to evaluate the person. Ideals to which Dineo offers no indication of a co-signature as evidenced by her aforementioned statement, "*I am not bound by societal norms*." Moreso, she subverts all expectation of a person experiencing shame and evidences pride instead likening herself to the devil to illustrate her freedom from the mores that might otherwise render her ashamed.

The Devil is in the Details

"*I actually want to know it feels like being Satan for once. Satan is having the time of his life in the world right now, boy. Satan doesn't care boy...You can call me crazy, and the devil is,*

and I'm about to paint the town red." Her comparison echoes sentiments of Toni Morrison's Sula (1973) – the main character in her novel of the same name. Sula embodies a rebel image that correlates with the devil archetype as it is understood in traditional Western mythology and biblical literature (Huang, 2021). *Sula* is set against the twentieth century American backdrop where slavery has been abolished and black people have just newly gained their freedom. However, despite their newfound freedom, they were still faced with oppression and with black women experiencing the worst of it.

Huang (2021) writes that in *Sula* God functions not as the personification of justice and mercy but as an accomplice of racial oppression and discrimination. In a society dominated by Whiteness, black people are forced to repress their inner anger, hatred and bitterness and subsequently cannot escape such a depressed life. Sula boldly challenges white and male interests as they are represented by God and in doing so corresponds with the devil's rebellion against the authority of God. Similarly, Dineo challenges men's authority – the figurative "Godheads" in a patriarchal society – through her implied proclamation of the *whore* status and/or completed rejection of the ideal that would submit her to shame as described above. Following the abolition of slavery, black women who were humiliated started to rebel to rebuild their humanity that has long been distorted by oppression (Huang, 2021).

One such a way that Sula achieves this is through her sexual activities when she comes of adult age. She demonstrates her resistance against the patriarchy by only sleeping once with men who would take on sexual performative role colloquially referred to as the "bottom". Formally, we would understand these types of men to occupy a subordinate masculinity. This means that they occupy a subjectivity that endures cultural and political exclusion as well as [legal] violence exacted by a more dominant masculine group (Gomez, 2007). However, as subordinate these men may be, for Sula to recognise them as a means through which she can enact her resistance entails that even in their subordination to white men, they are still complicit in the upholding of patriarchy against black women.

Complicit masculinity refers to the extended institutionalization of a patriarchal power under mutual agreements where the group reaches a consensus on the methods through which subordination ought to be carried out (Gomez, 2007). Hegemony is not particularly effective if a strategically designed plan is not in place to guarantee control and power. Henceforth, complicit masculinity is considered a circumspect conspiracy as one of the major and essential factors in masculinity's power because it refers the careful planning required to dominate other

masculinities and groups (Gomez, 2007). Considering the real life South African black men's [with whom Dineo interacts] contentious history and relationship with masculinity in post-apartheid South Africa as discussed in the fallen hero chapter, they can be said to occupy the same position as Sula's chosen victims and not solely on the account of race.

Sula also engages sexually with white men ultimately submitting all men at her mercy. It appears she utilises men as experiments and after sexually engaging with them, she discards of them with little excuse (Huang, 2023). Dineo adopts a similar approach when she explains to MacG that she does not believe in hoarding human beings in her life. This response is still associated with the question regarding her multi-paternal children. Dineo goes on to say, "*When your time has expired in my life, then onto the next*." She adopts a vague linguistic style that offers no closure or resolution. It is unclear on what would qualify one to suffer an expiration and be annexed from her life. Huang (2023) observes that Sula's sexual passion is not for the purpose of self-pleasure or the pursuit of men. Rather it is to allow her to feel her infinite energy and perpetual power during sex as well as to experience the loneliness and existence of her self-consciousness and thus authentically experience her true nature. For Sula, men are infinite resource and means through which to achieve her objectives. Dineo too shares this sentiment when she remarks in isiZulu that, "*Amadoda maningi emhlabeni*"[the world has scores of men available]. For Sula, sex functions as means through which to self-actualise. Similarly, Dineo's past relationships with the fathers of her children allowed her to self-actualise and achieve her goal of motherhood. She says to MacG, "*to answer your question, if I get an award for radio at Y-FM and that relationship doesn't work out, I'm not going to Metro FM and not to try and get an award. And if it doesn't work out there, I'll go to Kaya FM. So, by the time I get to Kaya FM, I have an award from Metro FM, Y-FM and Kaya FM. So that's how I look at it. My children are the award from my failed relationships and they make my life okay*."

Dineo Ranaka is a media personality with a strong emphasis in radio (Modise, 2022). She uses the imagery of a radio award – evidence of peak performance and achievement – to illustrate the relationship and perspective she has with regards to her children. Their mere birth and presence are meant to evidence her achievement and success as an individual. They, and her own sense of accomplishment, are not tied to the sustained presence of a man. If anything, it appears as though these men temporarily exist to provide her with the genetic material required to help her materialise her maternal desires. Much like Sula, Dineo's sexuality is not purposed to gratify the vanity of a man but to explore her own existence and ego as a woman (Huang, 2021). She rejects the idea of pedestalising men and putting their interests above all and

subsequently takes initiative. Sula utilises dissolute sexual actions as a means through which to fight against and resist a patriarchal society. Sula, much like Dineo, has a deviant lifestyle that works to overturn masculine authority and violates society's traditional values on women's sexual purity, chastity, and fidelity.

A Feminist Cry for a Caring Masculinity

Dineo's rejection and rebellion can be read as a feminist rallying cry for a different and encompassing iteration of masculinity. Reading it through a feminist lens is rather laughable and ironic given the fact that Dineo does not read her behaviour that way. She says, "*Well people say I'm a feminist and I'ld like to clear this…Number 1: I'm not a feminist. Number 2: I don't hate men. Just because a woman decides to not be with a man and ends a marriage 7 months into the marriage, it doesn't mean this woman hates men*." This utterance is in response to MacG's question, "*Do you think men are intimidated by you? Like maybe emasculated*?" Sol further supplements the question with his contribution, "*cause you're strong*".

Feminism is rather difficult to define due to the various strands that exist therein.. In this study, feminism is defined as the critique and challenge of male patriarchal supremacy (Pangket, 2022). It is an enterprise that takes seriously the concept of gender as an organising social process within patriarchal societies. It is helpful in identifying the ways in which patriarchy is problematic for women as well as men. Feminism, when viewed through an intersectional perspective, concerns equality for all people regardless of age, gender, sexuality, culture, nationality, ability, religion, race or class (Pangket, 2022). Waling (2019), citing Mills (1995), contends that feminists primarily hold two beliefs. The first is that as a social class, women are oppressed and subject to institutional and personal discrimination. The second is that society is organised around the benefit of men – a stance long held by this section. What these beliefs do not suggest is that men equally benefit from a patriarchal structure because they too face persecution at various points (Pangket, 2022). Nor do these beliefs explicate on whether every man enthusiastically or voluntarily participates as the system's extension since even men have agency to decide on whether they want to oppress or oppose the oppression of marginalised groups. While that may be so, it does not imply that the persecutions faced by men in a patriarchal society are comparable or equal in measure to the oppression faced by women and how it is that they are observed as gendered beings.

Thusly, Dineo's ironic feminist-laden behavioural and linguistic retorts invite or encourage an iteration of masculinity that is counter to hegemonic or complicit manifestations. The term

alternative masculinities come to mind in this regard. Alternative masculinity speaks to a masculinity that is constructed in a manner that is opposed to hegemonic masculinity (Morrell & Jewkes, 2011). It speaks to masculinities that instead are multiple and do not centre themselves on principles directly related or adjacent to domination, control and inequality. Masculinities that function on ethics of care and further recognise all people as culturally intelligible beings and holds everyone equally accountable for their wrongdoing. Dineo evidences that this is her belief when she continues to answer MacG and Sol's question regarding her intimidating social image. She says, "*Because I don't like being disrespected. I like to give respect and most men are highly disrespectful. And it's a thing with society that 'na women must be a certain way with men because that's what we say.' No. If you're bullshitting as a man, I'm going to call you out on your nonsense. That doesn't make me a feminist. That doesn't mean I hate men."*

An example of the kind of alternative masculinity for which Dineo is advocating is a model of caring masculinities as offered by Karla Elliott (2016). This is a model that proposes that masculine identities be reworked into caring ones by rejecting ideals of domination and instead integrate values of relationality and interdependence as well as positive emotions. Interdependence involves the concept of relationality as well as the intertwining of interests in a relationship filled with care. Interdependence recognises that relations of care are dynamic and not linear. Where instead of a sole caregiver perpetually providing care to a receiver, the parties concerned are dependent on each other for care in different ways at varying times and reciprocating these efforts when the time calls for it (Elliot, 2016).

Interdependence functions on morality-based honour and embodies two concepts of morality: the morality of rights and of responsibility (Elliott, 2016; Mosquera, 2016). Honour that is morality based is about being known for and behaving in a way that is trustworthy and honest. This honour code is abided by all members of society regardless of gender. It is essential to group life as it helps facilitate relationships filled with trust amongst group or society members (Mosquera, 2016). The stress on obtaining a reputation for being honourable and trustworthy reinforces social bonds and advances interpersonal and social harmony. Given that morality-based honour is a code that is abided by all genders, it stands to reason that it would embody conceptions of morality that are reflective of both socially constructed characteristics of masculinity and femininity. The principle of the morality of rights is premised on traits of independence and autonomy, which are traditionally associated with masculinity, whereas the principle of the morality of responsibility encompasses feminine qualities such as nurturance,

interdependence, relationality and care (Elliot, 2016).Elliot's (2016) model of caring masculinities is supported by bell hooks' (2004) proposition of a non-denominator culture which asks that the culture propagates a view of young boys and men as being born with the innate need to connect. In doing so, it would encourage these very same young boys and men to rescind their loyalty to and support of patriarchal masculinity so as to achieve a masculinity that is not synonymous with control, power and domination. hooks' request would encourage a recasting of traditionally masculine values such as provision and protection into care-oriented, interdependent and relational ones (Morrell & Jewkes, 2011). Additionally, there would be a recasting of affective dispositions. Incorporating a care-oriented approach offers rewards such as experiencing positive self-esteem, emotional intimacy, feeling loved and feelings of competence and respect.

Elliot (2016), citing Hanlon (2012), writes that competence here would mean an adequate demonstration of their ability to care and not necessarily the lording that they would have over their family. Respect here is associated with love for the patriarchal authority rather than a fear of the patriarchal authority. Dineo's mention of respect is in reference to the former. She implicitly expresses a desire to have love for a particular iteration of masculinity. Elliot (2016) contends that affective, relational caring masculinities which value positive emotions bear significantly, positive results, both for men and society. Caring masculinities, in comparison to hegemonic masculinities, offer a more satisfying and nourishing model of masculinity for men than hegemonic masculinity. Engaging in caring masculinities reduces the costs associated with hegemonic masculinity, for society across the board, while increasing the rewards and advantages of caring masculinities. Similarly, in her agentic and rebellious actsas well as calls for mutual respect in gendered relations, Dineo advocates for the caring masculinity brought forward by Elliot (2016).

CONCLUSION

Podcasts have been in existence for just over ten years. They are consumed for a variety of reasons ranging from educational to commercial and even entertainment purposes. Podcasts, which typically occur in an audio digital file, can be streamed online or downloaded onto mobile and desktop devices. Initial research has focused on the traits of podcast services and their influence on topics like education or their influence on listeners' online shopping habits. Terrain that remains unexplored or inadequately explored is the role that podcasts play in informing listeners on the avenues available to them in the pursuit and/ or co-construction of their subjectivities especially within the South African context. This is an important query to make because historical theoretical investigations concerned with aspects of subjectivity such as masculinity, gender and social identity within articles of mass media have argued that products of cultural media like magazines tend to supply and make legitimate particular gender identity representations and role expectations. How much more then would a relatively new mass medium yield similar significance if at all?

Additionally, it is an important inquiry to make because the literature explicates on the phenomenon that traditional media provides the cultural frames that further make accessible and publicly sanction reference guides to audiences. These reference guides are then considered by these audiences when they build their own identity and make meaning of that process. Mass media products yield oppositional forces on, among other things, an individual's identity given the fact that they function as a symbolic resource for a construction of the self – public and private. This symbolic resource offers individuals with representations of the self and other subsequently laying the foundation that help them mutually construct each other through semiotic and linguistic means. This paper centres the latter particularly through the lens of discourse.

Focusing on the subject matter of discourse, this paper bears in mind that identity is a material phenomenon that is enacted in the real settings of space and time which includes the digital and/ or online realm. It also understands identity to be an effect of actual occurrences. Furthermore, this paper is careful to address identity as an occurrence that is devoid of context. It is cognizant of the fact that identity and its subsequent subjectivities require the individual to embody it through performance and display it through apparel, property owned as well as through discursive practices. When observing subjectivities, however, it is paramount that one does so critically. To observe whether or not these subjectivities are created from an equal

playing field, how it is that they differ in their positionality as well as the accompanying access to economic, linguistic, social and cultural resources that these differences – if present at all – may bear. Thusly, this paper sought to ask these questions observing the subjectivity of masculinity.

Masculinity is a socially constructed and collaborative gender identity that is additionally fluid and non-universal as there are several kinds of masculinity that exist. The idea that masculinity exists in various iterations is not to be conflated with the idea that these exist as fixed entities. Rather, it is to understand these types of masculinities as configurations that are produced in specific situations in perpetually changing relationship structures. In other words, every society has its own understandings and configurations of masculinity that change as even the context from which they originate itself changes. Needless to say, this offers us a mammoth task in the face of deconstruction and attempting to make sense of these varying understandings. To simplify this task, the social sciences offers us two distinct ways to theorise on masculinity.

The first theorisation encourages us to explore the manner in which masculinity forms men's social actions and behaviours through a consideration of gender relations, subjectivity as well as the material and discursive practices that function to make them legible. The second theorisation advocates for the application of various model sets and categories of men and masculinity that determine whether they reject or uphold a specified model of masculinity. In this instance masculinity is constructed as either numerous, or a singular, governing bodies to which men are obligated to and/ or expected to adhere. This second offering opens room for a post-structural reading of masculinity to create spaces for imagining actual changes taking place in how men are positioning themselves in different societal relations, spheres and mediums. It is in the second theorisation where this paper found its compass. While a wealth of research may tell us how it is that men come to perform masculinity in a variety of social situations and cultures, we can still do more in the areas that investigate how men might actively reflect on and *feel* through such engagements. Thusly, in exploring the masculinity, this paper saw it fit to use an affective theoretical lens as provided by affect theoryThere are two overarching models in affect theory: the representational model and the non-representational model. The representational model sees thought, experience and affect as able to be re-presented, which is, to be discursively described. That is to say that the meaning of affect comes because of the structure of the symbolic order. Contrastingly, the non-representational model moves to find meaning not in the world's representations but through what actively occurs in the world. Herein affects gain meaning from their enacted practice or

as it takes place. Because of its flow, it evades discursive representation as it is always changing from one form to another. However, the flow does not mean that it cannot be captured. Though the non-representational model argues that affect cannot be re- presented, affectual geographers and scholars that work from this model consistently evoke moments, such as smiles and laughter, that evidence affects. In evidencing affect they use language to do so.

People live through and within language and when they use language, they do more than merely re-present the world with it. They are looking for a way to move past that which is purely tangible, extensive, and perceptible. Henceforth this research adopted the representational model as it is rather difficult and borderline hypocritical to work with a non-representational model that does the work of representing [through language] but states that it does not do so. Furthermore, this paper takes on stance on affects are not free-floating. Rather, that they emerge from the assemblage of human and non-bodies, discursive entities and all other entities that constitute everyday circumstances. Tomkin's approach to affect is the adopted framework for this research and it will be put in conversation with Ahmed's perspective on affect – both of which are representational approaches. These were explored in depth in an earlier section.

To ground our exploration of masculinity through an affective lens, this paper used a relatively popular South African podcast, "Podcast and Chill with MacG", as its object of study. "Podcast and Chill with MacG", is arguably a programme still well in its toddler years having been on the digital airwaves for nearly short of 5 years. It has been selected as the object of study because of the type of banter and ridicule found therein that are affiliated with certain kinds of homosociality and masculinity. For example, it utilises humour which has been shown to function as way to construct self-regulating subjects that align with hegemonic hierarchies and to preserve the gender order. Henceforth, this research looks at how the banter articulated in the podcast can inform the masculine audience's formation of their subjectivity by scrutinising the social interaction in the recorded case. Thusly, it was the aim of this research to discover some of the ways in which "Podcast and Chill with MacG" possibly surfaces affective identifications and attachments in its representations of black masculinity.

To fulfil this objective, this paper deconstructed three podcast episodes that featured the following celebrity guests: Jub Jub, Mpho Popps and Dineo Ranaka. Furthermore, this paper framed its analysis according to the archetypal themes of the fallen hero, the jester and the rebel – respective to the aforementioned guest line up.

The theme of the fallen hero follows an episode feature media personality Jub Jub. The term hero refers to a person who possesses great strength and courage. They are further celebrated for their valiant exploits and are known to the larger community as either noble and courageous individuals or highly accomplished individuals. Jub Jub symbolises this through his achievement of his celebrity status. However, he suffers a fall when he is involved in an accident that claims the lives of four high school pupils. Surviving a court trial and a five year stay in prison, Jub Jub embarks on a journey of redemption and utilises principles offered by image restoration theory to achieve this. Herein, the theory details a variety of strategies that an organisation or individual can employ in order to minimise the damage done to their image in the event a damaging instance has occurred. The most prominent affect promoted by this section is that of elevation. Elevation is an emotion that is contradictory to that of disgust. It is a combination of awe, admiration and reverence. . It subtly connotates to audiences that the highest ideal of masculinity is one that garners respect from peers and relevant contemporaries. More than situating the recipient in the most positive regard, it works to protect them from typical social punishment that a less favourably viewed individual would endure. The respect is so highly regarded that it imbues its recipient with Teflon-like qualities. Where if the recipient commits a perceived sin during an act that was in service of their masculinity, it is not so egregious that it renders them a pariah. This is contingent on the fact they offer some kind of amends, however, it does not require that they take full ownership of the harmful act. Gestures are enough to see them redeemed.

The theme of the jester [fool] follows an episode featuring South African comedian Mpho "Popps" Modikane. The jester is an archetype that inspires the positive affects of enjoyment and liveliness. A jester utilises their gifts to explore the world around them, to create out of a pure sense of enjoyment, to find delight in life for its own sake without illusions and without care, thought nor concern for the judgement of others. Their contribution to people's lives is resilience which can arguably be viewed as tolerance but in a higher form. Additionally, the jester is known for their ability to critique power as they are counterpart to the king or authoritative power. However, Mpho Popps does not take on this task of critiquing – rather he upholds the status quo. He described himself as a non-threatening black which highlights his awareness of his blackness operating as a metonymy for violence. This communicates an even more extreme awareness of the black body – the black masculine body – being a site that excites anxiety in non-black audiences. Mpho Popps actively works to "tone down" the level at which he could be perceived as a threat which if done unsuccessfully, will see him suffer financial

consequences. Mpho Popps' efforts speak to an insecure position that black masculinity occupies when it seeks to compete economically in concert with differently racialised contemporaries. He wittingly admits that his subjectivity is such that he must be in the business of centring non-black comfort and subsequently raise this cohort's resilience, or tolerance. This is all the while he simultaneously works to police and censor himself such that he is racially muted and seen only for his comedic function.

The final theme of the rebel follows radio personality and reality television star, Dineo Ranaka. The rebel describes a person who firmly believes in independence, freedom, revolution and outrageousness. Rebels do not abide by social norms and the expectation for them to do that is experienced as a compromise to their personality and identity. Herein aspects of an individual versus traditionally collaborative parenting model are explored. It is observed that Dineo contravenes social norms by virtually approaching parenting in a unilateral fashion that sees her undercutting the father's role as a provider and subsequent household head. Her rebellion against society begets rebellion against the family unit as the family is habituated and situated in social convention. Through her rebellion she enforces her own agency which is divorced from the need for social acceptance.

Dineo's norm contravention would typically be grounds for her to be enthralled with shame. Shame is an infamously painful emotion. It is the consequence suffered when one threatens the security of the collective anchors found in our social world. The existence of the rebel puts a mirror to society and forces us to actually look at the conventions and norms we have put in place and determine whether or not they serve an adaptive function. Given that shame is seen as the consequence of one's norm contravention, Dineo's *unmarkedness* of shame further presses society to turn that shame inwards with regards to the kinds of masculinity it is willing to accept. Her rejection of all things conventional works to raise questions of the current idealised formations of masculinity that she is expected to accept but simply can not or refuses to. She offers a challenge with respect to the current masculine reign and calls for a change that she sees as less harmful. As a person who is meant to bear the brunt of masculine domination, Dineo directly calls for a masculinity that centres partnership and/or equality and is vehement in her demand.

Limitation and way forward

Considering these findings, this paper does however experience some limitations. There were temporal constraints that could not allow for a broader selection of episodes to be reviewed. Thusly, the sample size was affected as the chosen episodes were a minute fraction of the overall number of episodes that are available. However, this does not significantly nor negatively affect the observations made as the reviewed episodes released are spread across several months. Possible ways forward include a focused and expansive investigation on the role of agency enacted by black men in the co-construction of their masculinity. This could be enhanced by a research methodology that involves a questionnaire or interview element that adequately captures the lived experience of the studied demographic.

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