

CHAPTER 1:

Official Treatment of White, Male, South African Homosexuals Prior to the 1968

Select Committee.

Introduction

Certainly to *begin* the analysis of men with masculinity/masculinities, or to search for the existence of masculinity/masculinities is likely to miss the point.

It cannot be assumed *a priori* that masculinity/masculinities exist. To do so is to reproduce a heterosexualizing of social arrangements.¹

The discourses around hegemonic masculinity as constructed in South Africa by the NP government did not simply exist. The NP government continued to remake and reinforce their discourses in order to maintain power. The impetus for this came from the SAP.²

The NP government had never tolerated white homosexuality. However there were periods where less emphasis was placed on policing sexuality because issues of race and black defiance and consciousness were far more important threats. Judging by the NP government's desire to maintain hegemony, the authorities' would have seen its own attention and efforts as more beneficial to the country in this regard. Hence the 1950s were relatively quiet on the topic of homosexuality until the 1957 Immorality Act. However, the 1960s saw an even greater interest in the policing of homosexuality with the commissioning of a select committee in 1968 to recommend legislation to criminalise private homosexuality. Black resistance was underground and the NP government turned its attention elsewhere, to the control of white morality and the reinforcement of hegemonic masculinity.

¹ J. Hearn, 'Is Masculinity Dead? A Critique of the Concept of Masculinity/Masculinities' in Mac an Ghaill, Understanding Masculinities, p 214.

² 'Homosexuals', The Star, (4 Sept. 1968), (C8/111/10, Police Records, vol. 2, State Archives).

Early Recognition of Homosexuality

Nicholas Southey's paper on Bishop Twells alerts one to the early recognition of homosexual behaviour in 1869 and the policing and punishment of it.³ Bishop Twells, the Anglican Bishop of the Orange Free State, was charged with sodomy, a capital offence. Prior to his warrant of arrest there had been rumours that Twells was under investigation by the local magistrate regarding alleged misconduct with boys. Twells fled Bloemfontein to avoid arrest but he confessed, to a degree, to his crime: "I dare not say I am altogether innocent."⁴ Evidence says choirboys testified against Twells but these youths were possibly adult men.⁵ Also, Twells was charged with sodomy but he may not have been guilty of penetrative acts. Twells said: "he was not guilty of the capital crime... (but) was *not innocent of the other charges*."⁶

There are hundreds of archival sources documenting sodomy cases involving Africans from the 1700s to the mid-1900s.⁷ In 1902 the Native Affairs Department 'discovered' sodomy among the Africans in the compounds. Originally it was believed the matter had been greatly exaggerated⁸ as no cases of sodomy had been brought to the attention of the Native Affairs Department.⁹ However, further investigation by the authorities found it to have been common practice and recognised as such.¹⁰ There was a conspiracy of silence in which the miners and mine bosses kept quiet¹¹ but it became impossible for the mine inspectors to cope with.¹² The authorities knew little of it because seldom were the culprits brought to justice owing to the difficulty in obtaining evidence sufficient to

³ N. Southey, 'Uncovering Homosexuality in Colonial South Africa: The Case of Bishop Twells' in South African Historical Journal, no. 36, (May 1997).

⁴ Ibid, p 55.

⁵ Ibid, p 56.

⁶ Ibid, p 58.

⁷ See www.national.archive.gov.za.

⁸ Letter from Transvaal Chamber of Mines to Secretary for Native Affairs, Johannesburg, 8 Aug. 1902, (SNA 1902 46, vol. 46, reference: NA1540/02, NASA).

⁹ Letter from L. Pritchard, Chief Inspector, Native Affairs Department to Secretary for Native Affairs, Johannesburg, 12 Aug. 1902, (SNA 1902 46, vol. 46, reference: NA1540/02, NASA).

¹⁰ Letter from Department of Native Affairs to Chamber of Mines, 27 Aug. 1902, (SNA 1902 46, vol. 46, reference: NA1540/02, NASA).

¹¹ Video: 'Apostles of Civilized Vice: Part II: A Natural Thing', Directed by Z. Achmat, (South Africa, 1999, Idol Pictures, Wits Gay Library).

¹² Minutes from L. Pritchard, Chief Inspector, Native Affairs Department, 29 July 1902, (SNA 1902 46,

convict.¹³ The Department of Native Affairs and the Chamber of Mines sought to work together to suppress the ‘evil’ before it became public scandal¹⁴ and promised the Portuguese authorities it would protect young Mozambique miners.¹⁵ It was suggested the younger men be segregated from the adults and it be a punishable offence if any mine manager allowed such sleeping arrangements to occur.¹⁶ One 1902 court case sighted sodomy as the cause of the fall of civilisations saying sodomy equalled the loss of political power.¹⁷

In 1906 the Union of South Africa imported Chinese labourers to work on the Witwatersrand gold mines. These labourers participated in homosexual activity, considered by some to be an inherent trait of the northern Chinese, which the majority of the Chinese labourers were.¹⁸ The Foreign Labour Department believed such practices were “more sporadic than endemic.”¹⁹ They did not exist in the exaggerated form stated. “The consensus of qualified opinion appears to be that, although the commission of unnatural offences may go on the mines, it is not an overt scandal.”²⁰ If it were, it was believed, the white men in charge would have notified the authorities.²¹ One mine manager who had been in charge of two thousand Chinese labourers for fifteen months had claimed to have only come across one case of sodomy.²² Also, the Lt-Governor’s office insisted homosexual practices did not go on to the extent and in the open manner in the veld as was alleged otherwise the crime would not have escaped the attention of the

vol. 46, reference: NA1540/02, NASA).

¹³ Letter from Mr Pietersen, Inspector, Native Affairs Department to L. Pritchard, Chief Inspector, Native Affairs Department, 28 July 1902, (SNA 1902 46, vol. 46, reference: NA1540/02, NASA).

¹⁴ Letter from Mr Pietersen, Inspector, Native Affairs Department to L. Pritchard, Chief Inspector, Native Affairs Department, 8 Sept. 1902, (SNA 1902 46, vol. 46, reference: NA1540/02, NASA).

¹⁵ Letter from Department of Native Affairs to Chamber of Mines, 27 Aug. 1902.

¹⁶ Letter from Mr Pietersen, to L. Pritchard, 28 July 1902.

¹⁷ Video: ‘Apostles of Civilized Vice: Part I: Questions of a Queer Reading History’, Directed by Z. Achmat, (South Africa, 1999, Wits Gay Library). This fall of civilisations argument became a common political theme. See chapter 2.

¹⁸ Memorandum on the Prevalence of Unnatural Crime Amongst Chinese Indentured Labourers on the Witwatersrand, 1906.

¹⁹ Letter from Superintendent J. Jamieson to Secretary to the Law Department, Pretoria, 28 Feb. 1906, (A1/36 LTG, vol. 176, reference: CON 5, NASA).

²⁰ Memorandum on the Prevalence of Unnatural Crime Amongst Chinese Indentured Labourers on the Witwatersrand.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Letter from N. Ross, 24 Aug. 1906, (A1/36 LTG, vol. 176, reference: CON 5, NASA).

mine inspectors.²³ “Such conduct on the open veld is quite impossible, and ... any statements to the contrary may be treated as a malicious and unfounded rumour.”²⁴ However, an informant said anyone walking about the mine who knew where to look would see it taking place.²⁵ Cases of syphilis of the rectum also alerted the authorities to the practice of sodomy.²⁶

The white mine managers knew sodomy was practised by the Chinese labourers: “the prevalence of this crime between coolies in the compounds is widespread and undisputed by all those white men who are in a position to know what is going on.”²⁷ But few had seen this for themselves: “we know it goes on to a certain extent, but it has never come under our direct personal observation.”²⁸ Karen Harris says the mine managers chose to ignore or hide the fact that such practices were occurring on the mines.²⁹ Consequently there had been no prosecutions for sodomy.³⁰ She says the “mine managers had to put up with (sodomy), if not encourage (it) if they wished to reproduce the labour force at their disposal.”³¹ However, the authorities did not believe the mine managers had deliberately kept the issue of sodomy from them: “that these offences are committed with the knowledge of government officials...There is not, I am sure, a word of truth in this.”³² Mr Blaine of the Attorney-General’s office said: “I do not for a moment believe that there is any justification for the statement that any officials of the government have connived at

²³ Letter from Lt-Governor’s office, Pretoria to Lord Selborne, 3 Aug. 1906, (A1/36 LTG, vol. 176, reference: CON 5, NASA) and letter from Office of Commissioner of Police to Sir R. Solomon, 19 Aug. 1906, (A1/36 LTG, vol. 176, reference: CON 5, NASA).

²⁴ Letter from N. Ross, 24 Aug. 1906.

²⁵ Letter from Lord Selborne to Sir R. Solomon, Aug. 1906, (A1/36 LTG, vol. 176, reference: CON 5, NASA).

²⁶ Letter from Lt-Governor’s office to Dr Sansom, 2 Aug. 1906, (A1/36 LTG, vol. 176, reference: CON 5, NASA).

²⁷ Letter from Lt-Governor’s Office, Pretoria to Superintendent of Foreign Labour, J. Jamieson, 3 Aug. 1906, (A1/36 LTG, vol. 176, reference: CON 5, NASA).

²⁸ Letter from Foreign Labour Department, Johannesburg to Sir R. Solomon, 24 Aug. 1906, (A1/36 LTG, vol. 176, reference: CON 5, NASA).

²⁹ K. Harris, ‘Private and Confidential: The Chinese Mine Labourers and Unnatural Crime’, (IASSCS Conference, ‘Sex and Secrecy’, 2003), p 13.

³⁰ Letter from Superintendent, Foreign Labour Department, Jeppestown, 24 Feb. 1906, (A1/36 LTG, vol. 176, reference: CON 5, NASA).

³¹ Harris, ‘Private and Confidential’, p 13.

³² Letter from Lt-Governor’s office to Mr Blaine, 22 Aug. 1906, (A1/36 LTG, vol. 176, reference: CON 5, NASA).

the practice of sodomy by Chinese labourers.”³³ All inspectors were instructed to report such matters to the police if they felt they had sufficient evidence that would lead to a conviction.³⁴

Although homosexual practice was evident in 1902 among the African miners, some of the white authorities believed the Chinese were teaching these practices to the African miners. These authorities argued that “before the introduction of the Chinese the natives with the exception of some from the East Coast were free from the vice referred to.”³⁵ Others disagreed: “that the Chinese taught the natives... (is) in the highest degree improbable, as the Chinese would not stoop to intercourse with blacks, for whom they affect the greatest contempt.”³⁶ Some believed the cause of this homosexual behaviour was the sleeping accommodation because the Chinese labourers slept side by side separated at intervals of three or four by a curtain. It was suggested such sleeping arrangements be altered.³⁷ Nothing came of this. Others felt the sleeping arrangements did not facilitate homosexual practices because the predisposition to the vice was inherent and not artificially engendered by the compounds.³⁸ Another suggestion was that the mines facilitate more physical exercise, recreation, religious instruction, and amusement to prevent such behaviour.³⁹

The homosexual behaviour of the Chinese labourers resulted in a “‘scandal’ which the Transvaal government, mining magnates and British parliament tried ... desperately to contain.”⁴⁰ Consequently the Chinese were expelled from the Rand in 1907 although not all the Chinese labourers conducted homosexual activity. According to Harris the homosexual activity of the Chinese was used against them to get rid of foreign influence,

³³ Letter from Mr H. Blaine, Attorney-General’s office to Sir R. Solomon, 23 Aug. 1906, (A1/36 LTG, vol. 176, reference: CON 5, NASA).

³⁴ Memo from Superintendent J. Jamieson to all inspectors from Foreign Labour Department, Johannesburg, 18 Feb. 1906, (A1/36 LTG, vol. 176, reference: CON 5, NASA).

³⁵ Letter from Lt-Governor’s office to Dr Sansom, 2 Aug. 1906.

³⁶ Memorandum on the Prevalence of Unnatural Crime Amongst Chinese Indentured Labourers on the Witwatersrand, 1906.

³⁷ Letter from Lt-Governor’s Office to J. Jamieson, 3 Aug. 1906.

³⁸ Letter from Foreign Labour Department, Johannesburg to Sir R. Solomon, 29 Aug. 1906, (A1/36 LTG, vol. 176, reference: CON 5, NASA).

³⁹ Letter from N. Ross, 24 Aug. 1906.

not because they were homosexual. “Society used homosexuality to suit itself.”⁴¹ The *Het Volk* party used the notion of ‘unnatural crime’ in the 1907 election campaign in order to end the indentured scheme. Foreign men were threatening the white, European, racist, patriarchal masculinity so they had to go. The fact that some of them indulged in homosexual activity was a convenient excuse for those in charge.

Knowledge of homosexual practices were laid before the South African public again in 1930, this time in South African prisons where “it appeared that homosexual relations between (black) prisoners (were) so common and so well recognized.”⁴² The Justice Department opened an enquiry into alleged practices of sodomy in prisons owing to the murder of a prisoner in Point Convict Prison, Durban where “the existence of the practice is notorious not only at this but at other large penal institutions.”⁴³ A prisoner killed another inmate because he had allegedly alienated the affection of the man’s prison ‘wife’. As on the mines, in the prisons an older convict took a younger prisoner as his ‘wife’. Such relationships were not necessarily always about sexual intercourse, although they frequently were.⁴⁴ In the case under investigation “it would seem that there was no possibility of sexual relations, as this convict had been separately confined from the time of his reception into the Point Convict Prison.”⁴⁵ The Department of Justice wanted an inquiry into the “deplorable lack of control” and “slackness” within the prison.⁴⁶ Mr S. Page from the Durban Magistrate’s Office agreed that there was “no doubt that this practice is prevalent in penal institutions” but he did not agree “that the fact of its existence is indicative of slackness or want of vigilance on the part of the prison staff.”⁴⁷ According to Page, controlling homosexual activity within prisons was almost impossible in that most cells contained between six and thirty convicts and homosexual acts were

⁴⁰ Harris, ‘Private and Confidential’, p 4. (Inverted commas are part of original quote).

⁴¹ Ibid, p 18.

⁴² Letter from I. Pienaar, Secretary for Justice to Director of Prisons, Pretoria, 11 March 1930, (vol. 1223, reference: 1/94/30, NASA).

⁴³ Letter from Mr S. Page, Magistrate’s Office, Durban to Director of Prisons, Pretoria, 3 April 1930, (vol. 1223, reference: 1/94/30, NASA).

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Letter from I. Pienaar, Secretary for Justice to Director of Prisons, Pretoria, 11 March 1930, (vol. 1223, reference: 1/94/30, NASA).

⁴⁷ Letter from Mr S. Page to Director of Prisons, 3 April 1930.

only brought to light if a prisoner complained. “It was not discoverable by other means.”⁴⁸ Again, as on the mines, it was believed that such practices were attributable to close confinement.⁴⁹

There was another scandal in 1939, ‘The Indecency Trials’, which brought to light an organisation catering for white, homosexual men. Marc Epprecht says this created a moral panic regarding homosexuality among white, South African youth⁵⁰ and generated a witch-hunt of white, homosexual men, instigated by a secret report by probation officer, V.P. Steyn that broke open the scandal.⁵¹ A white, male prostitution ring was discovered in Johannesburg by the authorities. Prostitutes from the juvenile detention houses in the city were blackmailing their clients. Nineteen men awaited trial and there were one hundred possible men to further investigate. According to Steyn, white, homosexual men were corrupting South Africa’s youth, the men of tomorrow.⁵² Even worse, those in the medical field who were obstructing justice wanted the parents of the “boy perverts” to be charged because imprisonment protected society as “the imperialists could not be beaten by pansies”.⁵³

The story hit the press headlines:⁵⁴ The Sunday Times called it a social scandal where perverts were being watched, followed by a clean up.⁵⁵ This initiated letters and articles, which advocated strenuous action against this type of perceived immoral urban behaviour. There was the accusation that civic officials and church leaders had kept quiet on the issue, maintaining a conspiracy of silence that had allowed this behaviour to occur.⁵⁶ A South African psychiatrist, Dr Louis Freed, believed the cause of this behaviour was poor mothering; white mothers should be counselled to prevent further

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid. See Z. Achmat in this chapter. He challenges situational homosexuality.

⁵⁰ M. Epprecht, ‘Fear and Loathing of Homosexuality in Zimbabwe: a Social and Intellectual History, 1890-1980’, (IASSCS Conference, ‘Sex and Secrecy’, 2003), p 5.

⁵¹ Video: ‘Apostles of Civilized Vice: Part I’.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Video: ‘Apostles of Civilized Vice: Part I’.

⁵⁴ ‘Amazing Social Scandal’, The Sunday Mail, (n.d), ‘Juvenile Devil’s Island’, The Sunday Mail, (5 Feb. 1939).

⁵⁵ Video: ‘Apostles of Civilized Vice: Part I’.

⁵⁶ Epprecht, ‘Fear and Loathing of Homosexuality in Zimbabwe’, p 5.

degeneration of the white youth.⁵⁷ Part of the discourse of hegemonic masculinity was blaming of the 'other'. Hegemonic masculinity had to be measured against something that was subordinate, in this case femininity: mothers, whose child rearing was, seen as detrimental to the country, in order to reinforce how right or appropriate the hegemonic masculinity was. Freed found homosexuality to be socially depraved but did not advocate imprisonment as a solution.

Hence discourses around homosexuality were not foreign to the South African authorities; instead they were often just silenced. Chinese labourers were sent home on the premise that their homosexual behaviour was immoral and the solution to the problem of homosexual activity among white youth was to educate their mothers. Homosexual practices amongst black South Africans on the mines and in prisons were supposedly circumstantial and could, it was thought, be quelled through increased vigilance. All of these solutions continued to entrench the hegemonic discourses around masculinity as articulated by the governments of the day and represented quick, successful fixes.

Punishment and Legislation

Foucault theorises about the multiplicity of power relations and the knowledge/power couplet.⁵⁸ Historians, he suggests, should no longer reconstruct the 'real' past or question determination and causation. Instead they should focus on knowledge and power and assess how power is discursively constructed and learn how politics is about fighting over meaning. Human relations produced in different cultures are competed for politically and this determines relations of domination and subordination. This is knowledge.⁵⁹ Such theory is vital when considering why the NP government felt the need to control white homosexuality. The NP government had to maintain its power base and did this through controlling knowledge on homosexuality in this country.

⁵⁷ See 'Apostles of Civilized Vice: Part I' for a different perspective of Dr Louis Leopold, a gay psychiatrist and contemporary of Dr Freed.

⁵⁸ C. Hall, White, Male and Middle Class, (Polity Press, UK, 1992), p 15.

⁵⁹ Ibid, p 24.

Following Foucault, all societies operate according to some definition of what is and what is not acceptable. Such definitions introduce the notion of conformity and define what is abnormal. These norms are protected through penalties, which act to police these social definitions. This normalisation is therefore an instrument of power.⁶⁰ The restriction of homosexuality was about power and having power over others, not about homosexuality itself.⁶¹ Regulating sexuality should not be seen as a dichotomy of repression and liberation.⁶² Rather we should recognise “those who have the power to define, and those who resist.”⁶³ In South Africa the desire to maintain their power made white, heterosexual men defensive if challenged and white homosexuality was such a challenge.⁶⁴ Patriarchy and the control of the racial order produced a normative heterosexual masculinity for white men. Normative masculinity was epitomised by the white, heterosexual man because he reinforced the hegemonic masculinity whereas black males were given no space to produce their own versions of masculinity. This enhanced normative masculinity in that adult; black males were not considered men. Both black and white homosexualities challenged this normative masculinity⁶⁵ in that non-conformist sexual orientations worked counter to hegemony. To a lesser extent black homosexuality challenged the social order because it was doubly non-conformist; these men were black and homosexual. However, the threat was not that great in the context of repressive South Africa in that black homosexuality only helped to prove that black men were ‘uncivilised’. “Masculinity is power” and as long as homosexuality, as a different definition of masculinity, did not challenge this traditional definition of masculinity, white men would have the complete power they sought.⁶⁶ The state institutionalised masculinities and controlled and regulated the relations between masculinities in the gender order of society. The state defined gender relations and social categories; that is, it defined the hegemonic masculinity in the country. The patriarchal social order needed

⁶⁰ M. Foucault, *Discipline and Punishment*, (Penguin Books Ltd, England, 1977).

⁶¹ Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1.

⁶² Weeks, ‘Sexuality and History Revisited’, p 30.

⁶³ *Ibid*, p 31.

⁶⁴ Morrell, *Changing Men in Southern Africa*, p 18.

⁶⁵ Du Pisani, ‘Puritanism Transformed’, p 169.

⁶⁶ M. Kaufman, ‘The Construction of Masculinity and the Triad of Men’s Violence’, in Kimmel and Messner, *Men’s Lives*, p 7.

subordinated masculinities in order to be the hegemonic masculinity.⁶⁷ This was ensured through repressive legislation.

The NP government policed sexuality based on conservative, Christian, nationalist, apartheid ideology. According to South African author Glen Retief,⁶⁸ this ideology meant that white society had to be kept sexually and morally pure in order to be strong and focused to fight the black, communist onslaught that the NP government constructed as a threat to the white minority.⁶⁹ White homosexuality was therefore perceived as one of the weak links in society, achieving and maintaining white supremacy. Homosexuality had to be eliminated because it threatened white racist hegemony. “The overriding image of the National Party presented to the outside world was one of strength, cohesion and unity.”⁷⁰ If one considers that hegemony, the true experience of society, relies on such an image, especially the hegemonic masculinity, then homosexuality would be a threat to the NP government’s power. If hegemony is threatened then power is threatened.

As well as power, masculinity and religious beliefs were also the driving forces behind legislation criminalising homosexual acts. Afrikaner masculinity was puritan and influenced by religion⁷¹ and Afrikaans, white men “espoused an established masculinity which was authoritarian, unforgiving and unapologetic.”⁷² This was in the context of the 1950s

when apartheid society was maturing and cementing increasingly prescriptive versions of masculinity. The apartheid state has long been recognised for its persecution of Africans, but its impact on gender relations (and specifically on men in South Africa) is less well recognized...a national white masculinity was

⁶⁷ Connell, *Gender and Power*, p 183.

⁶⁸ Retief is a gay activist who graduated from UCT. He has conducted research into the policing of homosexuality at the Institute of Criminology at UCT.

⁶⁹ G. Retief, ‘Keeping Sodom out of the Laager: State Repression of Homosexuality in Apartheid South Africa’, in M. Gevisser and E. Cameron, *Defiant Desire*, (Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1994), p 100.

⁷⁰ D. Scher, ‘Part 4: 1948-1966’, in B. Liebenberg and S. Spies (eds), *South Africa in the 20th Century*, (J.L.van Schaik Academic, Pretoria, 1993), p 342.

⁷¹ Du Pisani, ‘Puritanism Transformed’, p 158.

⁷² Morrell, *Changing Men in Southern Africa*, p 17.

created.⁷³

Patriarchy allowed for the reinforcement of this white masculinity. According to Rob Morrell violence is the instrument of patriarchal power and is a common component of the history of masculinity.⁷⁴ Patriarchal heterosexual power was asserted, partly, through legislation against homosexuals. Regarding the politics of masculinity the state institutionalised hegemonic masculinity and spent time and effort controlling it.⁷⁵ Sexuality is political and various groups, be they religious or medical, for example, try to implement sexual programmes and alter sexual arrangements and ideologies. According to discourse on masculinity, during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries various states became more interested in regulating sexuality (because religious control had declined world-wide) therefore law and public policy were regulated with regard to sexuality.⁷⁶

From the nineteenth century South African legislation penalised homosexual behaviour, including that conducted in private. Sections 121 and 122 of the Cape Native Territories Penal Code of 1886 said whoever had “carnal intercourse against the order of nature” with a man; woman or animal would be punished if penetration were proved.⁷⁷ The consequence was imprisonment with hard labour for up to ten years and could include flogging, whipping or a fine. In Natal, Section 10 of the Act to Amend the Law Relative to the Trial and Punishment of the Crimes of Rape and Indecent Assault and Conduct of 1898 legislated that “any male person who committed an act of gross indecency in public or private,” with another male was guilty of an offence, punishable by imprisonment with hard labour for one year.⁷⁸ A Transvaal Ordinance of 1903 stipulated a three-year penalty for “any private or public act of gross indecency.”⁷⁹ This Act was amended in

⁷³ R. Morrell, ‘Masculinity in South African History’.

⁷⁴ Connell, Gender and Power, p 157.

⁷⁵ Ibid, p 128.

⁷⁶ Vance, ‘Social Construction Theory and Sexuality’, p 41.

⁷⁷ Written Submission to Dept of Justice, (1968, AM 2656, GALA, William Cullen Library), C196.

⁷⁸ Prof. Hunt and Prof. Burchell, ‘Unnatural Sexual Offences’ from Textbook on Criminal Law. Handed in by M. Mitchell, MP, (3/3, AM2656, GALA.), D15.

⁷⁹ Evidence to Select Committee for Amendment Bill of Immorality Act, (5 June 1968, AM 2656, GALA), p 335. The various colonies had different laws owing to being colonised at different times and the granting of the Transvaal’s independence.

1908 to read 'any act of indecency' and the whole clause was repealed by the 1957 Immorality Act, which in effect meant homosexual acts in private were no longer illegal.

The South African legal system in general split this sexual 'deviancy' into three crimes: sodomy, bestiality, and unnatural offences. It was only the act that was illegal, not the lifestyle. It was legal to be homosexual, but illegal to engage in homosex.⁸⁰ Since colonisation, the legal definition of sodomy in South Africa was: "unlawful and intentional sexual relations per anima between two human males."⁸¹

"The crime in South African law of committing an 'unnatural offence' is constituted by any 'gratification of sexual lust in a manner contrary to the order of nature'."⁸² Because homosexual acts were considered by certain groups, for example missionaries, to be contrary to the order of nature so they were constructed as unnatural offences and made illegal. The term unnatural offences was used to punish any homosexual behaviour that was not sodomy, for example oral sex or kissing. However, unnatural offences could include both sodomy and bestiality if there was no penetration. According to the law there had to be two qualifiers to make a sexual act an unnatural offence. Firstly, the act had to be committed with another person or animal: if the act was done by a person to himself, no offence had been committed. Secondly, an unnatural offence conducted by two males was not considered criminal if committed between a man and a woman. Till 1957, whether the homosexual act was committed in public or private, "it (was) impossible to define the limits of unnatural sexual offences ... The adjective 'unnatural' involves a value judgement varying from country to country, race to race and age to age: it has little if any objective content."⁸³ I think that because of the confusion existing around the definition of unnatural behaviour, it was open to personal interpretation, as everything always is.

⁸⁰ Homosexual sexual acts.

⁸¹ Hunt and Burchell, 'Unnatural Sexual Offences', D4. If there was no proof of penetration a man was not guilty of sodomy, but of unnatural offences instead. According to the sodomy law even if both men were consenting the active and passive partner were considered guilty if there was proof of penetration. From 1961 the only legal anal sex was that conducted between a male and a female.

⁸² B&H, vol. II, 2nd edition (1982) as quoted in E. Cameron, 'Untitled Talk Delivered to GASA Convention', (31 May 1985) in Isaacs and McKendrick, Male Homosexuality in South Africa, p 146.

⁸³ Hunt and Burchell, 'Unnatural Sexual Offences', D10.

From the mid-1960s the NP government focused on policing the behaviour of white homosexuals. African resistance had gone underground but the fact that there had been resistance reminded the NP government that it had to continuously monitor and reinforce its control. It needed to continuously entrench its power. One way the NP government did this was to emphasise and maintain particular moral and religious views. Such efforts culminated in the 1968 Select Committee, which sought to control and ultimately, eliminate white, male homosexual behaviour. The setting up of the Select Committee was a cog in the wheel to maintain white sexual and moral purity. Potentially the Select Committee, as a source of discourse, could therefore contribute to the reinforcement of the hegemonic masculinity if it recommended that all homosexual acts in South Africa be criminalised, even those in private.

The NP Government and Religion

Two discourses regarding Christianity and homosexuals competed in the 1960s: the liberals or revisionists⁸⁴ and the conservatives or traditionalists.⁸⁵ The liberals disagreed with Christianity being the cornerstone of prejudices towards homosexuals and re-interpreted the Bible to support their argument. The traditionalists said the Bible must be interpreted literally to prove homosexuality is wrong. The liberal discourse was in its infancy in 1968 and the government adhered to traditional Christian ethics.

In order to strengthen white supremacy through particular kinds of morality the conservative NP government used the Bible and religion to prove homosexuality was wrong and justify its legislation against homosexual acts.⁸⁶ Christianity was one of the

⁸⁴ Those churches and religious leaders against the proposed Amendment Bill who submitted to the Select Committee could be considered liberals, for example Rev. Reeves and Rev. Taylor of the Anglican Church, and, to a lesser degree, the Catholic Church, and the Methodist Church of South Africa. The term Anglican Church used in this thesis is referred to quite loosely. The Anglican Church of South Africa is predominantly the Church of the Province of South Africa (CPSA), as opposed to the other, smaller break away group, the Church of England.

⁸⁵ In its evidence to the Select Committee the Church of England was very conservative and traditional in its interpretation of the Bible.

⁸⁶ In informal conversations with colleagues who are congregationalists of the NG Kerk I found that, without them being able to be specific, they have always known that homosexuality is wrong. "That is just the way it is." (Conversation with Johan Greyling). The NG Kerk has always made that clear to

cornerstones of the NP government's homo-ignorance and its subsequent homophobia. Fear of loss of power, too, propelled homophobia. This links up with George Yúdice's view that men do not oppress out of choice. They do so because of fears and a sense of powerlessness which culture expects men to transfer to others.⁸⁷ In this case it was religious culture.

Religion served to structure 'reality' for the NP government and to categorise the nature and value of relationships in society. Religion dictated the nature of relationships. According to most white, Christian-defined morality only heterosexual relationships were valid. Conversely, homosexual relationships were stigmatised by religion and there was no value to such relations. The Church considered a homosexual man to be "more exposed to temptation, he was more liable to lead his neighbour astray. So he had to be shut up like a woman or watched over like a child, mistrusted by society."⁸⁸ This mindset was encouraged by the SAP and perpetuated through their raids on white, homosexual night-clubs, bars, and private parties. The NP legislators also perpetuated this mindset through the Select Committee and the Amendment of the 1957 Immorality Act in 1969.

Post-WWII to 1966 Occurrence of Homosexuality in South Africa,

New studies from the 1950s presented changing gender expectations for men,⁸⁹ which were accelerated by World War II. Women's roles had changed owing to war mobilisation and an increase in women's liberation resulted in a so-called crisis of masculinity in men. Gender insecurity during the war created propaganda for the reinstatement of pre-war gender polarities. This included homosexual men. The 1950s western witch-hunt against white homosexual men was proof of a fear of otherness in western societies.⁹⁰

them and growing up in the NG Kerk entrenched this belief. That is how it was for the parents of those I talked to, and that is how it is for their children.

⁸⁷ G. Yúdice, 'What's a Straight Man to Do?' in Berger et al, Constructing Masculinity, p 274.

⁸⁸ P. Ariès, 'Thoughts on the History of Homosexuality' in P. Ariès and A. Béjin, Western Sexuality, (Basil Blackwell Ltd, Oxford, 1985), p 65.

⁸⁹ Connell, The Men and the Boys, p 7.

⁹⁰ J. Irvine, 'Toward a 'Value-Free' Science of Sex' in Phillips, Reay (eds), Sexualities in History, p 328.

In South Africa, as had always been the situation, black masculinity had to be controlled in the 1940s. If black men were socialised to be subordinate white men would remain powerful.⁹¹ The white authorities did this through legislating around race and sexual relations and through education, even encouraging black homosexuality on the mines, but this was spatially contained whereas white homosexuality was more of a threat to South Africa's patriarchal system because it was mobile.⁹² Race and locale of homosexuality were more important than the homosexual act itself. Race shaped the state's and general public's response.⁹³ Black homosexuality could be contained therefore it was white homosexuality that was the problem. "Occasionally the ethnic dimension of deviant sexuality was stressed more emphatically, especially when it accompanied a more far-reaching threat to religious and social order."⁹⁴ This was not the case with black homosexuality because it was contained.

Although not within my specified time period, mention must be made of Charles van Onselen's work regarding black homosexuality in order to gain a better understanding of the changing historiography of race and homosexuality in this country. It provides a comparative framework. In van Onselen's The Small Matter of a Horse: The Life of 'Nongoloza' Mathebula 1867-1948 he wrote of the homosexual activities of the black prison gang, the Ninevites within the confines of homosexuality being a safe alternative to sex with prostitutes on the Rand who were said to be spreading syphilis. Van Onselen wrote that homosexuality was not an expression of personal preference; it occurred because of deprivations of institutions.⁹⁵ Homosexuality was also a response to the confinement of prisons or the compounds but Zackie Achmat points out that the Ninevites practised homosexuality when they were "free on the hills." Therefore Achmat viewed van Onselen's account as an historical apology for male homosexuality in

⁹¹ B. Hooks, 'Doing it for Daddy', in Berger et al, Constructing Masculinity, p 99.

⁹² Elder, 'Of Moffies, Kaffirs, and Perverts', p 62.

⁹³ Ibid, p 63.

⁹⁴ Bleys, The Geography of Perversion, p 37.

⁹⁵ C. van Onselen, The Small Matter of a Horse: The Life of 'Nongoloza' Mathebula 1867-1948, (Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1984), p 52.

institutions.⁹⁶ Achmat challenged van Onselen's account and dealt it a fundamental blow.

Regarding the essentialist notion of economics being a cause of homosexuality on the mines, the African husbands on the mines paid and looked after their male wives in the compounds, who in turn could make money and return to the rural areas to pay *lobola*.⁹⁷ This system of homosexuality on the mines was known as Sokisi's Law.⁹⁸ To look feminine the mine wives sewed material to make breasts and a bra. This was "a norm on the mines."⁹⁹ Mpande wa Sibuyi wrote that the wives of miners back home knew their husbands had boy-wives on the mines. The white bosses also knew about this but perhaps kept quiet because some white men working underground had black toolboys with whom they had homosexual relations.¹⁰⁰ "The whole bureaucracy on the mines knew about it and they did not oppose it."¹⁰¹ In fact the white mining authorities sometimes encouraged black homosexuality because they believed that the sexual needs of the black man were insatiable and threatened the purity of the whites.¹⁰² The NP government tolerated black homosexuality because white miners' wives and daughters lived near the mines and compounds and homosexuality was preferable to interracial sex.¹⁰³ Also, by constructing black, male sexuality this way the mining houses and the state avoided the demands of black miners to bring their wives to the mines, which in turn might mean an increase in wages.¹⁰⁴ Homosexuality was accepted by miners and some mine managers on the mines, it was a means of survival. According to wa Sibuyi when new miners were chosen as wives they probably disliked it but could do nothing

⁹⁶ Achmat, 'Apostles of Civilised Vice', p 104.

⁹⁷ See T. Dunbar Moodie, N. Ndatshe, B. Sibuyi, 'Migrancy and Male Sexuality on the South African Gold Mines', in *Journal of South African Studies*, (1988).

⁹⁸ Sokisi was from Mozambique and thought to have brought love to the mines.

⁹⁹ M. wa Sibuyi, 'Tinkoncana Etimayinini: The Wives of the Mines' in M. Krouse, *The Invisible Ghetto*, (Cosaw Publishing, Johannesburg, 1993), p 54.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, p 58.

¹⁰² Weeks, 'Sexuality and History Revisited', p 56.

¹⁰³ P. Harries, *Work, Culture, and Identity*, p 23.

¹⁰⁴ G. Elder, 'Of Moffies, Kaffirs, and Perverts', p 60.

about it. “It was a way of life on the mines.”¹⁰⁵ There were males who were regarded as prostitutes but they were generally avoided.

Therefore historiographically, black homosexuality has tended to be seen as situational or circumstantial. Such accounts of black homosexuality tend to uphold normative discourses around sexuality. T. Dunbar Moodie’s research on same-sex marriages among male migrant labour on the gold mines was the first important study to consider homosexual relations between African men in Southern Africa.¹⁰⁶ Moodie’s research, however, came under attack by queer politics because it legitimates an understanding that homosexuality on the mines occurred because of the inhumane labour practices of apartheid and did not disrupt dominant social relations.¹⁰⁷ William Spurlin asserts Moodie normalised sexual activity from a heteronormative perspective because he assumes that after leaving the mines the labourers reverted back to heterosexual practices. Again this was situational homosexuality. Spurlin also wrote that Moodie’s work is misogynistic because it assumes young males took on a feminine role. This presumes male heterosexual desire.¹⁰⁸

Regarding homosexual relations as a defiance, as opposed to it being situational, Patrick Harries wrote about homosexual relations on the goldmines.¹⁰⁹ He said this expression of love showed the rejection of the employers’ demands that miners should put all their energy into their work and demonstrate sexual restraint. Black homosexual relationships contradicted the morality of white, western industrialism. Such relationships produced hierarchies, status, power, and pride on the mines. It gave the miners some kind of security. It also promoted and maintained African masculinity and African male roles in that it created “a social space in which the miner could assert a personal and communal

¹⁰⁵ M. wa Sibuyi, ‘Tinkoncana Etimayinini’, p 61.

¹⁰⁶ See Spurlin, ‘Broadening Postcolonial Studies/Decolonizing Queer Studies’, p 189.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, p 190.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Harries, ‘Symbols and Sexuality: Culture and Identity on the Early Witwatersrand Gold Mines’ and Harries, Work, Culture, and Identity.

autonomy and a male identity and solidarity.”¹¹⁰ The situation on the mines might have allowed for homosexuality but Harries asserted that it did not create it.

Achmat too does not agree with essentialist assessments such as Moodie’s. “Historical research has been fossilized, creating its own hierarchies and orthodoxies with their own modes of exclusion.”¹¹¹ For example homosexuality on the mines is only considered as unnatural vice and is defined, as such by law, theology, psychiatry, and criminology. “Consequently, the production and history of desire and pleasure have been ignored.”¹¹² Achmat wrote that black men in the compounds did not have homosexual relations as an alternative to a lack of female company, rather “the compound regime partially freed the male body through its enslavement, creating a network of new pleasures and desires.”¹¹³ He does not see it as conceivable that the mine marriages would have occurred if there were no element of desire.¹¹⁴ Achmat wrote that contemporary history has omitted this notion and it is time to recover it,¹¹⁵ although he does concede “it is impossible to uncover what really motivated the men who engaged in homosexual practices.”¹¹⁶

Homosexuality was not only recognised on the mines but also in African townships in the 1940s, 50s, and 60s. Through interviews and oral histories, Ronald Louw documents a homosexual community outside Durban in the 1950s, including male same-sex weddings. “This case study provided a nice complement to recent research on the ‘circumstantial homosexuality’ among African men in the mine compounds and prisons.”¹¹⁷ In the 1940s and 1950s in Cato Manor there was a group of Zulu, homosexual men who dressed as female, Zulu dancers. They had permission from the Department of Home Affairs so their behaviour was not monitored. They said they were simply showing the difference

¹¹⁰ Harries, *Work, Culture, and Identity*, p 208.

¹¹¹ Achmat, “Apostles of Civilised Vice”, p 95.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid, p 106.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, p 104.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, p 96.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, p 103.

¹¹⁷ D. Amory, “Homosexuality’ in Africa: Issues and Debates’ in *Issue*, vol. xxv, no. 1, 1997, p 7. I will not be looking at prison homosexuality as in many cases this is different to compound homosexuality in that it is violent, sexual assault, and often not consensual. (Elder, ‘Of Moffies, Kaffirs, and Perverts’).

between male and female Zulu dancers.¹¹⁸ During the 1950s some black men in Cato Manor took male ‘wives’ and married them. Later their female wives joined them in the urban area but these men continued to see their male ‘wives’ in secret. Some Soweto hostels were also sites of same-sex sexual relations, but if a man was effeminate it was thought he was really a woman or part thereof. Such a man’s male partner was a ‘woman’, not a homosexual.¹¹⁹ Hostels provided a protected refuge where it was easy to live with another man. Black homosexual men who had been chased away by their communities felt comfortable there.¹²⁰

There was also recognised homosexuality within the coloured communities. Some called District Six Gay District Six because everyone knew “the moffies were everywhere.”¹²¹ There was even a general acceptance and tolerance of the 1940s Moffie Concert, an annual drag show in District Six for which the area was well known. A coloured student wrote a three-page letter to the Cape Standard condemning the moffie participation in the concerts. He said they were “sexually abnormal.”¹²² A week later a three-page response reaffirmed the acceptance of the moffies and their concerts. The major newspapers did not cover the Moffie Concert but Golden City Post and Drum did.¹²³ During the 1950s homosexual men continued to be accepted in District Six. Even the gangsters greeted them.¹²⁴ The moffies looked after children and cleaned houses to help the working mothers in their community. “In every household there was a moffie.”¹²⁵ But many

¹¹⁸ Video: ‘Apostles of Civilized Vice’.

¹¹⁹ D. Donham, ‘Freeing South Africa: The ‘Modernization’ of Male-Male Sexuality in Soweto’, in Cultural Anthropology, vol. 13, no. 1, 1998. See chapter 4 for African homosexuality in the 1980s.

¹²⁰ Video: ‘Apostles of Civilized Vice’. Donald Donham, ‘Freeing South Africa: The ‘Modernization’ of Male-Male Sexuality in Soweto’, says as apartheid neared rural women began to join their men in the hostels and “the old days of male-male marriages were left behind”, (p11).

¹²¹ Video: Kewpie in ‘Apostles of Civilized Vice: Part II’: ‘A Natural Thing’, (Directed by Zachie Achmat, Idol Pictures, South Africa 1999). The term moffie is what many coloured homosexual men called themselves. It was a collective, recognisable term, a part of their sub-culture and was not considered derogatory.

¹²² Video: ‘Apostles of Civilized Vice’.

¹²³ ‘A Moffie’s Love Life’, Golden City Post, (26 Jan. 1956), ‘I am a Moffie’s Boyfriend’, Golden City Post, (11 March 1956), ‘Secrets of a Moffie’, Golden City Post, (12 Aug. 1956), ‘Moffies Hit Out’, Golden City Post, (4 Nov. 1956), ‘Moffie War Flares Over Bid to Depose Queen Piper Laurie’, Golden City Post, (18 June 1967), ‘It’s the Night of the Moffies’, Drum, (Jan. 1964).

¹²⁴ Video: ‘A Normal Daughter’, Directed by Jack Lewis, (South Africa 2000, Idol Pictures, Out in Africa Video Suitcase).

¹²⁵ Video: ‘A Normal Daughter’.

called them girls or ladies as opposed to moffies. Because of the Group Areas Act District Six was declared a white area and this acceptance of the coloured moffies was destroyed by 1966. What remained, however, was the moffie dialect. From the 1950s coloured homosexual men had begun using their own language, *Moffietaal*, which later evolved into Gayle.¹²⁶

There was also the recognition of homosexuality on Robben Island among the political prisoners. However, in contrast to Achmat's assertions, Jabulani Mbandla, a prisoner who practised homosexual relations while in the prison, says homosexual activity was sometimes owing to the lack of women.¹²⁷ Mbandla wrote that the ANC disagreed with homosexual activity not because of tradition or culture but because of the low morality of black, homosexual men: they took drugs and drank and swore excessively. Mbandla conceded that black, heterosexual men too, behaved this way, but black, homosexual men formed a minority and in order to be accepted they had to behave. The political prisoners on Robben Island agreed on a code of conduct – anti-social behaviour was not allowed. This is the same behaviour as the NP government's argument about morality and it included homosexual behaviour. "Only prisoners of the PAC (Pan African Congress) practice 'anti-social' behaviour"¹²⁸ and it is the triumphant discourse that gets to define what is social and anti-social.

White homosexual communities became recognised in the major South African cities of Cape Town, Durban, and Johannesburg owing to the social consequences of World War II. Many foreign soldiers had provided a makeshift market for South African male prostitutes, which resulted in permanent white, homosexual communities in the cities where foreign soldiers had been stationed. The authorities did not harass these white, urban homosexual communities during the 1940s. In the Cape and Natal white, gay men felt comfortable in the quayside culture.¹²⁹ In Johannesburg white, gay life centred itself

¹²⁶ To chat in gay terminology was called gail, the word Gayle evolved from this. See K. Cage, 'From *Moffietaal* to *Gayle* – the Evolution of a South African Gay Argot'.

¹²⁷ B. Luirink, *Moffies*, (David Philip Publishers, Cape Town, 1998), p 36.

¹²⁸ Ibid, p 38. See p 251 footnotes for African homosexuality on Robben Island in the late 1980s.

¹²⁹ See the video 'Faux Pas De Deux/Nil Desperandum' (Wits Gay Library). This is original 1940s footage, a home movie, of two white homosexual men who pick up men in Durban, have a picnic and

on Joubert Park where there had been an army camp during the war.¹³⁰ This resulted in white, gay clubs being established in the area. After the war these clubs closed, but those who had moved into the area to be near the clubs stayed on. White homosexuality was publicly unrecognised in the rural areas. This was partly because these areas were predominantly Afrikaans, and white, homosexual men were too afraid to come out, and partly because those who had come out left for the cities anyway, where there was a white, gay sub-culture in which they felt more comfortable.¹³¹ This was because cities offer anonymity and community¹³² simply through sheer numbers and urban densities.

There was victimisation of white gay men in the 1950s but it tended to be isolated and incidental. Even police submissions to the Select Committee in 1968 said victimisation of homosexual men in the past had been isolated.¹³³ The police had not organising campaigns against white, homosexual men or concerned with an anti-homosexual agenda. In comparison to race issues the state did not regard white homosexuality a serious problem. It was not yet visible enough to threaten the hegemonic masculinity. Also, white, homosexual men were actually benefiting, in this case, the NP government: a social body cannot separate itself from its social and cultural setting. The social body creates a way the physical body is perceived and then the bodily experience reinforces that social body.¹³⁴ According to Foucault norms are not achieved only by law and power from above but through multiple processes regulating the construction of space, time, desire, and embodiment. These norms of appearance, identity, and behaviour are therefore not maintained through violence and coercion only, but through self-surveillance and self-correction.¹³⁵ The NP government dictated to the public the way the white, homosexual body would be perceived. In turn the white homosexual body

presumably sex (behind a bush with clothes strewn on it) and are then beaten up and have their car stolen. The second visual is of two white sailors in rickshaw who pick up these same two men and pamper them.

¹³⁰ Black, homosexual men waited outside the gates of Joubert Park. They also prostituted themselves at the army barracks. (Video: 'The Man Who Drove With Mandela', Directed by G. Schiller, written and researched by M. Gevisser, Beulah Films, Wits Gay Library).

¹³¹ Retief, 'Keeping Sodom out of the Laager'.

¹³² T. Rothenberg, 'And She Told Two Friends' in Bell, Valentine, (eds), *Mapping Desire*, p 175.

¹³³ M. Gevisser, 'A Different Fight For Freedom, : A History of South African Lesbian and Gay Organizations from the 1950s to 1990s' in Gevisser and Cameron, *Defiant Desire*, p 30.

¹³⁴ J. Cream, 'Re-Solving Riddles' in Bell, Valentine, (eds), *Mapping Desire*, p 33.

reinforced this by remaining invisible. There had been swoops on public places and frequent raids on parties, according to South African author, Mark Gevisser, but this was only if white, homosexual men had been disturbing the peace.¹³⁶

A white, homosexual bar and party scene therefore existed in the 1950s and 1960s, although it was generally white, heterosexual men owned the gay bars.¹³⁷ These bars seemed to be usually impermanent, fly-by-night, unstable clubs. The popularity of a bar largely depended on the hospitality the white, homosexual community received and there was much displacement of gay socialisation, causing one bar to supplant the next. In the 1950s white, homosexual men were discreet and subsequently tolerated: “in those days we were allowed to do our own thing provided we behaved. So we behaved.”¹³⁸ White, homosexual men felt they must keep to themselves.¹³⁹ Consequently homosexuality remained indoors. Some white, homosexual men did, however, go cruising. There was very little cross colour picking up of men and few white, gay men thought black, gay men even existed.¹⁴⁰ Even if a white, homosexual man had a black partner the relationship was difficult because “you could not take them (the black partner) anywhere anyway.”¹⁴¹ There was some mixing of white and coloured homosexual men in Cape Town though. White, homosexual men met at Bachelor’s Cove and Maiden’s Cove, a coloured, homosexual beach was next door.¹⁴²

The fact that so many white, homosexual clubs and bars existed – especially in Durban and Cape Town – and that there was little reaction from the NP government suggests that till the mid-1960s the NP government was not too perturbed about white, homosexual

¹³⁵ L. McDowell, ‘Body Work’ in Bell, Valentine, (eds), Mapping Desire, p 78.

¹³⁶ Gevisser, ‘A Different Fight For Freedom’, p 30.

¹³⁷ Ibid, p 22.

¹³⁸ Joe in Gevisser, ‘A Different Fight For Freedom’, p 24.

¹³⁹ Video: Helen Joseph in ‘The Man Who Drove With Mandela’, directed by Greta Schiller, (Beulah Films, written and researched by Mark Gevisser, Wits Gay Library).

¹⁴⁰ Official police statistics show 5 cases of convicted sodomy between white and non-white, gay men for both July 1964-June 1965 and July 1965 to June 1966, and 11 cases for July 1966 to June 1967. (‘Statistiek Oor (A) Sodomie en (B) Onnatuurlike Geslagtelike Misdrywe – Vrou Met Vrou en Man Met Man Waar Daar ’n Meewerkende Party Is, 1 Julie 1964 Tot 30 Junie 1967’, Stastieke Aan Kompol op 27/3/1968, from Joubert to Keevey, C8/111/10, Police Records, vol. 2, State Archives).

¹⁴¹ Video: Helen Joseph in ‘The Man Who Drove With Mandela’.

¹⁴² Ibid.

men. This was because they were quiet and considered invisible within the confines of their entertainment venues. Also, the NP government was more involved with race relations in the 1950s and early-1960s and had little incentive to police white, homosexual men. “The Nationalists, it must be remembered, were engaged in a policy of political and social engineering.”¹⁴³ Seemingly, at this time this did not overtly include white, homosexual men as long as they did not exist or pose a threat to power and at the same time the authorities did not have the inclination to find them. Black South Africans were the 1950s target, especially during the first half of the decade, and much legislation was passed to strengthen the NP government’s stand against the integration of Africans into white South Africa.¹⁴⁴ The NP government concentrated on influx control, differentiating between urban workers and migrant labourers. Between 1952 and 1962 there were 3 018 511 convictions under the influx control laws out of an African population of 3 443 950.¹⁴⁵ 800 000 foreign Africans were deported.¹⁴⁶ Compounding this, the NP government had to deal with labour shortages. Therefore the government was very preoccupied. Some residential rights were given to detribalised, urban, black workers and this had to be administered. This is where the police and state’s attention was focused in the 1950s, not on white, homosexual activity. Ironically, it is possible that a lack of NP government reaction caused white, homosexual men to become complacent and more visible by 1966.

The state also had the more pressing concerns of the 1950s defiance campaigns and African nationalism to contend with. During the 1950s the ANC formally launched its Defiance Campaign. In 1956 black women protested against the carrying of passes. The ANC-aligned Congress Alliance wrote its Freedom Charter. The Treason Trial continued till 1961. In 1959 dissenters broke away from the ANC and formed the PAC. “In

¹⁴³ Scher, ‘Part 4: 1948-1966’, p 336.

¹⁴⁴ The following acts were passed in the 1950s: The Group Areas Act (1950), The Suppression of Communism Act (1950), The Native Building Workers Act (1951), The Separate Representation of Voters Bill (1951), The Bantu Authorities Act (1951), The Abolition of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents Act (1952), The Separate Amenities Act (1953), The Criminal Law Amendment Act (1953), The Bantu Education Act (1953), The Natives Resettlement Act (1954), The Senate Act (1955), The Industrial Conciliation Act (1956), and The Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act (1959).

¹⁴⁵ Botha Report of 1962, D. Posel, The Making of Apartheid 1948-1961, (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1991), p 120.

¹⁴⁶ A. Hepple, ‘Unemployment by Race’ (1962) in Posel, The Making of Apartheid 1948-1961, p 121.

general, the 1950s seems to have been a decade of heightened defiance.”¹⁴⁷ It seems in the context of heightened African resistance to white racism the black threat, both urban and rural, was far greater than any white, gay club or bar. White, homosexual activity was of relatively little importance; the white, racist regime had to control black people and the forms of black masculinity they were attempting to produce.

Consequently, because white, homosexuality was isolated and not considered a problem, taboos began breaking down and the press, with its letters to the editors, showed more interest in white, South African, homosexual men, both negatively and positively.¹⁴⁸ There were letters to editors stating disgust regarding white homosexuality as well as rebuttal letters by homosexuals.¹⁴⁹ Newspapers also carried stories of South Africa’s so-called white homosexual problem.¹⁵⁰ Arthur Weaver, a parent, was embarrassed that his children had read about homosexuality in the newspaper and that he had to explain to them what homosexuality was.¹⁵¹ Many people did not want to discuss homosexuality, they did not want it to exist, especially in the eyes of children. The awareness of white homosexuality seen in the 1950s newspapers had not gone away and was more evident because of Britain’s Wolfenden-hype, this being the 1969 report that suggested to the British Parliament that homosexuality be decriminalised. On the other hand there were white members of the public who were gay sympathisers. In 1956 they wrote to the newspapers condemning the treatment of white, homosexual men.¹⁵² According to Foucault twentieth century mass media is proof that sexuality was not being repressed, rather reporting was proof of its increase.¹⁵³ The coverage given to white homosexuality in the newspapers meant that, at least for most people, the concept was not entirely

¹⁴⁷ N. Worden, The Making of Modern South Africa, (Juta and Co. Ltd., South Africa, 1994), p 103.

¹⁴⁸ GALA has many journals of newspaper clippings collected by white, South African homosexual men and donated to the Archives. These clippings are discriminatory and unaccepting of white homosexuality as well as enlightening as they begin to alert South Africa that white homosexuality exists. Many clippings portray ignorance in that the stories were definitely homosexual-related although the reporters did not allude to homosexuality in any way. It was only homosexual men themselves who recognised that homosexual relations were being reported on. For example young boys living with older men were reported as cases of abduction.

¹⁴⁹ The Sunday Express, (2 April 1967), (GALA).

¹⁵⁰ K. Wallace, ‘Spotlight on SA’s Growing Social Problem’, The Sunday Express, (12 March 1967), (GALA).

¹⁵¹ The Sunday Express, (2 April 1967).

¹⁵² Letter to the Editor, ‘Distasteful Duties’, Natal Mercury, (4 September 1956), (GALA).

foreign. This would not have gone unnoticed by the NP government. But possibly there was no need for the NP government to take a proactive stand against white, homosexual men because they still posed no real visible threat to the hegemonic masculinity. “A well-established masculine order”, that is, a hegemonic masculinity, continued to allow the regime to run smoothly.¹⁵⁴ Nothing had happened, yet.

But in 1956 something did happen. White, homosexual men soliciting sex on the Durban Esplanade were caught. The police were actually there trying to prevent sexual relations between black and white citizens but while attempting to do this they came upon drug dealers and white, homosexual vice rings. Joe Garmeson says the winding, concealed paths were bushy and supposed to be a haven for dagga sellers but the Daily News received news that white, homosexual acts were being conducted there. The newspaper sent a “strapping young reporter who escaped with his virginity”¹⁵⁵ and the story hit the headlines. There was a raid and the activity consequently died down at that location but moved on elsewhere.¹⁵⁶

From the Durban Esplanade raid thirty-five men were arrested for indecent assault. The names, occupations, and ages of nine of the men were printed in the Natal Daily News.¹⁵⁷ These men were sentenced to six months imprisonment, suspended for three years on condition they were not convicted of any act of indecency during their suspended sentence. Mr Pretorius, who passed the sentence, said: “I cannot understand ... how a decent-thinking and decent-living person can stoop to doing things like this.”¹⁵⁸ I think this was an important event, because, for the authorities, it could possibly have meant that white homosexual men now really existed. White homosexuality was no longer an activity of some clandestine community. But the discovery of visible, white homosexuality did not necessarily work against the NP government. The recognition of an other could be entertained to increase the NP government’s power. An awareness of

¹⁵³ Connell, Gender and Power, p 157.

¹⁵⁴ Elder, ‘Of Moffies, Kaffirs, and Perverts’, p 56.

¹⁵⁵ Interview with Joe Garmeson, (23 Sept. 2003, Johannesburg, 10:00am).

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ ‘9 Men Sentenced for Indecency’, Natal Daily News, (23 July 1956), (GALA.).

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

white homosexuality would entrench the intolerance of it. The response by the dominant power is to reaffirm local gender hierarchies.¹⁵⁹

So the NP government reasserted its definition of masculinity: in 1957, as part of apartheid legislation the Immorality Act was passed criminalising inter-racial sex, as well as soliciting, prostitution, and sex with idiots.¹⁶⁰ The Act also outlined four offences relating to public homosexual behaviour; Section 10, 14, 20, and the infamous Section 20A,¹⁶¹ thereby making public homosexual acts illegal. The inclusion of these sections could possibly have been a reaction to the Durban Esplanade scandal. Garmeson says this might have been so, visible homosexual activity and raids by the police were cyclical and would repeat themselves. The SAP was getting more and more frustrated.¹⁶² Mark Gevisser disagrees, however, that the Esplanade raid contributed to the passing of the Immorality Act. He says he senses the clean up was not of any great national importance.¹⁶³ The 1957 Immorality Act protected minors and public decency only. Literally interpreted, the Immorality Act legislated that homosexual acts between two consenting adults in private were legal and that as long as no public homosexual acts occurred no crime had been committed.

In order to get around this legislation white, homosexual men met in public places in Johannesburg such as the Nite Beat Koffie Huis in Claim Street in Hillbrow, the East African Pavilion in Jeppe Street or the New Library Hotel in Commission Street. Thereafter they went back to a private residence.¹⁶⁴ In Cape Town white, homosexual men met at the Grand Hotel, the Sea Point swimming bath, and a flatland complex in Sea

¹⁵⁹ Connell, *The Men and the Boys*, p 53.

¹⁶⁰ The Immorality Amendment Act changed to the Sexual Offences Act in 1988.

¹⁶¹ Section 10 of the Immorality Act concerned “the protection of heterosexual men from homosexual men (and prostitutes) in public.” The penalty was two years imprisonment. Section 14 “protected minors under 16 years” (consenting adults in private were not guilty) and the penalty was 6 years imprisonment. Section 20 stated if one “committed or aided in an act of indecency in public, one was guilty, facing a possible two-year gaol sentence.” Section 20A stipulated that “acts committed between men at a party which aimed to stimulate sexual passion or sexual gratification were prohibited.” A party was an occasion where more than two people were present; three people constituted a party. The penalty was the same as that of Section 20. (Hunt and Burchell, ‘Unnatural Sexual Offences’, D4).

¹⁶² Interview with Joe Garmeson.

¹⁶³ E-mail from Mark Gevisser, ‘Re: Questions for PhD on Treatment of Gay Men in SA’, (16 Sept 2003), p 1.

Point. In Durban they met at Queer's Beach or Gay Beach between the Indian and Country Club beaches, and Club Hacienda, ironically near the Smith Street police station.¹⁶⁵ But neither the police nor the law could touch them because they were no threat to public decency, according to the stipulations of the Immorality Act.

But I think this began to frustrate certain elements in the SAP – white, homosexual men were undermining their power. Already in 1957 the beginnings of the Select Committee's arguments were evident. There was the fear and belief that white, homosexual men targeted and corrupted youths. This was possibly because in both Johannesburg and Cape Town the majority of rent boys (male prostitutes) were white, middle-class, Afrikaans youngsters.¹⁶⁶ This did not bode well for the NP government's planned white, moral conservatism. The moral strength of the Afrikaner culture depended on its youth being racist and heterosexual. That is, subscribing to a heterosexual Afrikaner version of hegemonic masculinity. "If white boys are *out of control*, how can they be expected to *maintain control* as white men."¹⁶⁷ From my interview with Joe Garmeson it seems this was a justified fear of the white NP government. These rent boys challenged the hegemonic masculinity. "The whole masquerade of masculinity may be destabilized by the diversity of sexual roles and identities men inhabit."¹⁶⁸ That includes a homosexual masculinity. The hegemony of a dominant culture is never absolute therefore it is always threatened, so it has to be defended against challenges of other subordinate cultures.¹⁶⁹ The NP government felt that gaoling homosexual men was the only way to protect white children.¹⁷⁰ So began, in earnest, the history of the NP government's concern regarding the protection of white, heterosexual morality in South Africa. The reality was that the repression of white homosexuality gave the NP government greater power in terms of racist domination.

¹⁶⁴ Memo from District C.I. Officer, Hillbrow, (13 Oct. 1967, AM 2656, GALA).

¹⁶⁵ Memo from Capt. F.A.J. van Zyl, (7 March 1966, AM 2656, GALA), B253.

¹⁶⁶ Gevisser, 'A Different Fight For Freedom', p 26.

¹⁶⁷ P. Mariani, 'Law-and-Order Science' in Berger et al (eds), Constructing Masculinity, p 153.

¹⁶⁸ D. Marriott, 'Reading Black Masculinities' in Mac an Ghail, Understanding Masculinities, p 194.

¹⁶⁹ Edley, Wetherall, 'Masculinity, Power, and Identity' in Mac an Ghail, Understanding Masculinities, p 109.

¹⁷⁰ This was evident by the punitive measures of the Immorality Act.

Often the SAP was not targeting white, homosexual men, but came upon homosexuality by accident, such as on the Durban Esplanade. However, in 1957 the Pretoria Immorality Criminal Investigation Department (C.I.D.) intentionally moved to clean up sex perversion. White homosexuality was considered rife in Pretoria. According to the police there had always been white, homosexual men in Pretoria but since the war the problem had escalated.¹⁷¹ I think of all places in which sex perversion was cleaned up it makes sense that this should occur in Pretoria, which was very conservative; an Afrikaner stronghold where heterosexual masculinity would have been strongly defined. The Pretoria daily newspaper, Hoofstad, supported the *verkrampes* (conservatives) of the NP.¹⁷² The need for a clean up shows the hegemonic masculinity was threatened in Pretoria. But the clean up was not necessary on the premise that white, homosexual men were a problem, it was necessary because they existed. “Isn’t homophobia a fear of what gay men represent (a challenge to masculine hegemony) rather than of gay men itself?”¹⁷³

What possibly further unnerved the white, racist government was that prominent gay communities tended to be white, male, and middle-class, which mirrored the race, sex, and status of the government MPs. It became unacceptable to the NP government that such communities existed; they were an embarrassment to the NP government and threatened the ‘natural’ order white, heterosexual men were comfortable with.

There seems to have been a shift away from the 1950s media awareness of white homosexuality as a phenomenon or scandal to more serious analysing of it. The media no longer mentioned white homosexuality in passing or alluded to it; it was beginning to attain in-your-face reporting, without apology.

The maintaining of power through the policing of particular kinds of morality was important to the NP government and it initiated an anti-liberal, anti-communist witch-

¹⁷¹ Sunday Tribune correspondent, ‘Police Drive Against Pretoria’s Male Vice Rings’, Sunday Tribune, (1 September 1957), (GALA), n.p.

¹⁷² Interview with Anthony Manion, (6 Sept. 2000, Johannesburg, Johannesburg, 10:00am).

¹⁷³ E-mail from Mark Gevisser, (16 Sept 2003), p 2.

hunt in the 1960s.¹⁷⁴ But it seems the policing of race always took precedent over the policing of sexuality, unless the two could be incorporated, as in the 1957 Immorality Act. If the NP government was overwhelmed with African resistance it appeared white, homosexual men were safe. Again during 1959 and the early 1960s the government paid little attention to white, homosexual men because the crushing of black consciousness was the top priority.¹⁷⁵ Apartheid was about a white national logic of identity – a survivalist mentality whose identity was threatened by multiculturalism.¹⁷⁶ In 1959 Verwoerd had to deal with rioting in the black townships in Pretoria, Cato Manor, Pietermaritzburg, Paarl, and Windhoek. In March of 1960 Verwoerd also had to quell rioting in Sharpeville, Langa, Worcester, Johannesburg, and Durban. Sharpeville, specifically, led to a loss of investor confidence in South Africa and Verwoerd had to stem capital withdrawal, increased emigration, slumped markets, and an unstable stock market. A state of emergency was declared and only lifted in August 1960. New security legislation “was rushed through parliament” to strengthen the power of the NP government and the police.¹⁷⁷ In 1961 the formation of Umkhonto we Sizwe was initiated by the banning of the ANC and PAC the previous year. Umkhonto aimed to bring about the collapse of public order and ultimately white supremacy. Consequently acts of sabotage continued for the next three years. Black masculinity was threatening white, racist hegemony. The PAC also had its own military wing, Poqo, and conducted acts of sabotage and violence. Poqo hoped to plunge South Africa into chaos. “The country was gripped by fear and alarm.”¹⁷⁸ In 1963 the PAC planned to overthrow the NP government and create an African Socialist state in which only Africans would have a voice. The NP government prevented this and arrested the leaders of Umkhonto in 1963, which resulted in the Rivonia Trial. The authorities also had to deal with black resistance simmering against Bantu education. A programme of industrial decentralisation was implemented to curb the urbanisation of Africans as well as urban removals, and the NP government concentrated on the Bantu Homelands. Hence there was little inclination to seek out white, homosexual men in the early 1960s: the challenge of black masculinity

¹⁷⁴ Du Pisani, ‘Puritanism Transformed’, p 167.

¹⁷⁵ The same trend was evident in the 1970s.

¹⁷⁶ C. Stychin, *A Nation by Rights*, (Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1998), p 57.

¹⁷⁷ Scher, ‘Part 4: 1948-1966’, p 369.

was far greater. After the Rivonia trial ended in 1964 most of the leaders of the African resistance movement were captured and any campaign to overthrow the NP government was squashed. African resistance went underground for a while. “The new draconian legal system achieved the results intended.”¹⁷⁹ The 1960s “banning of resistance organizations, increased police powers of detention and heightened state control over publications, broadcasting and all forms of dissent.”¹⁸⁰ The state had experience in the art of control and the elimination of any threat.

The status quo shifted when white, male homosexuality became more blatant, possibly encouraged by the government’s 1950s and early-1960s appeasement of white homosexuality because it was concentrating on race relations. Connell’s observation that masculinities are created in specific historic circumstances, which can be contested, restructured, and displaced seems appropriate here as well. They are always changing. As gender relations change so men’s lives change but because change works against some groups’ interests controversy and conflict are created.¹⁸¹ This challenged the NP government’s power but it did not want to change.

Once the immediate threat of black resistance was over the NP government could concentrate on maintaining the status quo. It got its chance in 1966 when the SAP reinforced the existence of an ‘other’. Power is realised through social relations.¹⁸² Power is not powerful if it has no impact on society. In order to retain its power the SAP needed something to control, repress, be powerful over something. The NP government would have supported the SAP to maintain its hegemonic masculinity and power because anything that does not conform to the true experience of hegemony is a threat, even though there were greater threats, such as black resistance.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, p 405.

¹⁷⁹ F. Welsh, *A History of Southern Africa*, (Harper Collins Publishers, London, 1998), p 423.

¹⁸⁰ Worden, *The Making of Modern South Africa*, p 113.

¹⁸¹ Connell, *The Men and the Boys*, p 219.

¹⁸² L. Knopp, ‘Sexuality and Urban Space’ in Bell, Valentine, (eds), *Mapping Desire*, p 159.

A Change in the Official Attitudes to and the Treatment of White Homosexual Men from 1966.

According to Stychin all social constructions must be continuously reinforced. A 'nation' naturalises itself and in this way manages people and places.¹⁸³ States cannot define the threat to white masculinity but seek to create a model to locate it.¹⁸⁴ White, gay, middle-class men are often indefinable. Black miners were contained and controlled in compounds but white, gay men were invisible and could infiltrate into white, middle-class suburbia. Homosexual acts had always occurred in South Africa but the reaction of the state was hidden through an essentialist framework that separated supposed situational homosexuality from a gay identity.¹⁸⁵ It became recognisable that white homosexuality was geographically transferable¹⁸⁶ and needed to be contained. It was the police raid of a private party in Forest Town in the northern suburbs of Johannesburg in 1966 that created a definite space for the SAP to exploit and sparked the need for a clamp down on white homosexuality. "'350 in Mass Sex Orgy!' read the *Rand Daily Mail* on Monday 22 January 1966."¹⁸⁷

Mark Gevisser explained that this change in official attitude during the early 1960s could be attributed to the message of sexual freedom and sexuality that permeated popular culture. It was an era of sexual liberation and generational rebellion. This was particularly evident in music and movies.

Before the 60s, homosexuality was something you did, rather than something you WERE. Now the personal was the political, it was an identity, and one you began to wear with pride. Some of this must have filtered through to SA despite censorship, thus both giving gay men more confidence and making law enforcers more jittery. So you could see the clampdown on gay men as something akin to the banning of TV, or the Beatles.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸³ Stychin, *A Nation by Rights*, p 3.

¹⁸⁴ Elder, 'Of Moffies, Kaffirs, and Perverts', p 56.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, p 64.

¹⁸⁶ Young, white, homosexual boys grew to be homosexual men. Also, homosexual, black miners were still homosexual when they went home.

¹⁸⁷ Gevisser, 'A Different Fight For Freedom', p 30.

Gevisser says public policy is usually a response to events. The police found out about the Forest Town party and felt the need to respond. He does not necessarily think the state had previously ignored homosexuality because the authorities felt secure but rather it was more a case of the state not “shining the light on homosexuality because it did not really think about homosexuality much at all before the Forest Town Raid.”¹⁸⁹ Theorists highlight the fact that those in power often create an ‘other’ in order to be powerful over something. Boundaries must be clearly set with no leverage for alternatives. It is important to choose the right other, one the nation can determine as an other, one they do not want protected.¹⁹⁰ Gevisser did not agree that the SAP had created this other, manifested by the Forest Town party: “I often think we ascribe far too much agency to the state and its organs, even with a government as interventionist and intent on control as the NP in the 1960s. I think the government and the SAP exploited an opportunity rather than created a situation.”¹⁹¹ Could this not be the same thing? Once the SAP knew about the party, they did not ignore it or moderately monitor it. They exploited it in order to reinforce their power. Is this, then, not creating something, which they themselves could exploit? The SAP did not stop at raiding the party.

Garmeson feels the SAP’s interest in focusing on homosexuality was initiated by an increased visibility of white homosexuality, which played to the NP government’s concern of public indecency and the protection of minors.¹⁹² He says the 1966 party was the atomic bomb that worked because it was so visible and widely publicised, whereas there had been many other atomic bombs that had fizzled because the police had raided and managed to keep it quiet. Considering the secrecy of homosexuality, prior police raids were confined to fewer people and smaller premises (clubs or bars) as opposed to the Forest Town party which was far more public and concerned greater numbers of white homosexuals. Therefore it had been easier for the police to keep publicity surrounding such raids to a minimum and the extent of the threat of white homosexuality

¹⁸⁸ E-mail from Mark Gevisser, (16 Sept 2003), p 1.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ M. Aarmo, ‘How Homosexuality Became ‘Un-African’: The Case of Zimbabwe’ in E. Blackwood, S. Wieringa, (eds), *Female Desires*, p 267.

¹⁹¹ E-mail from Mark Gevisser, (16 Sept 2003), p 2.

¹⁹² Interview with Joe Garmeson.

to hegemony had not appeared to be that great. Personally, in the 1960s Garmeson had avoided bars that became too popular because they attracted attention.¹⁹³

The party was held at Torwood House where Beyers Malan lived with his lover, Monty Lewis. A friend of theirs, Billy Landau and his French lover, Guy des Roches, visited South Africa and “as was typical of the times, each and every member of the group of friends, tried to outdo one another by organising glamorous dinners, brunches and other entertainment for the visitors.”¹⁹⁴ Lewis suggested organising “the party of parties.”¹⁹⁵ Garmeson agreed it was such a party, although he did not see this as sensible – “the idiots who ran it wanted it to be the biggest and best”¹⁹⁶ – because it would only draw attention to white, homosexual men. Torwood House is huge with extensive grounds and to impress Landau and des Roches, Lewis and Malan thought it would be fun to see how many gay men they could get to attend. So an open party was decided on.¹⁹⁷ Pamphlets with the address, time, and date were printed and distributed at the gay clubs, specifically New Library Bar. The police also went to the New Library Bar to glean information about the gay scene: inevitably they found out about the party. Garmeson says the biggest problem with the party was that there were numerous underage boys there. This, he says, was the SAP’s greatest worry.¹⁹⁸

Garmeson went to the party and said it was a very glamorous affair, but it was also very uncontrolled because it was too publicised.¹⁹⁹ Lewis and Malan

began to hear, via the grapevine, that the party was being seen as the social event of the decade. All the drag queens were going to be there ... there were even rumours that a Cabinet Minister’s son (possibly Vorster’s) was gay and that he would, as well, be attending the party.²⁰⁰

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ E-mail from B. Malan, ‘PhD at RAU: Questions on 1966 Forest Town Party’, (26 Aug. 2002).

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Interview with Garmeson.

¹⁹⁷ E-mail from Malan.

¹⁹⁸ Interview with Garmeson.

¹⁹⁹ Gevisser, ‘A Different Fight For Freedom’, p 30 and interview with Joe Garmeson.

²⁰⁰ E-mail from Malan. The State Archives Police Records contains a letter from the leader of the Gay Commando stating Vorster’s sons were homosexual, (letter from Gay Commando to Prime Minister

The rooms in the house were locked and the party was held on the verandah and in the gardens. Malan says it was a great success, the house and garden were packed with people; he had not realised there were so many white, gay men in Johannesburg.²⁰¹

According to Malan, late in the evening a good-looking man asked Landau for a drink and he was offered some punch. He insisted on paying for the drink, which Landau refused because it was a bottle party: each man at the party had brought his own bottle of alcohol labelled with his name.²⁰² The man insisted again and Landau jokingly accepted 50c for the drink. At the same time Malan went into the hall and ran into a group of civilian-dressed policemen, who looked like “rough trade,”²⁰³ trying to open the locked doors. “One guy was actually trying to break a door down while saying to his mates: ‘Die moffies naai seker hier binne’.”²⁰⁴ Malan told them that were not the case because the doors were locked and if they wanted access they should ask him for the key. Malan was consequently arrested on the grounds of being the key holder. “I was immediately taken outside and put into a vehicle ... I overheard several men talking: ... ‘Het jy gesien hoe soen die moffies mekaar? Hulle vat aan mekaar se gatte! Hulle behoort almal vreggemaak te word’.”²⁰⁵

A while later other men and two boys in drag were put into the police vehicle and taken to Marshall Square where they waited “for what seemed like hours.”²⁰⁶ An official then told them they could leave; no reason was given. Lewis and Landau, however, had been arrested because they were selling liquor illegally. The manager of the New Library Hotel provided the money for their bail and legal representation.

Botha, 28 Jan. 1981, C8/111/10, ‘Homoseksualisme, Police Records, vol. 2, State Archives).

²⁰¹ E-mail from Malan.

²⁰² Interview with Garmeson.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ E-mail from Malan. Translation: “The moffies are fucking in here.”

²⁰⁵ Ibid. Translation: “Did you see how the moffies were kissing? They are grabbing each other’s arses. They should all be killed.”

²⁰⁶ E-mail from Malan.

The 1966 raid was the largest, most organised, and most publicised the police had ever attempted²⁰⁷ in comparison to their previous raids on white, homosexual clubs and bars. The Forest Town party resulted in extensive radio and press coverage and even attracted headlines around the world, in India, Italy, Britain, and Europe.²⁰⁸ According to the police “there was a party in progress, the likes of which had seldom been witnessed in the Republic,” attended by three hundred men who were all obviously homosexual.²⁰⁹ The men paired off and continued their sexual acts in the garden and in motorcars in the streets, “engaging in the most indecent acts imaginable with one another.”²¹⁰ Malan says he presumes

that men had sex in the garden, possibly even in the cars although I doubt that it was as visible as the Major claimed ... it could not have been really ‘public’. The entire garden was walled and fenced with creepers growing all over. Large trees and shrubs in the garden afforded lots of fairly private areas – public in my mind would have been outside the property in the street and in cars, of which I saw nothing.²¹¹

Garmeson did see such sexual behaviour though. He also confirmed that there was much sex in the garden. In fact just after 11pm he was escorted to the garden where he and his partner could find no privacy or space and standing under a pillar they “entertained each other.”²¹²

Major F.A.J. van Zyl, Commissioner of the SAP, said, “the scene which took place on the evening described was such that it filled even hardened members of the Criminal Investigation Department (C.I.D.) with disgust and revulsion.”²¹³ According to Major van Zyl liquor was consumed in large quantities and males were dancing with males, “kissing

²⁰⁷ Gevisser, ‘A Different Fight For Freedom’, p 30.

²⁰⁸ E-mail from Malan.

²⁰⁹ Testimony by Major F.A.J. van Zyl in Evidence to the Select Committee for Amendment Bill to Immorality Act, 1968, (24 April 1968, AM 2656, GALA), p 11.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ E-mail from Malan.

²¹² Interview with Garmeson. Garmeson did admit this was very out of character for him, such parties were not his thing and he found them boring. Garmeson left about ten minutes before the police unmasked themselves.

²¹³ Testimony by van Zyl, p 11.

and cuddling each other in the most vulgar fashion imaginable.”²¹⁴ There were also cross-dressers at the party, five of whom were charged with masquerading. These young men were arrested because they could not produce their male clothing so they were breaking the law.²¹⁵ Two men were arrested for gross indecency.²¹⁶ But nobody could be arrested for homosexual acts because it was a private party. The 1957 Immorality Act only criminalised public homosexual acts.

Further information regarding homosexuality was coming to the C.I.D. as a result of raids on private residences in Pretoria and Johannesburg and white, homosexual clubs in Johannesburg and Durban.²¹⁷ The police also found white, homosexual acts occurring in schools, universities, cultural bodies, the broadcasting industry; specifically radio, and in the police and defence forces.²¹⁸ “It can, in fact, be stated unequivocally that this deviation is not limited to a certain group or category; it is a phenomenon which appears in our society as a non-respector (sic) of persons.”²¹⁹ White, homosexual men were being arrested but prosecutions were rare.²²⁰

On 1 February 1966 Brigadier Gideon J. Joubert, C.I.D. Chief, addressed a circular to all police divisions from Pretoria, who had led the Vice and Liquor Squad Police in the raid at Forest Town.²²¹ According Brigadier Joubert his memo aimed to draw the police divisions’ attention to the issue of white homosexuality in South Africa. The SAP was to

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Interview with Garmeson.

²¹⁶ Beyers says to his knowledge only Billy and Monty were charged, no other charges were laid against anyone else at the party.

²¹⁷ Van Zyl even headed a raid on a Durban club. 4 men and a woman were arrested on charges, under the Liquor Act. (‘Police Raid Durban Club’, The Pretoria News, 9 Feb. 1966, K279 278/4/66, Police Records, State Archives).

²¹⁸ Memo from Maj. van Zyl to the Sekrataris van die Volksraad, ‘Ontugwysigingswetontwerp’, (3 June 1968, C8/111/10, Police Records, vol 2.), p 2.

²¹⁹ Memo from the South African Police, Pretoria, to the Secretary of the House of Assembly, Cape Town. Re: Immorality Amendment Act, (13 March 1968, AM 2656, GALA), B240.

²²⁰ Testimony by van Zyl, p 12. Police Statistics prove this: not a single white, homosexual man was prosecuted for indecent acts between June 1964 and July 1967. (‘Statistiek Oor (A) Sodomie en (B) Onnatuurlike Geslagtelike Misdrywe’).

²²¹ Circular from G.J. Joubert to Police Commissioners of South Africa, ‘Homoseksualiteit en Onsedelikheid’, (Feb. 1966, K54/66, C8/111/10, ‘Homoseksualiste’, Police Records, vol. 1, State Archives).

trace and smash organised gatherings.²²² The circular told the police divisions that the SAP should be on the look out for white, homosexual parties, characterised by the large numbers of cars parked outside the residences. Because the party venues constantly changed the SAP was advised that police action was necessary on the same night the party was discovered so as not to miss an opportunity of prosecution. The circular advocated “planned surveillance” and “careful patrolling.”²²³ The police were advised to “do everything possible to take the necessary action to eradicate this type of behaviour which influences the morals of the youth as well as the whole populace.”²²⁴

On 10 February 1966 the Commissioner of the South African Police, J.M. Keevy, brought the seriousness of the matter to the attention of the Minister of Justice, B. J. Vorster, providing photographs from the Forest Town party.²²⁵ Commissioner Keevy said it was not difficult to arrest white, homosexual men, it was prosecution that was the problem because the law did not support police action. “Despite police observation during the aforementioned incident, it is apparent that stringent measures cannot be taken against homosexuals in terms of existing legislation.”²²⁶ Commissioner Keevy made it very clear that the SAP was doing all it could to protect South African citizens from homosexuality but the 1957 Immorality Act was inadequate and restricted them.²²⁷ Keevy recommended Vorster amend the 1957 Immorality Act in order to untie the hands of the police and the courts.²²⁸

The SAP proposed the following amendments to the Immorality Act:

Sexual Offences between males 15 bis.

(1) Any male person who –

- (a) commits or attempts to commit any immoral, indecent or unnatural act with any other male; or

²²² Express Reporter, ‘Police Drive Against Vice ‘Clubs’’, Sunday Express, (30 January 1966), (GALA).

²²³ Annexure A in Testimony by van Zyl, p 17.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*

²²⁵ Letter from J. Keevy to B. Vorster, ‘Bedrywighede van Homoseksualiteit’, (10 Feb. 1966), (C8/111/10, Police Records).

²²⁶ Annexure B in Testimony by van Zyl, p 18.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*

- (b) allows any male person to commit or attempt to commit any immoral, indecent or unnatural act with him; or
- (c) entices, solicits or importunes any male person to the commission of any immoral, indecent or unnatural act with him or any other male person shall be guilty of an offence.

(2) If in any prosecution under paragraph (2) of sub-section (1) it is proved that the accused person committed with any other male person any act which is likely to stimulate or gratify sexually, such accused person shall be deemed to have committed an immoral, indecent or unnatural act, unless the contrary is proved.²²⁹

The proposed amendments therefore suggested the punishment of all homosexual acts, not just those in public. A new sub-section regarding punishment was also recommended. It allowed for imprisonment including compulsory labour of three years, with or without a fine, the maximum of which would be £300.²³⁰ Therefore prior to the Select Committee the SAP and the Department of Justice were already working towards increasing their powers over the policing of sexual morality in South Africa, or in reality securing their power and maintaining hegemonic masculinity.

Keevy wanted a modified interpretation of the law to include both public and private homosexual acts. White, bourgeois, heterosexual, masculinist culture was declining therefore to ensure future dominance conformity was necessary.²³¹ Consequently, using the ‘decline of civilisations’ argument later put before the Select Committee,²³² “the Minister ordered that the laws should be amended as drastically as possible to cope with the problem.”²³³ This later resulted in the Select Committee.

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Annexure D – ‘Proposed Amendments to the Immorality Act, 1957 (Act No. 23 of 1957)’ in Evidence Submitted to the Select Committee for the Amendment Bill to the Immorality Act, (24 April 1968, AM 2656, GALA), p22 and K279 218/4/66, Police Records, State Archives.

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ Mariani, ‘Law-and-Order Science’, p 153.

²³² ‘Die geskiedenis bewys duidelik dat volke al ten gronde gegaan het as gevolg van homoseksualiteit. Die wette moet dus vir volgende sessie so drasties moontlik opgeknop word’. (Letter from Keevy to Vorster, ‘Bedrywighede van Homoseksualiteit’). See Chapter 2.

²³³ Testimony by van Zyl, p 11 and Memo from van Zyl to the Sekretaris van die Volksraad, ‘Ontugwysigingswetontwerp’, (3 June 1968), (C8/111/10, Police Records, vol. 2), p 2.

As a result Staff Officer of the C.I.D. at the Police Head Office in Pretoria, Colonel J.J.P. van der Bergh, District C.I. Officer, conducted an investigation into homosexuality in 1967. As with most investigations into white homosexuality just after the Forest Town party, it was likely that this was instigated by the Forest Town party. Col. Van der Bergh was also in charge of policing in Pretoria, a conservative, Afrikaans, NP-supported area where the ‘clean up’ had occurred in 1957. Hence his investigation into homosexuality is not altogether surprising and not wholly unbiased. The findings of the investigation were put in a memorandum: ‘General Notes Regarding the Phenomenon of Homosexuality in the Republic’. In the memorandum Col. van der Bergh cited that homosexuality was entrenched in South Africa, practised by people of all classes and it was increasing, especially in the cities. He said the police were called the ‘shits’ and uniformed police were called ‘morons’ in gay jargon. Col. van der Bergh called homosexuality ‘the cult’. He concluded: “I am of the honest opinion that our present legislation is quite inadequate to cope with this very real problem.”²³⁴

Because so much white, homosexual activity was assumed in South Africa and elements in the SAP wanted the Immorality Act amended “all police divisions in the country were ordered to conduct enquiries, particularly on a scientific basis and (to suggest) ways and means of curbing the evil.”²³⁵ This was done for “administrative purposes,”²³⁶ although it is not clear what this was. Possibly this information would justify the call for an amendment to the Immorality Act. Through these police enquiries it was noted that homosexuality was really only a ‘problem’ in the cities. Police divisions in the platteland and sparsely populated areas apparently saw few occurrences of homosexuality.²³⁷

Investigations by the eleven Commissioners of Police and the District C.I.D. Officer in Hillbrow tried to gauge the extent of white homosexuality in South Africa. I think that because all the commissioners commented on the occurrence of homosexuality in their

²³⁴ Annexure C in Testimony by van Zyl, p 21.

²³⁵ Testimony by van Zyl, p 12. See chapter 2.

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ Evidence to the Select Committee for Amendment Bill of the Immorality Act, (24 April 1968, AM

regions and they had all come up against it at some or other time, this was accumulative opinion that the extent of homosexuality was great. The investigations showed the different opinions and understandings of the extent of white homosexuality. Various Commissioners made widely differing comments.²³⁸ Some were aggressively homophobic,²³⁹ some complacent,²⁴⁰ and some felt that homosexuality was a mental disease to be cured by psychiatry.²⁴¹ In 1967 there was no consistency in the SAP perception of homosexuality. Individual SAP views ranged from the necessity of gaol to psychiatric help and from an emphasis on punishment to a concentration on rehabilitation. There were many ifs and buts regarding the conclusions to the officers' investigations – *if* homosexual men kept their attention on adults there would be no need for an amendment, *but* this was not happening.²⁴² Homosexual men should go to gaol *but* go for psychiatric treatment first.²⁴³ *If* homosexuality is rebellion by young boys it is not a threat.²⁴⁴ Homosexual men damage the social structure *but* cannot be held responsible.²⁴⁵ Homosexual men should not be gaoled *if* they are not sodomites.²⁴⁶ Homosexual men are born gay *but* they can also be indoctrinated and become gay.²⁴⁷ I think it cannot be disputed that there was little SAP consensus on white, homosexual issues.

Connell's important observation that the definition of what society deems masculine is seen in the lives of individuals but also defined collectively in culture and supported by institutions²⁴⁸ applies here as well. Keevy, as representative of the SAP as an institution, brought the 'problem' of white homosexuality to the attention of Parliament in 1967

2656, GALA), (24 April 1968), p 12.

²³⁸ See Memo from van Zyl to the Sekretaris van die Volksraad, 'Ontugwysigingswetontwerp', p 4-7.

²³⁹ The Commissioners of Natal, the Northern Orange Free State, and the Witwatersrand. Evidence Submitted to the Select Committee, (24 April 1968).

²⁴⁰ The Commissioner of the Eastern Transvaal and the District Officer of Hillbrow. Evidence Submitted to the Select Committee, (24 April 1968).

²⁴¹ The Commissioners of the East Rand, Port Natal, the Northern Transvaal, the South Western Districts, the Northern Cape, and Border. Evidence Submitted to the Select Committee, (24 April 1968).

²⁴² Testimony by van Zyl, p 12.

²⁴³ *Ibid*, p 14.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p 13.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid*.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p 14.

²⁴⁷ Annexure E in Testimony by van Zyl, p 24.

²⁴⁸ Connell, The Men and the Boys, p 11.

because it had to be curbed. Relying on the existence of white homosexuality in each region in the country, and using this to show the accumulative extent of it, his perception was that it was out of control and this he relayed to Parliament. He represented the SAP as being more concerned about power than white homosexuality. Supposedly this curbing of homosexuality re-enforced the norm of heterosexuality, which was in line with particular patriarchal, white, masculine ideologies. Such ideologies contributed to hegemony in the country. If hegemony was challenged it was threatened even though this was not a physical threat. White homosexuality was a threat in that it did not reinforce the experience of hegemony. Therefore it had to be controlled.

Some members of the SAP also considered the possibility of a conspiracy; white, homosexual men were planning to take over South Africa, intent on overthrowing the moral order of apartheid. Therefore the state needed to contain and control the assault.²⁴⁹ For some in the SAP a conspiracy theory explained why there were more and more white, homosexual men and also explained why white homosexuality was conducted in secrecy. I think such 'queer' conspiracy theory is valid because

any action taken by any group for any purpose whatsoever – as long as it was contrary to Government policy – would have been seized upon in some way or other and made part of the general ... conspiracy to destroy the Afrikaner government. The publicity generated by the (Forest Town) party gave the Government an ideal opportunity to manufacture another 'volksgevaar'.²⁵⁰

The NP government had a history of utilising apparent conspiracies to boost its image. In 1956 “in a dramatic manner clearly intended to create the impression that a dangerous conspiracy had been uncovered, the government arrested 156 leaders of the African National Congress and its allied movements and charged them with high treason.”²⁵¹ Oswald Pirow, lawyer for the state, told the court that there was a dangerous communist conspiracy to overthrow the state. Gevisser says this conspiracy-rhetoric was typical of

²⁴⁹ Elder, 'Of Moffies, Kaffirs, and Perverts', p 63.

²⁵⁰ E-mail from Malan.

²⁵¹ Scher, 'Part 4: 1948-1966', p 383.

the latter 1960s.²⁵² It was through conspiracy theories that the NP government consolidated its rule, including its control over sexuality. When a nation's existence is threatened the danger is sexualised. This allows for the creation of a same-sex sexuality alien/other conspiracy, which is considered a threat to 'civilisation'. This is examined in terms of maleness and the othering of male same-sex sexual practices.²⁵³ Conspiracies had to be eliminated if Afrikanerdom was to prosper and continue its conservative, Christian tradition.

Realistically one could not conceive that white, homosexual men would or wanted to overthrow the NP government. But elements within the SAP could use such conspiracy to create a real (or imaginary) threat, which would be tangible, representing the challenges white homosexuality posed to hegemony and therefore white power as it existed at this time.

Thus the 1966 Forest Town raid had sparked off a definite change of attitude towards South Africa's white, homosexual men. Gevisser, however, says that this change of attitude remains a mystery because homosexual life had been no more public in the 1960s than it had been in the 1950s.²⁵⁴ However, the NP government's concentration of African resistance, the subsequent increased visibility of white homosexuality, and the heightened sexual liberation ethos in the 1960s would have all contributed to this more public face of white homosexuality, initiating a change in attitude. Gevisser also argues that the SAP was no more interested in white, homosexual activity in the early 1960s, prior to the Forest Town raid, than it had been in the 1950s.²⁵⁵ I found Gevisser's assertion to be supported by some archival material. Club Charade, a gay and lesbian club, was founded in the 1960s. "Before the club was founded the police were consulted – and were guests at the opening ... the police are our welcomed guests at any time ... I have received only courtesy, co-operation and protection and guidance from the police."²⁵⁶ However, South African author, Glen Retief, hints at an explanation to this SAP change in attitude. He

²⁵² Gevisser, 'A Different Fight For Freedom', p 31.

²⁵³ Stychin, *A Nation by Rights*, p 9.

²⁵⁴ Gevisser, 'A Different Fight For Freedom', p 30.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

says that Prime Minister Verwoerd was clamping down on liberation movements and had formalised apartheid. The authorities were consolidating their Christian, National control over South Africa. Even Gevisser says in order to do this anything that was not Christian and threatened white civilisation had to be eliminated.²⁵⁷ According to Gevisser, the fact that the Forest Town house was raided lends credence to Retief's assumption.²⁵⁸

Gevisser and Retief's arguments are valid but I think they ignore the rhetoric of the hegemonic masculinity that insists that the white, heterosexual masculinity remains just that: hegemonic. This might have been the driving force behind the SAP's reactions. The hegemonic masculinity is the articulation of the social structure, discourse, and bodily activity. If a masculinity is hegemonic it is culturally exalted and this stabilises the whole gender order that has so carefully been constructed.²⁵⁹ The hegemonic masculinity contributed to the NP's defined hegemony that is the real experience of the country. If this was threatened, the NP's power was threatened. The SAP, as a state institution and the tool that reinforced hegemony, would have worked towards maintaining the state's power.

I think another reason for the official change in the treatment of white, homosexual men was that African resistance had gone underground and the NP government could concentrate on other threats. Therefore the change of attitude of the NP government was not really the mystery Gevisser proposed. The publicity around white, sexual encounters may not have changed, but the political agenda of the NP government had – not because white, homosexual men had become more visible but because African resistance had gone underground and the NP government and SAP could focus their attention elsewhere. One of these focus areas was to reinforce cultural identity and power. If a government's hegemony is to remain intact it has to change as challenges appear.²⁶⁰ This is what the NP government was doing.

²⁵⁶ J. Goodwin, editorial in Club Charade, (no date), (C8/111/10, Police Records, vol. 2).

²⁵⁷ Gevisser, 'A Different Fight For Freedom', p 30.

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

²⁵⁹ Connell, The Men and the Boys, p 84.

A further possible explanation for the NP government's change in policy towards white, homosexual men is Verwoerd's insistence on control. "It was really only with Verwoerd in the 1960s that the notion of total social control became part of the apartheid project; that Christian Nationalism really started to be implemented. Before then, the project of social control was much more tentative."²⁶¹ Verwoerd was intolerant of the consequences of urbanisation and disliked liberalism. South Africa's public opinion was beginning to change because of urbanisation and religion was becoming secular as well as voluntary. An increase in urbanisation led to increased tolerance and expression of homosexuality because the Church reached fewer people.

Another reason for the NP government's clampdown on white homosexuality was that Forest Town was in an affluent English-speaking suburb. Also, in the 1960s, Afrikaner culture and religious organisation had been advocating that wealthy English-speaking men were corrupting the Afrikaner youth. White homosexuality was a corrupting influence on a pure, racial group.²⁶² The rent boys' clients were predominantly wealthy, English-speaking men. This translated into a round up of English-speaking, gay men and a return to Christian morality of Afrikaner youths in order to create a united body of support for NP government policies.

A fifth possibility for the NP government's newfound interest in homosexuality was Britain's 1967 Sexual Offences Act, which decriminalised homosexuality. Britain's Wolfenden Report on the merits of decriminalising homosexuality was a cause for concern.²⁶³ The NP government watched such liberalism overseas and did not want the same thing happening in South Africa. Ironically, Member for Chelmsford, Mr N. St John-Stevas, when addressing the House of Commons in England, said: "nobody would dream of enacting a law penalizing homosexuality today. If we did not have it already no

²⁶⁰ Williams, *Problems in Materialism and Culture*, p 38. See introduction for discussion on hegemony.

²⁶¹ E-mail from Mark Gevisser, (16 Sept 2003), p 1.

²⁶² Stychin, *A Nation by Rights*, p 70.

²⁶³ 'Homosexuality is a Threat to the Country, Probe Team is Told,' *Rand Daily Mail*, (4 Sept. 1968), (C8/111/10, Police Records, vol. 2, State Archives).

one would support it. The disadvantages and the inequity are too apparent.”²⁶⁴ The NP government thought otherwise as it called for a select committee.

Parliament was prepared to listen to the new Minister of Justice, P.C. Pelser and his call for a select committee in the 1968 parliamentary sitting. When Pelser addressed the House of Assembly he referred to the Bible to justify his argument. He said the city of Sodom had been destroyed because of homosexual men so homosexuality must be eliminated in South Africa, lest it destroy this country too. He continued that the city of Sodom was ruined due to the toleration of homosexuality and the same could happen to South Africa if something was not done about it.²⁶⁵ In addition Pelser said history had warned people of this viper and history proved it was not innocent fun. White, homosexual men could not be allowed to destroy the moral fibre of South Africa. I believe Pelser felt strongly about what he said to Parliament but there was a toning down in his attitude once the Select Committee was approved. In an editorial of Club Charade it was stated: “our Minister of Justice has said, he wishes to deal with this matter firmly, but with understanding.”²⁶⁶ Also, when the secretary of the club requested to appear before the Select Committee he pointed out to the Minister of Justice that white, homosexual men were nervous of appearing before the committee for fear of being “branded and listed.”²⁶⁷ The Minister of Justice assured him “your society need not have the slightest fear of being ‘branded or listed’ as you call it.”²⁶⁸

No parliamentarian challenged Pelser and his notion of the potential collapse of white South Africa due to unchecked white homosexuality. Both the United Party (UP) and the NP MPs debated how to contain this white homosexuality. Retief points out that the liberal voices of the UP, those whom one would expect to remind parliament that anti-gay legislation was an infringement of fundamental human rights, “were either silent, or

²⁶⁴ Hansard: Commons vol. 724, col. 844, (GALA), D112.

²⁶⁵ From the House of Assembly Debates, cols 1405-6 in Retief, ‘Keeping Sodom out of the Laager’, p 99.

²⁶⁶ Club Charade editorial, (March 1968), (C8/111/10, Police Records, vol. 2, State Archives).

²⁶⁷ Letter to Mr J. Goodwin from Secretary of Minister of Justice, ‘Re: Homosexuals: Select Committee’, (29 Feb. 1968, C8/111/10, Police Records, vol. 2).

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

simply missing.”²⁶⁹ But Antony Manion of GALA reminds us that liberals in 1968 in the South African Parliament did not want homosexuality decriminalised either.²⁷⁰ Liberalism, in the 1960s context, was strictly defined in racial terms. The UP was liberal because it did not support the NP’s racial policies not because it was liberal per se. Previously the UP had challenged the NP’s Group Areas Act, the pass laws, university segregation, and the validity of the NP’s Separate Representation of Voters Act. Earlier, legal proceedings had been instituted by the UP challenging the 1955 Senate Act and the 1956 South Africa Amendment Act. The UP might have been liberal regarding race, but concerning white sexuality it was as conservative as the NP. Both political parties subscribed to similar ideas about masculinities.

Pelser’s proposals to Parliament were harsh enough for the NP government to ask him to refer the matter to a Parliamentary Select Committee. Vorster, who already had vested interest in homosexuality from his term as Minister of Justice in 1966, had a policy of referring any controversial bills to select committees. For example in 1966 when Verwoerd had legislation drafted to prohibit the improper interference of one population group in the politics of another, he was trying to remove coloureds from white politics. The Bill was to be introduced to Parliament in the latter part of 1966, but Verwoerd was assassinated before this occurred. Vorster then decided to carry through his predecessor’s Bill but “because the Bill was so controversial, he thought it advisable first to refer it to a select committee.”²⁷¹ In doing this Vorster created more exposure for the compulsory entrenchment of hegemonic masculinity. Continuing this trend a Select Committee consisting of parliamentarians was also established to consider homosexuality in South Africa more thoroughly.

Conclusion.

White South Africa has a history of homophobic legislation for men dating back to colonial times. Such legislation outlawed sodomy and public homosexual behaviour not necessarily the homosexual lifestyle. The NP government’s need for social reproduction

²⁶⁹ Retief, ‘Keeping Sodom out of the Laager’, p 102.

²⁷⁰ Interview with Antony Manion of GALA, (28 August 2000, Johannesburg, 3:00pm).

through the entrenchment of patriarchy, conservatism, Christian morals, power, identity, masculinity, and the moral solidarity of the nation dictated that homosexuality be criminalised. This reproduction of power inequalities is what patriarchal authority relies on.²⁷² Although patriarchy is constantly reforming masculinity the latter remains powerful because it is versatile. Masculinities shift in a social climate therefore they are not based on tradition and are a constant threat to the hegemonic masculinity.

“It is now believed that sexuality is thoroughly defined by culture, that is: by people’s symbolic structuring of desire.”²⁷³ The NP government had to prevent white, homosexual men from structuring desire and attaining such comfort. Considering South African politics, however, prior to 1966 the NP government was preoccupied with race relations and curbing African defiance was the priority, not white homosexuality. Consequently white, homosexual men became more visible which in turn drew the authorities’ attention to white homosexuality and the need to control it.

Two main occurrences brought the focus onto white homosexuality, the arrest of white, homosexual men soliciting in Durban in 1956 and a white, homosexual party in Forest Town, Johannesburg, in 1966. The 1956 arrests possibly initiated the 1957 Immorality Act, which continued to criminalise the public displays of homosexuality but also limited the powers of the police because private homosex was not criminal. The 1966 party caused the SAP to demand stricter legislation from the Minister of Justice. This resulted in the setting up of a Select Committee that was supposed to investigate proposals for the Immorality Amendment Act. The NP government’s response to a crisis of the definition of masculinity was the fear of losing what it already had.²⁷⁴

²⁷¹ Scher, ‘Part 4: 1948-1966’, p 437.

²⁷² Connell, Gender and Power, p 160.

²⁷³ Bleys, The Geography of Perversion, p 6.

²⁷⁴ Connell, Gender and Power, p 265.