DECOLONISING GENDER IN EDUCATION: CONTEXTUALISING GENDER IN THE GRADE 7 LIFE ORIENTATION TEXTBOOKS

by

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DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY

I declare that this mini-dissertation is my own original work. Where secondary material is used, this has been carefully acknowledged and referenced in accordance with university requirements.

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Abstract

The increasing visibility of gender based violence in South Africa is one indicator of the insidious gender inequalities rampant in the country. We are socialised to internalise and reproduce unequal gendered power relations required to maintain a heteronormative patriarchal society. Taking cognisance of education as a tool for socialisation, this study aimed to engage critically with the discourse and representation of gender within seven textbooks for the subject Life Orientation for grade 7. The study made use of feminist critical discourse analysis, critical pedagogy, Black feminist theory as well as decolonial theory to provide a thorough interrogation of the discourse of gender in the textbooks. The broad aim of this study was to contextualise gender in the Life Orientation textbooks for grade 7 by interrogating how the discourse on gender in the textbooks potentially socialises learners to act in complicity or to subvert a heteronormative patriarchal social order.

This study revealed that the textbooks in question employ a variety of mechanisms to maintain a heteronormative patriarchal worldview, and each publication upheld these discourses to varying degrees. Some of the discourses used to sustain this perspective included the stereotypical gendered representations of boys and girls, queer invisibility, male autonomy versus a lack of female autonomy, failure to problematize rape culture and consistently portraying girls as the victims of male predators. This study further found that there was a significant lack of opportunities provided in the texts for critical interrogation of hegemonic discourses, as many of these discourses were presented as self-evident.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1   INTRODUCTION

The South African Constitution's (1996) promise of equality precipitated a commitment to pursue gender equality in education in South Africa. In 1996, the Department of Education (DoE) thus assembled the Gender Equity Task Team (GETT) with the purpose of launching an operation concerned with meaningfully addressing gender inequality within the education system (Wolpe, Quinlan & Martinez 1997:21). Chisholm (2012) argues that the legacies of apartheid education were immense. This included widespread inequality, encompassing persistent institutionalized racism and sexism (Chisholm 2012:102). The school curricula inherited from the apartheid government have undergone four transitions since 1994. The first overhaul was widely criticized as a symbolic and superficial political process which 'constrained syllabus revision' (Jansen 1999:58) by cleansing the curriculum of political incorrectness. This focussed primarily on removing racist and sexist elements immediately after South Africa's first democratic election. Thereafter, there was the introduction of outcomes-based education in *Curriculum 2005 (C2005)* which emphasised anti-discrimination, inclusivity and the development of critical thinking (Chisholm 2003). Following the revision of C2005 the *Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9 (RNCS)* and *National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12* were introduced which strengthened 'rights-based elements of the curriculum' (Chisholm 2003). Most recently, the revision of these to a comprehensive *National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12 (NCS)* which contains *Curriculum Assessment Policy and Statements (CAPS)* for each school subject (Simmonds 2013). I agree with Chisholm's (2012) assertion that:

> it is necessary to situate educational development within
> broader economic and political processes and to see educational
> change as part of complex social reality, a long-range process of
> change and continuity, contest and contradiction.

While equality is enshrined in the South African Constitution, gender inequality remains an insidious problem in South Africa. The constitution articulates that:

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

One visible manifestation of gender inequality is high levels of gender-based violence (Garcia-Moreno, Heise, Jansen, Ellsberg & Watts 2005). High levels of gender-based violence in South Africa include high rape statistics and incidence of domestic violence; physical and sexual violence experienced by the LGBTQIA+ individuals; street harassment; as well as unsafe school (Prinsloo 2006) and work environments.

While Jewkes & Abrahams (2002) reported that rape statistics are elusive (due to non-reporting, under reporting and the impediment of defining and understanding what constitutes rape and sexual assault), the South African Police Service (SAPS) data shows 39 828 rapes for 2016/2017. This amounts to over 100 rapes daily. SAPS statistics do show a declining trend from 2008/2009 to 2016/2017 to the tune of 4 percent; however, the most recent SAPS crime report shows that there has been an 8.2% increase in rapes. This brings figures to 40 035 rapes for 2017/2018. Furthermore, although Nel & Judge (2008:24) note that the invisibility of transgender and intersex experiences of gender-based violence persists, they also report a 'disconcertingly high prevalence of homophobic violence' (2008:19). Additionally, they (2008:19) assert that this is due to higher levels of 'outness', integration into lesbian and gay communities and challenging patriarchal gender roles. I think that it is evident that the contestation of public spaces by marginalised identities in South Africa is steering public discourses and narratives in a direction that can result in meaningful change. While increased visibility and assertion of marginalised voices seems to provoke patriarchal reassertions, resistances to the established hegemonic order grows stronger. Gender-based violence is no longer a taboo topic in South Africa, nor is it a normalised transgression that gets swept under the rug. Everybody knows its name, and many are calling it out. Patriarchal reassertions of masculinities and sexualities that result in higher incidence of violence amongst marginalised identities persist as they are sewn into the fabric of society, however, resistance too persists.

Hooks (2000:40), who writes from the United States, argues that within traditional family structures, individuals learn to accept sexist oppression as 'natural' and are primed to support other forms of oppression, including heterosexist domination. The patriarchal family structure is thus the blueprint upon which society learns to accept male domination and the unequal status of women. This teaches boys aggressive masculine behaviour which can work to the detriment of girls and boys but is dismissed as normative and expected; while it models a subservient role for girls, one that is non-threatening and obedient. Hooks (2000:43) asserts that sexism is perpetuated by institutional and social structures; by the individuals who dominate, exploit, or oppress; and by the victims themselves who are socialized to behave in ways that make them act in complicity with the status quo.

It is precisely this socialisation to act in complicity with the status quo, and the subsequent indifference to violent domination and exploitation – particularly by actors who are first victims of such domination and then become victimisers – that has aroused Maria Lugones' (2008) investigation into the coloniality of gender. Lugones (2008) believes that it is our allegiance to what she calls the 'colonial/modern gender system' that maintains the oppression of marginalised identities. She thus calls for a decolonisation of gender, that we may extricate ourselves simultaneously from multiple oppressions.

Following hooks and Lugones, I believe that schools are one of the first points of contact and engagement with the outside world for children, where models of behaviour learned inside the household will be enacted. This can thus serve as a crucial point for intervention in the socialization of children to subvert traditional gender dichotomies and sexist patterns of behaviour. Additionally, considering the state of gender relations in South Africa, I assert that intervention via education is imperative.

1.1.1   Problem statement

This research dissertation will focus on the contextualization of gender, as well as the interrogation of how the discourse on gender in the Life Orientation textbooks potentially socialises learners to act in complicity or to subvert a heteronormative patriarchal social order. The textbooks to be analysed include seven books from six publishers approved by the Department of Education (DoE) for the public school Life Orientation curriculum for grade 7.

There is a vast body of research concerned with gender in education, including gender equality, but much of this is focussed on parity in education. These quantitative outputs focus on gender-disaggregated indices of performance in school, school enrolment, and test scores and so on, and were in compliance with Millennium Development Goal 3 to 'eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education by 2015'. While this information is necessary and important, and the representation of women within education is instrumental in empowerment, achieving parity may lead to the illusion that gender equality has been achieved.

Subsequent to the MDGs, other bodies of research – that are qualitatively concerned with gender in education – continue to emerge. For example, research involving the curricular constructions of male and female subjectivities and identities (Smith 2000; Hughes 2001), as well as sexuality in education (Francis 2011; Francis 2012; Francis 2013). Most applicably, Simmonds (2013) explored the curriculum implications for gender equity in human rights education. Additionally, there has been substantial research done on gender and textbooks in the South African context, and about Life Orientation specifically.

Textbook research in South Africa comprises Carolyn McKinney's (2005) critical analysis of learning materials in South African schools and includes an analysis of a range of diversity issues, inclusive of gender, race and class. Chiponda and Wasserman (2011) focussed on women in history textbooks. Maistry and Pillay (2014) further studied gender representation in Business Studies textbooks. Existing research on Life Orientation encompasses the implementation of Life Orientation (Prinsloo 2007; Rooth 2005), the perspectives of teachers (Van deVenter 2009) and learners (Jacobs 2011) on Life Orientation, as well as Life Orientation as a function of human rights education (Simmonds 2013). Wilmot and Naidoo's (2017) study of entrenching heterosexuality through language in Life Orientation textbooks, is also applicable to this body of work. There is, however, a gap in education research for feminist interrogations and research which focuses on the relationship between curriculum content and gender equality.

Furthermore, an exploration of gender in relation to the Life Orientation learning materials is timely given that the department of education is currently working on a study to evaluate learning and teaching materials for discriminatory content. The purpose of the task team established by the Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga, is to ascertain whether the

text and illustrations used by authors and publishers in textbooks are inclusive and sensitive (2017 Media Statement).

More than achieving parity in education, and a commitment to include gender education within human rights education in the curriculum, I assert that it is necessary to contextualize gender in the curriculum within wider historical, political and social structures. My idea of contextualization as it regards gender in the textbooks is concerned with how gender is conceptualized in the textbooks and the settings within which gender is framed. Additionally, whether the discourse on gender is potentially emancipatory or reinforcing of hegemonic gender discourse; and finally, how gender is represented with regards to access to resources, visibility (seeing and being seen) and gendered stereotyping and power relations. Moreover, I think it is necessary to link these strategies for contextualization with the socio-political context of South Africa. Therefore, contextualizing gender and interrogating the discourse on gender in the Life Orientation textbooks for grade 7 will provide insight into the relevance and context-appropriateness of gender education as a tool to achieving equality and empowerment.

My awareness of the problem and the gap in research arose out of my commitment to gender and feminist studies and my interest and experience working in education. These in conjunction with the state of gender relations in South Africa and the commitment to equality espoused by the South African Constitution led me to questions of the extent to which gender is addressed in curricula, as well as how it is contextualized; furthermore, how this relates to South African society.

1.1.2   Aim and objectives of the study

The broad aim of this dissertation is to engage critically with the discourse and representation of gender within the textbooks for the subject Life Orientation for grade 7.
The specific objectives are to:

- Provide an in-depth feminist analysis of gender discourse and representation within the textbooks (grade 7 Life Orientation)
- Explore the curriculum as well as the textbooks as a tool to end sexist oppression and promote critical thinking of gender as a discourse of domination

- Investigate gender discourse in the textbooks as an element of the wider socio-political context of gender in South Africa

1.1.3   Research question

My research question is therefore 'how is gender contextualized in the Life Orientation textbooks for grade 7?'

I intend to explore this question through asking:

-Is the gender discourse in the Life Orientation textbooks patriarchal or potentially emancipatory, as read through a feminist lens? (Does the discourse on gender contain sexist elements that are potentially alienating? Does the discourse challenge dominant hegemonic patriarchal discourse?)

-How is gender represented in the Life Orientation textbooks? (Is gender representation inclusive? Do these representations reinforce or challenge gender stereotypes?)

-How is the socio-political context of South Africa reflected in the gender discourse and representation in the Life Orientation textbooks

My objective with this question is to contextualize gender in the curriculum within the wider socio-political and historical realities of South Africa. This includes contextualization within the aims of the curriculum of developing the self in society, meaningful participation in society, equal opportunity and critical thinking.

1.2   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

As previously stated, this research dissertation will make use of textbooks for grade 7 Life Orientation. This research will not involve human participants, nor will it involve any sensitive secondary data, such as personal clinical institutional records (Wassenaar 2008:66). Wassenaar (2008:66) further states that 'the clearest case for (ethical) exemption applies to studies that do not involve human participant and/or are based on information that is already

in the public domain'. The materials required are public domain materials and publicly available. I therefore do not foresee any ethical dilemmas resulting from the use of these materials. I will also be consulting with the university copywriting services to ensure that this dissertation complies with copy write legislation.

1.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The contained scope of the mini-dissertation and the exclusive use of document review pose limitations on this study. For example, triangulating document analysis with classroom practices, for example, may provide a broader picture of gender articulation in the curriculum and increased benefit as far as pedagogy and curriculum development are concerned. However, this study is essentially a textbook analysis and I shall make use of approved syllabi for grade 7 Life Orientation to provide depth and a more holistic study.

Furthermore, Fairclough (1995:71) cautions that:

> Ideologies reside in texts. While it is true that the forms and content of texts do bear the imprint of ideological processes and structures, it is not possible to 'read-off' ideologies from texts. This is because meanings are produced through interpretations of texts and texts are open to diverse interpretations, and because ideological processes pertain to discourses as whole social events, not to the texts which are produced, distributed and interpreted as moments of such events.

However, as a hermeneutic enquiry, this study is intentionally designed within an interpretive paradigm and will therefore be limited to the analysis of textbooks.

1.4 STRUCTURE OF CHAPTERS IN THIS DISSERTATION

Chapter 1 provided an overview of this research dissertation. It included a concise problem statement and a description of the research questions as well as an overview of this dissertation's research methodology.

Chapter 2 provides an in-depth review of literature applicable to this dissertation. This includes discussions of colonial, apartheid and post-apartheid education, as well as debates on curriculum transformation in South Africa. Textbook studies particular to gender in the South African context will also be discussed in order to situate this study within this growing body of work. The theoretical framework that underpins this study is additionally explored in this chapter. This framework includes feminist critical pedagogical perspectives, Black feminist thought as well as decolonial feminist thought.

Chapter 3 will provide an in-depth discussion of the research methodology that this dissertation employs. This will include a review on the research design, an in-depth exploration of the document review research method employed, as well as an expanded discussion of data selection criteria, and finally, a comprehensive discussion on feminist critical discourse analysis as the method of analysis for this dissertation.

In chapter 4 the results of the data analysis will be presented and an interpretation will be provided. This presentation will discuss the curriculum generally and each publication specifically. The discussion will also include any patterns observed across curriculum materials

Chapter 5 will include a discussion on the results of the analysis, limitations of the study and implications and recommendations of this study and for further study will be provided.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

The history of South Africa in general, and with regards to education specifically, is very complex. Formal education operated in different ways and for different purposes. As previously mentioned, I do not think it possible to delink the education system from the history of domination and exploitation which characterised the colonial and apartheid eras of our country. While it is not possible here to trace the entire complex history of education in South Africa, my purpose is to first provide a brief overview of state education as a discourse of domination during the colonial and apartheid periods. This will allow me to make linkages between education and institutionalized gender inequality. Thereafter, I will provide a more in depth engagement with post-apartheid education generally, and particularly, Life Orientation.

2.1.2 Colonial education

Freire (1970:76) writes critically about education as an 'exercise of domination' with the purpose of 'indoctrinating them (students) to adapt to a world of oppression'. I believe that that statement can be applied when considering the historical context of state education in South Africa. State colonial education sought not only to differentiate education for the production of different races, but also to differentiate education for the gendering of children through the production of boys and girls (Reilly 2016). The link between gender and formal education in South Africa can be traced back to the turn of the twentieth century. John Buchan, who arrived in 1901 as the secretary of the High Commissioner for South Africa, set the ideological guidelines for native policy and was integral in establishing an educational programme for Africans (Reilly 2016:101). The specifics of this education programme, as quoted by Reilly (2016:101), included that:

> The native mind is very ready to learn anything which can be
> taught by concrete instances, and most forms of manual
> dexterity, even some of the more highly skilled, come as easily

to him as to the white man. When boys are taught everywhere carpentry and ironwork and the rudiments of trade, and the girls sewing and basket-making and domestic employments, a far more potent influence will have been introduced than the Latin grammar or the primer of history (Buchan 1903:309).

This would then serve to institutionalize race- and gender-based divisions of labour.

2.1.3   Apartheid education

During the apartheid era, the Department of National Education (DNE) was made up of nineteen racially, ethnically, and regionally divided departments (Jansen & Taylor 2003:9). The racialized education system was segregated according to the apartheid racial categories which classified people of colour in South Africa as Bantu, Coloured, and Indian. The policies that governed this segregated education system were the Bantu Education Act of 1953, the Coloured Person's Education Act of 1963, the Indian Education Act of 1965 and the National Education Policy Act of 1967. These policies reinforced the differential education objectives that colonial education instituted. This differential education would then cement a politically, socially and economically unequal South Africa.

Schools during the apartheid era were segregated (Jansen & Taylor 2003; Chisholm 2012). White teachers were considerably higher educated than African teachers (Chisholm 2012), government spending per white child eclipsed that of government spending per black child (Jansen & Taylor 2003; Chisholm 2012), and schools for those designated Africans, Indians and Coloureds were underfunded, under resourced and understaffed (Chisholm 2012:88). Furthermore, Chisholm (2012:89) states that:

> Over a period of forty years a system of education was developed which attempted to exercise a degree of social control over the political and aspirations of black people, but also served to reproduce social relations of domination and subordination between black and white, male and female.

The legacy of apartheid education underpinned gender inequality in South Africa. Chisholm (2012:86) writes that the state 'cemented women into 'traditional' patriarchal relationships'. This involved not only providing differential training that would allow men to take up hard manual labour and prepare women for domestic servitude, the state also feminised the teaching profession and subordinated women to a double-edged system of patriarchal controls emanating from the state and chiefs (Chisholm 2012:86).

2.1.4   Post-apartheid education

In an expedient attempt to 'intervene in the education crisis' (Jansen 1999) - which was the inheritance of 'one of the most divided education systems in the world' as it had been 'entrenched for many decades in the regressive practice of racism, sexism, authoritarianism, and inequality' (Jansen & Taylor 2003) - Education Minister Sibusiso Bhengu sanctioned a short-term revision of the syllabus to remove overtly racist and sexist elements from existing curriculums.

The Gender Equity Task Team (GETT) tasked by the DoE made recommendations with regards to requirements for the achievement of gender equality. Some of the recommendations proposed by the GETT (Wolpe et al 1997:230) include that:

- guidelines are proposed to address sexism in the curricula, textbooks and teaching
- strategies are proposed to counter and eliminate sexism, sexual harassment and gender violence throughout the education system
- the responsibility is on the government in generating steps to deal with gender-based violence in a systemic manner

As a result of these recommendations, the DoE adopted (amongst others) a gender sensitive curriculum, gender sensitive learning and support materials, as well as gender awareness in teacher training programs (Wadesango, Rembe & Chabaya 2011:249). These changes were implemented with *Curriculum 2005* which was the first major overhaul after the initial curriculum cleansing. This overhaul drew major criticisms for inaccessible language, the under-preparation of teachers for the new curriculum, as well as exacerbating discrepancies in implementation between privileged and disadvantaged schools because of resources and

capacities, to name a few (Jansen & Taylor 2003:38). The highly criticized C2005 was also learner-centred in direct response to the authority driven apartheid education (Jansen &Taylor 2003:37) and eliminated gender specific vocational training (Chisholm 2003).

In a paper titled '*The politics of implementing policy for gender equality',* Linda Chisholm (2003) – who was both chair of the committee to review C2005 as well as integrally involved in the creation of RNCS - propounded that policy for the achievement of gender equity was not supported by resources. She further asserted that the attempt to integrate gender in the curriculum resulted in nothing more that the 'inscription of gender within broader policy and legislation' and therefore that gender, at the policy level, was nothing more than symbolic. The purpose of the review of C2005 to RNCS was to 'simplify the complexity' of the C2005 and to 'ensure a stronger human-rights based content' within the existing frameworks (Chisholm 2005:196).

Simmonds' (2013) study, in part, compared the NCS and CAPS curriculum statements specifically for gender and gender-related concepts. She discovered in the senior phase, which comprises grades 7-9 (of interest to this research dissertation), the NCS curriculum statements required that students engage with concepts of gender stereotyping, sexism and gender equity issues. In the CAPS curriculum statements for senior phase, topics of gender constructs, sexual behaviour, sexuality, gender equity, and gender-based violence featured. Simmonds (2013) inferred that much of the discourse on gender within the curriculum statements was underpinned by a 'gender reform paradigm' as coined by Lorber (2012), which is concerned with equal access and participation among boys and girls.

Post-feminist assumptions include that once a measure of equality has been achieved, for example equal access to education, gender struggles along with feminism have ended. Lazar criticizes this assumption (Lazar 2005:20) and further states that 'beneath the appearance of emancipation, sexist discrimination thrives in covert forms in these contexts through deep seated, naturalized, androcentric assumptions'. These deeply embedded gender ideologies are reinforced through seemingly innocuous practices and assumptions that are antithetical to feminism as a political movement which requires a political consciousness, to achieve the ends of gender equality. The concept of gender equality for the purpose of this dissertation is not concerned with the quantitative balancing of the scales in seeking equal representation, but rather focuses on the agency and access to resources granted to these representations.

This draws from bell hooks' (1984) articulation of feminism as a movement to end sexist oppression. This articulation necessitates the eradication of the ideology of domination and promotes liberation from sexist role patterns, domination and oppression for men and women.

2.2   THE ROLE OF TEXTBOOKS

Davids and Maistry (2018:35) remind us that in many instances in the South African context, 'many students learn only through a close interaction with textbooks' and that often, the authority of these texts is not questioned. They further write that:

> In South African schools, the textbook serves as an indispensable trustworthy source of disciplinary content knowledge. While the constitution and vetting of such knowledge is subject to the state's textbook publication protocols as they relate to screening for discrimination and prejudice in relation to race, gender, sexuality etc., there is dearth of understanding of covert ideological hegemony embedded in the textbook as revered artefact (2018:35).

What is of further concern to David and Maistry (2018:33) is that while textbooks are subject to mandatory protocol, little attention is paid to the subtext of selected content as it relates to the inherent value systems and the worldviews that it presents. This integral role played by textbooks in the education of learners, requires careful consideration. Apple (1990:18) writes that

> Texts are not simply 'delivery systems' of 'facts'. They are at once the results of political, economic and cultural activities, battles and compromises. They are conceived, designed, and authored by real people with real interests.

Textbooks therefore are representative of dominant discourses in society. While there is pressure to include more in textbooks to suit a modern and progressive society, Apple (1990:26) cautions that progressive items are perhaps mentioned, but not developed. This is

yet another mechanism which ensure the maintenance and dominance of hegemonic discourses – through the compromise and the process of 'mentioning' (Apple 1990:26). Apple (1990) insists that 'in the context of the politics and the textbook, it is the power that should concern us the most'.

Although this dissertation examines gendered power relations and engages with other discourses of domination, it is important that we are cognizant of the fact that these iterations do not start and end between the covers of the textbook. While textbooks are indicative of the reality of unequal power relations, they are also reflective of the future, as these discourses and images are being inculcated into the minds of learners. There is thus a wider issue to address. That being the reality within which textbooks are commissioned and produced.

2.2.1 Textbook study in South Africa

In 2009, the gender equality approaches of the Department of Education were critiqued by Dieltiens, Unterhalter, Letsatsi and North, as having two basic approaches. They articulated these approaches as *gender blind* – equating equity with parity between sexes – and *gender lite* – acknowledging some gender discrimination without addressing underlying power relations that uphold inequality.

These critiques remain true, if we consider textbooks an indication of the DoE's efforts. Earlier textbook studies conducted after the Dieltiens et al. (2009) critique of the DoE, includes a study on women in history books (Chiponda and Wasserman 2011). This study found an overwhelmingly stereotypical depiction of women as 'indistinct figures' lacking agency, and essentially invisible in history. Here, Chiponda and Wasserman argued (2011:14) that 'youth are likely to consider the way men and women are portrayed in textbooks to be unquestionable or beyond dispute.' Additionally, they (2011:14) asserted that besides serving curricular goals, textbooks convey sub-text which influences the understanding of the social and historical roles of men and women.'

Supporting these findings was Ntombikayise Nene's (2014) Masters dissertation, which revealed the subordinate role of women in grade 12 history textbooks. Here Nene found that women were portrayed as having no agency. She too found that white men were more visible, had agency and were named characters. Conversely, women of colour were nameless entities

with no agency. Further she demonstrated that there was a lack of representation of women of colour.

Furthermore, Morgan and Henning (2011) uncovered a lack of complexity and ambiguity in the discussion of race and racism in history textbooks. One issue highlighted in this study was the inadequate discussion or critical evaluation of race and racism due to the singularity of viewpoints presented by the authors. For example, the text purported that "There is only one race – the Human Race" (2011:177). This also results in a failure to interrogate underlying power relations that inform the historical and contemporary social climate of South Africa.

Maistry and Pillay (2014) found that in Business Studies textbooks, women were periodically represented in domesticated roles with fewer occupational roles; while men enjoyed more representation in a wider range of occupational fields and dominating leadership positions in various institutions. They concluded that the textbooks were gender biased and insensitive, further widening the chasm for potential equality in the business world.

More recently, Wilmot and Naidoo's (2017) study on the entrenchment of heterosexuality through language in Life Orientation textbooks notes that LO 'probably has the most significant impact on the construction and transmission of sexual identities' as the themes dealt with in Life Orientation are specifically focussed on, among others, sexuality, relationships and human rights. This study analysed language of the characters as well as language of the authors. This study found that in high school textbooks, monogamous heterosexuality was normalised for the purposes of marriage and reproduction. LGBT sexualities were marginalised and/or excluded. Their findings support Potgieter and Reygan's (2012) findings of a lack of visibility of LGBT identities in LO textbooks. They further problematized the recognition of homosexuality as representative of the entire spectrum of LGBT identities and epistemologies in high school LO textbooks.

While there is no scope here for a full and comprehensive discussion on gender related textbook research carried out in South Africa, the studies I have mentioned unequivocally show a trend across time and across disciplines of the heteronormative patriarchal underpinnings of textbooks, as representative of the institution of education in South Africa.

2.3 LIFE ORIENTATION

The South African school curriculum (Department of Basic Education 2011:4) generally aims to:

> equip learners, irrespective of their socio-economic background, race, gender, physical ability or intellectual ability, with the knowledge, skills and values necessary for self-fulfilment, and meaningful participation in society as citizens of a free country;

The South African school curriculum (Department of Basic Education 2011:4) is built on the principles of:

> social transformation: ensuring that the educational imbalances of the past are redressed, and that equal educational opportunities are provided for all sections of the population; and

> active and critical learning: encouraging an active and critical approach to learning, rather than rote and uncritical learning of given truths;

The purpose of Life Orientation according to the CAPS (Department of Basic Education 2011:8) curriculum statements is as follows:

> Life Orientation is central to the holistic development of learners. It addresses skills, knowledge and values for the personal, social, intellectual, emotional and physical growth of learners, and is concerned with the way in which these facets are interrelated. Life Orientation guides and prepares learners for life and its possibilities and equips them for meaningful and successful living in a rapidly changing and transforming society.

> The focus of Life Orientation is the development of self-in-society. It promotes self-motivation and teaches learners how to

apply goal-setting, problem-solving and decision-making
strategies. These serve to facilitate individual growth as part of
an effort to create a democratic society, a productive economy
and an improved quality of life. Learners are guided to develop
their full potential and are provided with opportunities to make
informed choices regarding personal and environmental health,
study opportunities and future careers.

The subject of Life Orientation draws on knowledge, values, skills and processes from sociology, psychology, political science, human movement science, religious studies, labour studies and industrial studies (Prinsloo 2007:158). In an effort to facilitate learners' development into South African society, and considering the previously mentioned commitment to gender equality and the state of gender inequality in South Africa, Life Orientation is the subject where learners would most likely be expected to engage with social discourse, including gender. It is important to briefly note here that besides the inclusion of 'gender constructs' in the unit that deals with puberty, neither gender nor race are explicitly addressed in the Life Orientation curriculum for grade 7. This is cause for concern in a multicultural society like South Africa; a society riddled with issues of gender, such as gender-based violence (including sexual assault and intimate partner violence), LGBTQIA+ victimisation, street harassment and so on, which are topics of ongoing discussion in public discourse.

2.4   THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM

While this dissertation is chiefly concerned with the analysis of textbooks, it is important to make mention of what is referred to as the 'hidden curriculum'. This concept, coined in 1968 by Philip Jackson, takes cognisance of the relations and features of classroom and school life as strong socialising forces. Leach (2003:103) writes that:

Learners' extensive exposure to textbooks and other learning
materials through years of schooling serves as a powerful
medium for socialising young people into dominant patterns of
gender relations and gendered behaviour, which they will carry

into adult life. When added to this are all the personal biases and preferences of individual teachers, biases in test items in examinations, and the social influences that accompany everyday school experiences, the learning environment becomes an extremely socialising force. This is particularly the case with children whose sense of identity is in the process of development and hence vulnerable to individual and societal influence, but it also applies to adults who are following non-formal education programmes of literacy or vocational skills.

As it involves gender, the hidden curriculum usually includes hegemonic discourses which are considered normative in terms of thinking and behaviour. This informs gendered roles, as well as heteronormative and patriarchal paradigms that are embedded in society and in institutions such as education.

I will highlight two of many studies carried out in South Africa that underscore aspects of the hidden curriculum particular to the South African context. These studies, while tangential to my own study, serve to make linkages as to how the contextualisation of gender in the curriculum extends to factors beyond learning materials.

In researching teaching for social justice, Dennis Francis and Adré le Roux (2011) were concerned with the intersection between identity, critical agency and social justice education. Their study revealed that amongst their participants, who were white women pre-service (student) teachers, all were 'oblivious to how they experience white privilege and the currency that this carries in South Africa' and with regards to gender, some were 'trapped in accepting stereotypical roles as '*nurturers*' or '*caregivers*'. These worldviews are integral to the presentation of teaching material and the normalising of hegemonic discourses in the classroom. Francis and le Roux (2011:309) concluded that there is a 'critical need' for a systemic approach to how social identity is unpacked through curriculum, pedagogy and social relations in teacher education' and that 'an understanding of the interconnection between various social identities can be useful in designing more holistic modules that will teach about anti oppression and will teach for social justice' (2011:310). They further posit that

all students need to be exposed to critical multiculturalism, and anti-oppressive education or education for social justice, as oppression affects everybody. Understanding the interconnections that exist between race, gender and other forms of identification may prove worthwhile as such understanding shifts quite powerfully away from essentialising identities to an approach that views all forms of oppression as important (2011:310).

In a later study, Francis (2013) addresses how teachers' comfort and values influence sexuality education in the classroom. The study included Life Orientation teachers for the senior phase, but the findings of this study (and other similar studies) are wholly applicable when considering the impacts of the hidden curriculum. Findings of this study include that teachers chose what to teach based on their own morals and values (2013:71). Francis argues that this is often done in ways that undermine the curriculum, but in the absence of detailed policies or curriculum documents regarding sexuality education, the curriculum is thus left open to personal interpretation.

The findings in the above-mentioned studies, which include the internalisation of hegemonic discourses regarding gender roles, racial myopia in a post-apartheid South Africa, and additionally teacher values and comfort, are concerning when placed in relation to critical pedagogy. Rather, these findings seem more consistent with Freire's (1973:95) banking system of education which encourages passivity and a submerged, rather than critical state of consciousness.

2.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Firstly, I engage with canonical works in critical pedagogy and decoloniality (such as Freire, Quijano and Maldonado Torres) mainly through feminist writers and from a feminist perspective. My objective in doing this is to foreground gender and a feminist viewpoint. I also do this in answer to the invisibility of gender as a category of analysis and sometimes overt sexism in male-dominated decolonial scholarship.

The use of feminist theory also enables the positioning of gender as the 'categorical centre of enquiry and the research process' (ed. Hesse-Biber 2014:3). Hesse-Biber (2014:4) further articulates that feminist research aims to support social justice and social transformation. Employing feminist theories additionally allows the researcher to explore how gender intersects with other discourses of domination, for example, race or class as well as challenging hegemonic and patriarchal viewpoints.

The overarching framework for this dissertation is heavily influenced by bell hooks' (1994) critical feminist pedagogical approach which involves an 'illuminating interplay of anticolonial, critical and feminist pedagogies', as well as the works of anti-colonial feminist writers Maria Lugones and Oyeronke Oyewumi. Both Lugones and Oyewumi interrogate the study of gender and feminism as Eurocentric and underscore the need to decolonise both gender and feminism. I believe that these themes will be extremely important in navigating the nuanced context of gender in South Africa. I further think that Black feminist theories are rightly positioned to subvert and disrupt hegemonic gender discourses while situating these discourses within appropriate and nuanced socio-political contexts. I will also draw on the work of other feminist theorists as is necessary.

2.5.1   Critical pedagogy

Bell hooks' pedagogical practices are largely influenced by Paulo Freire's (1972) idea of education as the practice of freedom which requires that instead of what he refers to as the 'banking' system of education where educators 'deposit' knowledge, education be used as a tool for emancipation. This requires teaching to develop a critical consciousness. Inculcating the tools for critical engagement can empower individuals to participate consciously in society, and to interrogate and question the world around them as opposed to passively accepting the status quo.

2.5.2   Decolonial feminism

Lugones draws on the work of Anibal Quijano (2000) when discussing the coloniality of gender (Lugones 2008). Lugones (2008) articulates what she calls 'the modern/colonial gender system' and states that the gender system introduced was thoroughly informed through the coloniality of power. She quotes Quijano (2000:381) that although

coloniality is related to colonialism, these are distinct as the latter does not necessarily include racist relations of power. Coloniality's birth and its prolonged and deep extension throughout the planet is tightly related to colonialism.

I believe that Lugones is thus implying that coloniality as it relates to gender cannot be separated from racial domination. Lugones (2008:2) asserts that:

> The heterosexual and patriarchal character of the arrangements (gender) can themselves be appreciated as oppressive by unveiling the presuppositions of the framework. Gender does not need to organize social arrangements, including social sexual arrangements. But gender arrangements need not be either heterosexual or patriarchal. They need not be, that is, as a matter of history. Understanding these features of the organization of gender in the modern/colonial gender system-- the biological dimorphism, the patriarchal and heterosexual organizations of relations--is crucial to an understanding of the differential gender arrangements along "racial" lines.

The intentions of Lugones (2008:1) are explicitly stated: she wants to make visible the instrumentality of the colonial/modern gender system in subjecting men and women of colour in all domains of existence. She further aims to provide a way to understand, read and perceive our allegiance to this gender system and to place ourselves in a position to reject this gender system. Furthermore:

> …in understanding the extent to which the imposition of this gender system was as constitutive of the coloniality of power as the coloniality of power was constitutive of it. The logic of the relation between them is of mutual constitution. But it should be clear by now that the colonial, modern, gender system cannot exist without the coloniality of power, since the classification of

the population in terms of race is a necessary condition of its possibility.

To think the scope of the gender system of Eurocentered global capitalism it is necessary to understand the extent to which the *very process of narrowing* of the concept of gender to the control of sex, its resources, and products constitutes gender domination (Lugones 2008:12).

Oyeronke Oyewumi (1997:152) writes that 'the process of inferiorizing the native, which was the essence of colonisation, was bound up with the process of enthroning male hegemony'. She also recognises that 'the process of gender-formation is inseparable from that of institutionalising race and class hierarchies' (1997:155). With regards to further interrogating the relations of power and knowledge production from an Afrocentric perspective, Oyewume (2000) insists that:

One effect of this Eurocentrism is the racialization of knowledge: Europe is represented as the source of knowledge and Europeans as knowers. Indeed, male gender privilege as an essential part of European ethos is enshrined in the culture of modernity. This global context for knowledge production must be taken into account in our quest to comprehend African realities and indeed the human condition.

2.5.3   Black feminist thought

Finally, I use Black feminist theories as a heuristic device as they are premised on inclusivity and diversity. These include bell hooks' (1984) articulation of feminist theory, which considers feminism as a political consciousness that necessitates critical engagement with discourses of domination. Additionally, Kimberlé Crenshaw's (1989) intersectional theory is integral to this study. Crenshaw (1991) explains that:

the experiences that Black women face are not subsumed within the traditional boundaries of race or gender discrimination as

these boundaries are currently understood, and that the intersection of racism and sexism factors into Black women's lives in ways that cannot be captured wholly by looking at race or gender dimensions of those experiences separately.

De la Rey (1994:7) echoes that:

being a woman is not distinct from being either black or working class or heterosexual. We cannot partial out gender from the rest of who we are – for we are simultaneously classes, raced and gendered.

Hendricks & Lewis (1994:66) assert that 'black feminist theory provides the basis for consciousness-raising, and a general form of emotional and psychological empowerment'. Patricia Hill-Collins (2000) has noted that although widely used, Black feminist thought is a poorly defined paradigm. Nevertheless, I employ this paradigm as it necessitates the consideration of context – historical and material conditions that shape realities, and it insists upon intersectionality – the consideration of multiple, simultaneous and interlocking systems of oppression that shapes lived experiences.

Applying this to the context of gender discourse and representation in South Africa requires engagements with other interlocking systems of oppression, such as race or class as it affects South African society. Hendricks & Lewis (1994:65) write that 'third-world and black feminists explicitly address racial discourses' and that 'racial discourse is at the basis of knowledge/power dialectic in South Africa'.

2.6   CONCLUSION

This study of the contextualisation of gender, and the interrogation of the discourse on gender within the grade 7 Life Orientation textbooks must occur within the contexts of the history of South African education as well as the colonial history of the country. Understanding colonisation and its effect on the South African education system offers insight into the role education has played in gendered oppression as well as how it is used to maintain hetero-

patriarchal social structures. Emerging bodies of postgraduate and other research on gender in school textbooks show consist gender bias and discrimination over time and across disciplines.

To be liberated from sexist oppression, it is necessary to interrogate the relations of power that exist to maintain hierarchies that sustain oppression. Without taking cognisance of the coloniality of gender, we may suffer what Lugones (2008:1) calls 'epistemological blinding', which she explains as indifference because of the categorical separation of race, gender, class and sexuality. Liberation requires epistemological awareness and no categorical separation.

My idea of liberation with regards to gender in the South African context would include that the concept of gender be understood as a discourse of domination and that gendered oppression is understood not as a single issue, but as intertwined with and interlocked by other systems of domination like race and class. Liberation and equality must engage with hegemonic binary notions of gender as potentially alienating and antithetical to the equality envisioned in our constitution. Furthermore, liberation and equality require freedom from sexist oppression to subvert traditional gender roles.

<center>**CHAPTER 3**</center>
<center>**RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**</center>

3.1   INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to present the scope of the research design and methodology of this research dissertation. I will do so by elucidating the theoretical underpinnings of this research design and introducing the research strategy of this study. This dissertation has made use of a qualitative research design. Schurink (2009) emphasises the importance of a flexible qualitative research design by stating that 'the focus in qualitative research should rather be on the research question and the ability of the research design to clarify the research purpose and perspective…' (2009:804). Schurink believes that this serves the purpose of opening up the enquiry and to account for possible changes in the 'researcher's ontology and epistemology' (2009:804) as the 'qualitative paradigm is constantly in flux' (2009:805).

3.2   RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Johann Mouton (2001:55), a research design is a 'blueprint of how you intend conducting research' and is 'tailored to address different kinds of questions' (2001:57). The research question explored in this dissertation undertook to discover how gender is contextualised in the grade 7 Life Orientation textbooks. To do this, an empirical research design making use of textual data was employed. Research questions were expressed through the use of exploratory and descriptive questions.

I have conceptualized my study using bell hooks' (1994) articulation of 'teaching to transgress'. Her feminist critical pedagogical approach includes a multicultural and inclusive learning experience (1994:35) that promotes critical consciousness (1994:36). Hooks (1994:37) further emphasises that 'no education is politically neutral' and that critical pedagogy requires a recognition that the 'politics of racism, sexism, heterosexism' and so forth influence what is taught and how it is taught. Paulo Freire's (1972) articulation of education as the practice of freedom has been highly influential of hooks' pedagogical approach. Freire (1972:78) writes that

education as the exercise of domination stimulates the credulity

of students, with the ideological intent (often not perceived by

educators) of indoctrinating them to adapt to the world of

oppression.

Freire's discussion of 'conscientisation' as joined by meaningful praxis has also been significant for hooks who agrees with the necessity to 'verify in praxis what we know in consciousness'. Hooks (1994) describes her own pedagogical practices as 'illuminating interplay of anticolonial, critical and feminist pedagogies'- which for this study will be appropriated and articulated as anticolonial, critical and feminist epistemologies.

An additional influence in the conceptualisation of this study is Maria Lugones' work on the coloniality of gender (2008) and decolonial feminism (2010). She puts forth that decolonising gender is 'necessarily a praxical [sic] task' (2010:746). She further explains that it is to 'enact a critique of racialized, colonial, and capitalist heterosexualist gender oppression as a lived transformation of the social'. Lugones (2010:748) writes that:

The long process of subjectification of the colonized toward

adoption/internalization of the men/women dichotomy as a

normative construction of the social – a mark of civilization,

citizenship, and membership in civil society – was and is

constantly renewed.

Lugones (2010:746) states that her intention is not to 'search for a non-colonized construction of gender in indigenous organizations of the social' as she does not believe that gender travels away from colonial modernity. Rather, Lugones insists upon recognising that resistance is 'historically complex'. The coloniality of gender helps Lugones (2010) to understand oppression as the complex interaction of economic, racializing, and gendering systems. She therefore believes that ultimately,

the decolonial feminist's task begins by seeing the colonial

difference, emphatically resisting her epistemological habit of

erasing it. Seeing it, she sees the world anew, and then she

requires herself to drop her enchantment with 'woman', the

universal, and begins to learn about other resisters at the

colonial difference (2010:753).

Thus, through shared epistemologies we can view the coloniality of gender not as static or pre-existing, but rather as an oscillating entity that is and must be constantly resisted.

These conceptualising influences involve educating and learning for emancipation through critical engagement with systems of domination which may underpin and be upheld by the curriculum. For example, curriculum materials used by students as well as the 'hidden curriculum' are strong socialising forces. This necessitates engaging with education as a political tool, and not as a neutral endeavour.

3.3   QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PROCESS

3.3.1   Data selection

This empirical study employed qualitative data selection methods, in the form of textbooks. The texts analysed were the Life Orientation textbooks by six publishers on the DoE's approved list of publishers for public school. These are as follows:

TABLE 1: DATA SELECTED FOR ANALYSIS

PUBLISHER	BOOK
Maskew Miller Longman	Life Orientation Today
Shuter & Shooter	Top Class Life Orientation
Vivlia Publishers	Life Orientation for the Real World
Oxford	-Headstart Life Orientation -Successful Life Orientation
Macmillan	Solutions for all Life Orientation
Via Africa	Life Orientation

As mentioned in the discussion on research methods, making exclusive use of document review posed some limitations on this study. In an attempt to combat some of these limitations, I selected seven of the approved textbooks for Life Orientation for grade 7. My

intention was to attempt to provide a more robust, holistic understanding and interpretation of gender in the curriculum for grade 7.

The selection of grade 7 draws on an important phase in learners' psycho-social development. Erik Erikson (1968) articulated the eight psychosocial stages of human development. He believed each stage of development to be associated with an inherit conflict which needs to be negotiated in order to proceed with development. For Erikson, the focus of adolescence (ages 12-18) is identity formation. He posited that the years preceding adolescence, also referred to as middle childhood, (ages 7-11) are concerned with 'industry vs inferiority' (Eccles, 1999:32). During this time, children learn competency, productivity and encounter feelings of inferiority in relation to their peers. Eccles (1999:32) highlights self-awareness and the consciousness of different perspectives; as well as consequences and the awareness of self in relation to others to be associated with middle childhood. I put forward that this period is therefore integral in the socialisation of children because of my agreement with Eccles (1999:34) that children during the period of middle childhood increasingly spend less time with their parents and more time with teachers, peers and other supervisor or activity leaders.

While in the South African context, we only make the distinction between primary school (grades 1-7) and high school (grades 6-12), other school systems differentiate between primary school (grades 1-6), middle school (grades 7-9) and high school (grades 10-12). According to the South African schools Act of 1996, children are required to enter grade R at the age of six. Therefore, by the time the learner reaches grade 7, we can expect the mean age of students to be twelve to thirteen years.

Bussey and Bandura (1999:702) and Bandura et al (1999) have observed that stereotypic gender occupational orientations are in evidence as early as middle school. They further state that by this age, children's beliefs in their occupational efficacy, which are rooted in their patterns of perceived efficacy, have begun to crystallize and steer their occupational considerations in directions congruent with their efficacy beliefs.

I therefore chose to assess the textbooks for grade 7 Life Orientation based on childhood development. The transition from middle childhood to adolescence is clearly an integral

period in the development of children, their beliefs and their sense of self and their association with the world and social structures.

3.3.2 Framework of analysis

The framework of analysis employed for this study utilised an amalgam of aspects of existing gender analysis frameworks tailored to suit the purposes of this study. Following Simmonds (2013), I have analysed the textbooks term 1 'Development of Self in Society' sections of each textbook which are comprised of chapters on self-image, puberty, and dealing with peer pressure. Included in my analysis will be the section of term 2's 'Constitutional Rights and Responsibilities' section which discusses dealing with abuse in different contexts. These sections contribute directly to the social development of the learner in society. I have excluded the 'Physical Education', Health, Social and Environmental Responsibility', and the 'World of Work' sections. These sections deal with physical education, environmental and social issues such as substance abuse and study habits and career paths. These sections deal with providing scientific-like instructional information rather than being open to subjective discussion and social development. The sections analysed are allotted seventeen teaching hours of the total of seventy hours allocated to Life Orientation over a forty-week period.

In Simmonds' (2013) analysis of the Life Orientation curriculum statements, for grade 7 specifically, it was found that the gender specific vocabulary included boys and girls, gender constructs and sexual behaviour. These were presented in the context of the 'development of self in society' and within thematic contexts of puberty – including changes in boys and girls; puberty and gender constructs; and peer pressure, which included topics such as unhealthy sexual behaviour.

In order to meet the aim of this research dissertation which is to engage critically with the discourse and representation of gender within the textbooks for Life Orientation for grade 7; and to attempt to ascertain how gender is contextualized in the Life Orientation textbooks for grade 7, I have borrowed and adapted from existing gender analysis frameworks to develop a framework of analysis suited to the textbooks I have analysed.

As this dissertation is interested in the contextualization of gender and will make use of feminist critical discourse analysis to critique discourse which 'sustain a patriarchal social

order' (Lazar 2005:5) and highlight 'unequal social arrangements' (Lazar 2005:1), I have highlighted social relations over social roles. My objective in doing so was to highlight relationships of power related to gender. Where necessary, social roles have been underscored to counteract possible limitations imposed by highlighting social relations in particular contexts in the textbooks. I have also placed a high importance on intangible resources, which include aspects such as 'self-confidence and credibility; status and respect; and leadership qualities' (March, Smyth & Mukhopadhyay 2003:25). This framework is ultimately interested in empowerment for the purpose of transforming gender relations (March et al. 2003:25).

An existing framework of analysis heavily influential to this study is the Social Relations Approach developed by Naila Kabeer. Her approach is influenced by socialism and feminism (March et. Al 2003:102). The aim of this framework is to offer a method of analyzing existing gender inequalities in the distribution of resources, responsibilities, and power (March et. Al 2003:102). This approach also emphasizes relations between people and their relations to resources, and uses concepts rather than tools to achieve this end. Furthermore, this approach challenges the 'ideological neutrality and independence of institutions' (March et. Al 2003:105) which will be an indirect aim of this project as I will not engage in education institutional analysis. I will be focusing on two of the five main concepts associated with this method. These are the concepts of human well-being and social relations. Human well-being as it concerns the Social Relations Approach concerns 'survival, security, and autonomy' (March et. Al 2003:103) with an emphasis on human dignity. Social relations as articulated by Kabeer 'describe the structural relationships that create and reproduce systemic differences in the positioning of different groups of people' and 'determine what tangible and intangible resources are available to groups and individuals' (March et. Al 2003:103).

My analysis will include both text and illustrations. With lexical analysis, different lexical choices can signify different discourses which in turn will 'signify certain kinds of identities, values and sequences of activity which are not necessarily made explicit' (Machin & Mayr 2012:30). Additionally, Machin & Mayr (2012:31) write that

> …visual communication semiotic resources are used to
> communicate things that may be more difficult to express
> through language, since images do not tend to have such fixed

meaning or at least the producer can claim that it is more suggestive and open to various interpretations.

They (Machin & Mayr 2012:31) also remind us that 'visual and linguistic semiotic resources have different affordances'. Thus, these two modes of communication work together to perform a variety of functions which include meaning making and to serve ideological purposes.

I have analysed visual and linguistic elements of the curriculum materials to determine whether they reinforce sex stereotypes, whether they are positive or negative portrayals of characters. Additionally, the methods of presenting characters in terms of autonomy and situational context have been analysed. The social relations (and roles, where necessary) of characters in visual representations will also be interrogated. I have furthermore employed the FAWE (forum for African Women Educationalists) 'narratological analysis' framework. Fiona Leach (2003:109) posits that it is necessary to identify the author's position in relation to the characters and events described, and to understand the assumptions behind the voices heard by considering what is not said as much as what is said. I will use the locus, visualization, and power criteria of the narration analysis to aid in trying to identify this relation. Leach (2003:110) describes these criteria as follows:

Locus: The location from which the actors operate is important in determining the gender responsiveness of the text. The distinction between public locus and private locus is important…

Visualisation: This analyses the patterns of seeing or recognising, and being seen and being recognised. It is important to identify whose view is being reported and how different players view the same matter or event… Seeing combined with action and speech is a source of power, which can be gendered…

Power: Questions of power are crucial because this defines gender relations; in particular who has power over decision making.

Particularly regarding language use, I will have chosen to use the following criteria recommended by the FAWE framework: naming (who is named and who is unnamed), use of nouns and pronouns, generics (words intended to convey a gender-neutral meaning but carry unacknowledged gender bias), and other gendered references and associations (Leach 2003:111).

3.4   QUALITATIVE METHODS

3.4.1   Document Review

This research dissertation made exclusive use of the document review research method. Bowen (2009:29) states that document may be the only necessary data source for studies designed within an interpretive paradigm, as in hermeneutic enquiry. This necessitates the consideration of difference between my own frame of meaning and those found in the text (May 2011:199). A purpose of document review includes the recognition that documents are not 'neutral artefacts' but are indeed situated within wider social and political contexts through which power is expressed (May 2011:199). May (2011:200) further asserts that by approaching documents in this way we learn about the societies which produce them, for example, it may be reflective of the marginalisation of certain groups and the social characterization of others. May believes that:

> A critical-analytic stance would consider how the document represents the events which it describes and closes off potential contrary interpretations and possibilities through a particular construction of reality as self-evident. We would now consider the ways in which texts seek to assert power over the social world it describes. In so doing, the social world might be characterized by the exclusion of valuable information and the characterization of events and people in particular ways according to discrete interests (2011:213).

Advantages of using purely a document analysis are that it is 'unobtrusive' and 'non-reactive' (Bowen 2009:31) so therefore, ethical considerations are limited. Furthermore, document review is a flexible method in that it allows consideration not only for the manner of the construction of meaning but also for how new meaning is developed and employed (May 2011:211). There are, however, limitations posed by using purely document research as method which shall be discussed as part of the 'limitations of the study' section (6).

3.4.2 Data Analysis

I employed qualitative data analysis methods, in the form of feminist critical discourse analysis. For Norman Fairclough (1995), 'critical discourse analysis (CDA) is integrating a) analysis of text, b) analysis of processes of text production, consumption and distribution and c) sociocultural analysis of the discursive event. This means to 'denaturalise' the naturalised ideologies which dominate and determine social interactions (Fairclough 1995:27). For example, certain taken-for-granted sexist or patriarchal ideologies are so deeply inculcated in society that we assume their truth and therefore accept them to be true. Interrogating these naturalised assumptions in discourse exposes the power relations that these discourses uphold. Jäger (2011:34) states that discourses are not interesting as mere expressions of social practice, but because they serve certain ends, namely to exercise power with all its effects. They do this because they are institutionalized and regulated, because they are linked to action.

Lazar (2005:1) articulates critical discourse analysis (CDA) as:

> A critical perspective on unequal social arrangements sustained
> through language use, with the goals of social transformation
> and emancipation.

Furthermore, a feminist critical discourse analysis has the central concern of:

> Critiquing discourses which sustain a patriarchal social order:
> that is, relations of power that systematically privilege men as a

> social group and disadvantage, exclude and disempower women
>
> as a social group (Lazar 2005:5).

This study will therefore be concerned with 'demystifying the interrelationships of gender, power and ideology' (Lazar 2005:5) in the textbooks for the school subject Life Orientation for grade 7.

In attempting to expose and analyse the interrelations of gender and power in the textbooks, this analysis employed a multimodal (Lazar 2005) approach. Firstly, I have extended part of Simmonds' (2013) study which incorporated identifying how gender and gender-related concepts are enacted in the curriculum through analysing Life Orientation curriculum policy documents. This study further applied a feminist CDA to analyse gender and gender-related concepts in textbooks for grade 7 Life Orientation. Additionally, this study includes an analysis of gender representation, both visually and textually, within the textbooks and the context in which these are presented. These concepts and representations will then be examined in relation to patriarchal gender ideology as they serve to perpetuate or subvert this discourse of dominance.

3.5   CONCLUSION

This chapter provided a description of the research approach, design and methodologies employed by the researcher in undertaking this research dissertation. This study made exclusive use of document review as a research method and employs a qualitative design. Feminist critical discourse analysis was employed to interrogate power relations presented in text and illustration in the textbooks analysed.

The next chapter presents the data analysed using the methods discussed in this chapter. The data is presented per data source. The findings will be analysed and interpreted responding to the research questions and theories employed in the conceptualisation of this study.

CHAPTER 4
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

If we consider middle childhood as integral in the socialisation of children because of the increased time spent outside of the home, it is necessary to provide an interrogation of the school curriculum and learning materials and how they contribute to the development of self. Placing the curriculum within the broader context of South Africa and its political history is fundamental. Teaching for social justice should be inherent of education as a socialising force in a post-apartheid South Africa. Education as the practice of freedom is antithetical to 'education that merely strives to reinforce domination' (hooks 1994:4). As hooks (1994) reminisces about her early education, she makes a distinction between knowledge being about information only, versus the political commitment required to properly teach to transgress. Political commitment is required because, as we are reminded by hooks (1994:37), no education is politically neutral. The politics of racism, sexism, heterosexism and other forms of domination inform teaching practice, in particular, what is taught and how it is taught.

Francis and le Roux (2011:299) write that increasingly, teachers and researchers are addressing forms of social justice education by focussing on classroom pedagogies and educational practices that seek to deal with and combat different forms of oppression such as racism, sexism and heterosexism. This is in response to the call for teachers to advocate for social justice, human rights and inclusivity which has been central to all education policies in South Africa following 1995 (Francis and le Roux 2011:299). This research joins a growing scholarship of gender and textbook research in South Africa, with the aim of interrogating gendered power relations read in the subtext of Life Orientation textbooks.

4.2 LIFE ORIENTATION CURRICULUM MATERIALS FOR GRADE 7

The curriculum material analysed for this study included seven text books approved by the Department of Education for Life Orientation for grade 7. All of these books are currently in use in classrooms across South Africa. The publishers and titles are as follows:

TABLE 1: DATA SELECTED FOR ANALYSIS

PUBLISHER	BOOK
Via Africa	Life Orientation
Shuter & Shooter	Top Class Life Orientation
Maskew Miller Longman	Life Orientation Today
Macmillan	Solutions for all Life Orientation
Oxford	-Headstart Life Orientation -Successful Life Orientation
Vivlia Publishers	Life Orientation for the Real World

My analysis included units from the first term's 'development of self in society' section and the second term's 'constitutional rights and responsibilities' section as follows:

TABLE 2: SECTIONS OF CURRICULUM MATERIALS TO BE ANALYSED

Term 1	Units
Theme: development of self in society	-Self-image -Changes in boys and girls: puberty and gender constructs -Peer pressure: effects of peer pressure
Term 2	Units
Theme: constitutional rights and responsibilities	-Dealing with abuse in different contexts: between adults and children and between peers.

4.2.1   VIA AFRIKA: LIFE ORIENTATION

4.2.1.1   Self-image

In the text of sections one and two of the self-image unit, which explores what self-image is and reflects on positive personal qualities and relationships, the language employed and pronouns used show no gender bias. Gender neutral pronouns such as yourself, we, and so on are employed. However, the imagery is explicitly gender-biased.

Figure one portrays a skinny, buck-toothed freckled boy standing in front of a mirror. In his thought bubble, he is a muscular athlete with one foot resting on a rugby ball and flexing his left bicep. Three girls wearing skirts are clearly smitten and ogle him with adoration. This positive visual of white male self-image both implicitly and explicitly promote a heteronormative message. In his inflated self-image he is portrayed as strong and good at sports as a readily interpellated heteronormative male subject ought to be. The female adoration for these qualities reinforce macho masculinities and feminine submission to these strong masculine qualities. He is seen and recognised. He is singular, prominent and he is seen by his multiple anonymous female admirers. The different skin tones of his admirers are also indicative of a heteronormative white male having access to all women. Furthermore, in the description of the illustration the male character is named in 'This boy has a very good self-image'.

On the page that follows, we see figure two. The description of the illustration reads 'When you feel confident you will have a positive self-image'. This is an image of a dark-skinned and unnamed girl. There is no portrayal of body positivity or physical achievement. There is no real context or locus for the picture, that is, she does not function or exist within a specific space. She has been stripped of autonomy by being unnamed, and while she seems to have access to intangible resources in terms of her self-confidence, this not seem to translate into success in any specific arena. The background is blank, bar a smaller dark-skinned male character who looks possibly unhappy or insecure or unsure. It is not clear whether these two figures are meant to show contrasting depictions of positive and negative self-images or whether it is meant to show how undesirable confident female figures are to male figures. The girl in this picture is not being admired for her confidence, which is in stark contrast to image one. One can even argue that her confidence appears threatening to the figure in the

background. She has possibly, then, been removed from existing in a public or private locus because her confidence is threatening or undesirable.

Figure 1

FIGURE 1

This boy has a very good self-image!

Figure 2

FIGURE 2

When you feel confident you will have a positive self-image.

In the self-image unit, there is a discussion on personal interests, abilities, and potential. Again, the text itself portrays no gender bias in that gender-neutral pronouns are used. The image portraying the concept of personal potential is an image of a white man. He is a South African athlete holding up his Olympic gold medal and smiling. He looks confident and is clearly successful at sport. While this image seems innocuous, it supports many dominant discourses about masculinity, whiteness and success. For example, how success is measured or who can be successful, as well as the equivalence between whiteness and achievement.

The text continues to include a section on enhancing self-image. The message conflates self-respect with self-image.

> Some people have a positive self-image. They respect
> themselves and so earn respect of those around them (pg. 12).

I do not believe that these ideas are synonymous with each other. It is possible to have a poor self-image, for example a poor body image due to media fat shaming, and still have respect for oneself. Self-image is easily influenced by the media, the entertainment industry and trends, whereas self-respect is affected by other factors such as upbringing and life experience. I do believe that these two concepts intersect at some point but they should not be conflated with one another.

Additionally, there are recommendations for improving one's self-image like exercise and a focus on positive qualities as well as helping people, with the promise that if one respects oneself then others will respect you too. This cannot be substantiated and suggests that we should require the validation of others. It further implies that if that validation is not there then the problem stems from the person in question's personality or character. There is also a class bias implicit in

> You should always exercise and eat healthily to feel good and
> improve your self-image (pg. 13).

Studies show that higher-quality diets are associated with greater affluence (Darmon & Drewnowski, 2008). It follows that if it is not possible to eat as healthily as one should, according to dominant discourses on healthy eating, then one may not feel good or be able to

improve self-image. This assumes middleclass –ness. Implicit in that assumption are suggestions that one is disqualified from possessing a 'healthy' self-image if one is not middle class, and further that not being middle-class is a failure. This is highly problematic in a country like South Africa which is so heavily stratified by class. Statistics South Africa (2017) places 55.5% of South Africans living in poverty. They also mention that children, black Africans, females, and people from rural areas are those most affected by poverty. It follows that the assumption of middleclass- ness is potentially an assumption of whiteness. This reifies domination in the form of whiteness and middleclass-ness.

The activity that follows includes five images associated with improving self-image. The first image is of a girl riding a bicycle with the caption that states that exercise makes you healthier and if you respect yourself others will respect you too. The second image shows a girl standing against a wall wearing shorts, the caption here reads that you should stop thinking negative thoughts about yourself. Another image is of three happy, confident looking guys with a rugby ball, reminding learners that they are unique. With regards to helping someone or doing a good deed every day, the images show a girl helping an old lady by taking her for a walk (care labour) and a boy helping an old man with a laptop (productive labour) as illustrated in figure 3. All of these images are stereotypical depictions that verify and maintain certain kinds of masculinity – particularly the 'masculine' ideals of being sporty and a tech-savvy.

Figure 3
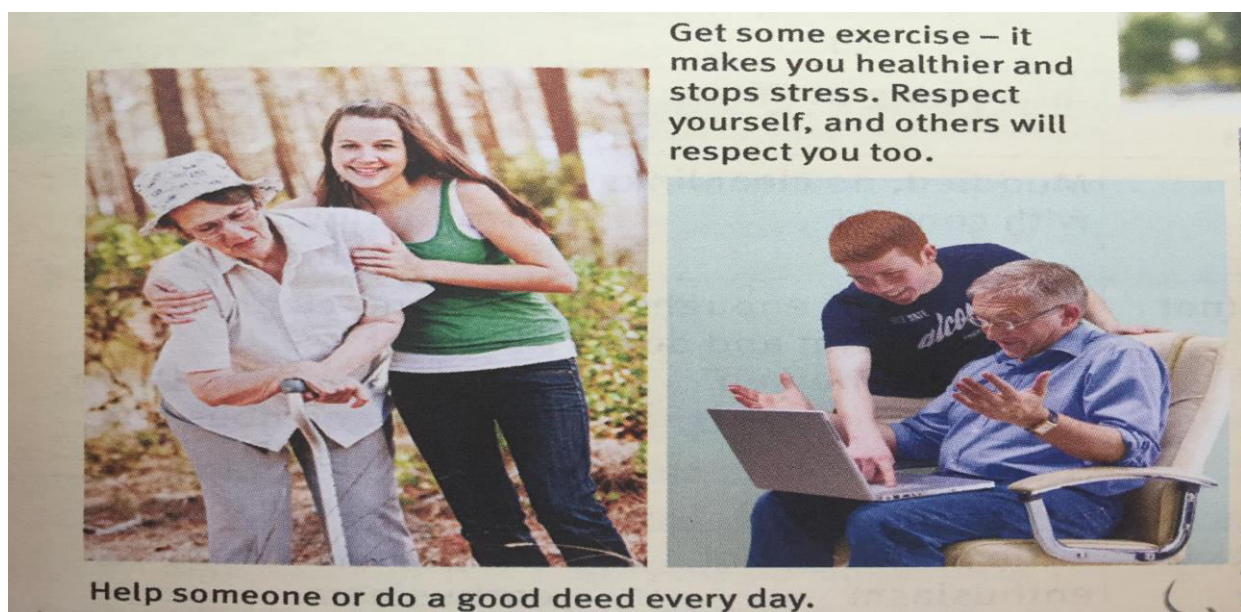
Similarly, these images verify and maintain certain kinds of femininity – particularly engaging in care labour versus productive labour, and having a poor self-image.

The section that deals with strategies to enhance self-image also includes a problem-solving activity. The activity is accompanied by an image of friends at the beach (see Figure 4). The caption reads 'What is Laura's problem?' Immediately she is framed as someone with a problem. Her expression and placing in the image further sets her as problematic. Laura, the named, white, female character is sitting on the sand clearly not feeling good. Laura's friends are in the water playing and having a good time. Her friends comprise two boys, one white and one of colour and a black girl. The text that accompanies this image is as follows (pg. 14):

> Laura has a poor self-image. She believes she is fat and
> unattractive. On a beautiful, sunny day, she and her class go on
> an outing to a beach in Durban. They are allowed to swim.
> Laura sits on the sand, very unhappy and lonely. She refuses to
> swim, even though her friends try to get her to join them in the
> water.

Students are required to act out a role-play. In this role-play, they are required to:

> Take turns to be Laura and show why you think she has a poor
> self-image. Show how her friends can help her to respect herself
> more.

Laura is associated with negative vocabulary and having body image issues. This is conflated with not having self-respect. This entire activity is problematic, not only because textual and visual elements associating negative body image with girls but also the repetition of negative vocabulary as opposed to providing a positive example. The book advises that there is an informal assessment by the teacher based on students' demonstration of Laura as feeling 'fat, unattractive, does not accept herself, does not like her body and is too shy to mix'. This role-play, in my opinion, will result in a parody of feelings associated with a poor body image, something which most students at the grade 7 level would be struggling with. Parodying these feelings potentially invalidates them and will possibly not result in a productive

conversation about developing and cultivating a good body image. It may also call attention to those students who are feeling this way, and this can have multiple negative effects. The number of happy and confident male figures here outnumbers the number of confident female figures. This further reinforces stereotypical ideas that boys do not experience these issues or feelings.

Figure 4

FIGURE A   What is Laura's problem?

On the page that follows, the book provides strategies to enhance others' self-image through positive actions. Here the image of three boys leaning against a brick wall is accompanied by a caption that again, associates boys with success in sports and sports cars because they all like playing goalkeeper and they all dream of driving an Audi TT. This is meant to demonstrate that even though we may have many similarities with others, we are all unique. Implicitly, it presents masculine success as competence in sports and desiring fast cars and stereotypes men in terms of a specific material ideal. This normalises capitalist achievements and reinforces gender roles, where men are seen to be 'natural' providers, breadwinners, heads of households and so on.

4.2.1.2   Puberty and gender constructs

It is important to firstly note that while 'gender constructs' is featured in the title of this unit, a discussion or mention of gender constructs is conspicuously absent. Rather, the material proceeds to construct gender through imagery and text. This unit first addresses what puberty is and the associated physical and emotional changes. In describing puberty, gender neutral pronouns such as 'everyone', 'your', 'child' and 'peers' are used. There are no accompanying images. When elucidating on physical and emotional changes, the text uses binary gender terms of 'boy' and 'girl'. They note that

> Some girls may find that their hips suddenly get fatter. This is
> normal and does not mean you have to go on a diet to lose
> weight.

There is nothing said further about boys under this section. While the text is instructing that an increase of fat is normal, the use of 'get fatter' and 'go on a diet' and 'lose weight' are specifically used with regards to girls and these phrases are already familiar to girls at that age. These utterances are pre-packaged and loaded with negative connotations. The socialisation of girls to hate their own bodies starts at a very young age. Pumla Gqola (2015:39) cautions that

> patriarchy creates an inferiority complex in women that also
> depends on hatred for the feminine and therefore self-loathing.
> Consequently, women spend energy fixing themselves since
> the full human is masculine, and given the fact that women
> cannot legitimately attain masculinity, the best they can do is
> make themselves desirable for the approval of the masculine.
> When this approval is perpetually deferred, more work on the
> self is spent. In the end, patriarchy produces a condition of
> women's unease in their bodies.

Today, the body is the focus for women's labour and attention; and a sleek, controlled figure is essential to portraying success (Gill 2009:99). Therefore, utterances such as 'go on a diet' and 'lose weight', regardless of being used in the context of trying to convince girls that

'getting fatter' is normal, function as negatively coded language that necessarily makes a girl feel alienated from her own body. Gill (2009:100) further explains that possessing a 'sexy body' is presented as a women's key source of identity. Women are no strangers to the discourse that polices their bodies when they are not considered sexy by the patriarchal gaze. They are told that they are 'getting fatter', and that they need to 'go on a diet' to 'lose weight'. Anti-fat ideology functions as other ideologies do: it produces individual women as interpellated subjects who submit freely to the commandments of the Subject, in this case the patriarchal ideal of femininity, so that she shall freely accept her subjection (Althusser 1971:56). In this instance, women submit themselves to self-surveillance and disciplining practices to obtain the ideal body.

In the accompanying table of changes in boys and girls there is an image of a white male on the beach, topless wearing shorts and looking confident, as well as a picture of a young girl of colour with a turtle-neck shirt and smiling coyly. The male image clearly exudes body confidence whereas the girl seems very shy. Weight gain is framed positively for boys as it describes that boys 'Grow taller, shoulders become broader, muscles get bigger, gain weight', whereas for girls it is again framed very negatively in that it describes that 'Hips widen and many girls become conscious of their weight.'

A sub-section of this unit includes a discussion about feelings and romantic relationships. The image is a heteronormative image of a boy and girl who are in love. The text reads (pg. 23):

> This can be a difficult time when your close friends may be
> more interested in spending time with a boyfriend or girlfriend
> than with their old friends of the same sex.

This validates a heteronormative world view as it is implied that romantic relationships involve people of the opposite sex, while platonic friends are of the same sex. Stevi Jackson (2006:105) highlights that 'institutionalized, normative heterosexuality regulates those kept within its boundaries as well as marginalizing and sanctioning those outside them'. This happens, as Jackson (2006:105) explains, because heterosexuality depends upon and guarantees gender division and therefore regulating both sexuality and gender. What this ultimately means is that

heterosexuality, while depending on the exclusion or
marginalization of other sexualities for its legitimacy, is not
precisely coterminous with heterosexual sexuality.
Heteronormativity defines not only a normative sexual practice
but also a normal way of life (Jackson 2006:107).

This is problematic because assuming heterosexuality invalidates other sexualities. The representational practice of normalising heterosexuality necessarily requires that queer identities are positioned as not normal or desirable. Following Hall (1997: 235), meaning depends on the difference between opposites and there are always relations of power between the poles of the binary. Thus, if we were to consider the binary heterosexual/queer, or even the problematic but common consideration of heterosexuality/homosexuality, we can see that heterosexuality operates in the public sphere, it is named, it sees and it is seen. The power relations here are clear and heterosexuality wields its discursive power of meaning making by silencing and thereby invalidating queer identities.

4.2.1.3 Peer pressure: the effects of peer pressure

The unit on peer pressure employs gender neutral language throughout as it talks about peer pressure and substance abuse. There is an image portraying peers engaging in 'gender appropriate' activity. There are three boys, one with a rugby ball, one with a skateboard and one with a walkie talkie. The picture includes two girls, one singing and one painting. Here the girls are involved in the arts and the boys in activities suited to boys as per a heteronormative worldview. The characters are of different races. Ostensibly, this looks like a multicultural picture of happy young girls and boys. The associated text defines peer pressure as wanting to behave as others do for acceptance. While the image portrays each individual happily engaged in their own activity, possibly to promote a message of being oneself and expressing individuality, the gendered activities that the characters are involved in suggests what kind of activities girls and boys should be involved in. This also additionally and covertly dictates appropriate behaviour of girls and boys.

In the subsection on unhealthy sexual behaviour, language and imagery ceases to be gender neutral. It additionally problematically aligns healthy sexual behaviour as comprising masturbation and abstinence or waiting for a faithful partner before having sex. The accompanying three images portray unhealthy sexual behaviour. Firstly, a diagram in which both a male and a female character have multiple sexual partners (of the opposite sex). While the text is explicitly telling learners not to have sex, the imagery implicitly communicates to them the only kind of sex that is appropriate (heterosexual) – even though framed in the 'unhealthy' context of multiple partners. Secondly, a woman dressed in a short skirt leaning on a motorcycle and a guy looking at her with an innocent expression. The caption is a question asking whether exchanging sex for rewards is worth it. This image portrays the 'woman as the whore' trope; that through their sexuality women are temptresses and men are innocent victims of their feminine wiles. The third image portrays an aggressive pot-bellied man (relative) who 'may want sex with younger people'. This text rightly communicates that sexual predators may be known or unknown to us, but is potentially suggestive that not practising abstinence might render one a victim for predatory men. It also implies that there is a safety in abstinence, that if you behave in an acceptable prescribed way, then no bad can happen. This image also overtly perpetuates the portrayal of men as predators, which covertly perpetuates the portrayal of women and girls as victims.

The subsection on bullying and rebellious behaviour talks uses gender neutral language with images portraying girls as the victims of bullies and boys as rebellious, wearing hoodies and experimenting with drugs. This perpetuates the stereotypes of girls as weak and needing to be protected or rescued, while it normalises violent and rebellious behaviour for boys. Ironically, these sanctioned violent masculinities are the entities that the stereotypically-portrayed girl victims would require protection or rescuing from. Yet, instead of problematizing violent and rebellious masculinities, to contribute to a safer environment for potential victims, these curriculum materials choose to coach potential victims on how they should protect themselves from the very violence it is sanctioning.

4.2.1.4 Dealing with abuse in different contexts

This section deals mainly with physical and sexual abuse. While it uses gender neutral language, an image portrays girls as victims of abuse. She is hiding her face but has a visible

bruise on her left fore-arm. A statement in the text related to cyber abuse that can manifest in the real world is highly problematic. It reads: 'Don't become a victim of abuse – be clever and careful about people you communicate with on the internet or on your phone' (pg. 79). This places onus on the victim to be clever and avoid abuse, implying that those that fall victim to abuse are not clever.

An activity on 'threatening and risky situations' requires that students examine the images and explain why they are risky, who is at risk and what they would do if they were the person in danger (see Figure 5). The six images associated with the threatening and risky situations all portray girls as the victims.

The first two images are indicative of normalised rape culture. In figure A, a boy is pouring something into a girl's drink. She is standing away from the drink while chatting to a friend. The message in this picture tells girls not to leave their drinks unattended as opposed to telling boys not to drug girls. In this way, normalised rape culture places the onus on the victim to avoid these risky situations instead of problematizing the behaviour that creates the actual risk.

Figure B shows a girl walking home alone at night. The caption asks whether this is safe or not. Again, the onus is on the potential victim to refrain from a certain activity – that is, if it is not safe then it will be her fault if something does happen to her because she is being unsafe. Figure C portrays a drunk adult man and a young girl hiding behind the couch. His speech bubble says that he wants to kiss her and feel her soft skin. This portrayal of family sexual abuse offers no productive way for a learner in that position to navigate the situation. Figure D shows a drunk guy offering a lift to two women and a caption asking whether the reader would get into a car with a drunk person.

Figures E and F are also indicative of normalised rape culture and casual sexism. Figure E is of a young girl chatting on the internet to an old man who has misrepresented himself. The caption asks whether she is safe going to meet him. Again, the girl is engaging in unsafe behaviour and I believe that it is implicit in this image that she should be 'clever' and not become a victim of abuse in this way.

Figure 5

Activity 2 Threatening and risky situations

Work alone or with a partner.

1 Study the pictures below.
2 Write a short paragraph about each picture to explain why the situation is risky or threatening. Describe what each person in the picture is doing, and who is at risk. Suggest how you think each story ends.
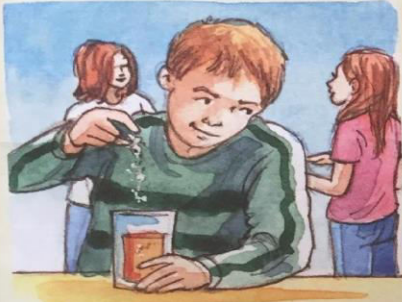3 Say what you would do if you were the person in danger.

FIGURE A Look at this boy pouring white powder into the girl's drink.

FIGURE B Is it safe for her to walk alone? Why not?

Come here brat! I want to kiss you. Let me feel that soft skin of yours.

FIGURE C Why do you think the girl looks so scared?

Come on girls. I'll drive you home. I've only had 5 or 6 beers.
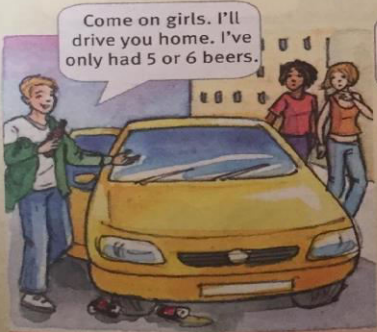
FIGURE D Would you get in a car with a drunk person? Why not?

Oh yes! I cannot wait to meet you!

Meet me at the Mall at eight tonight?

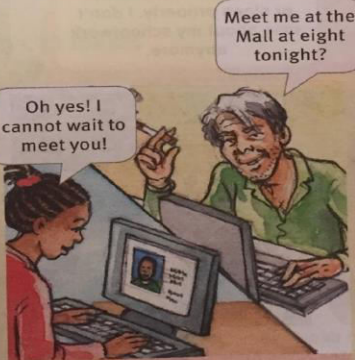**FIGURE E** This man is pretending to be a young boy. Do you think the girl is safe? Give a reason for your answer.

Thabo I think you should stop now!

FIGURE F Is the girl in danger? Explain your answer.

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Figure F shows a woman being kissed on the neck by a young man. Her speech bubble reads 'Thabo I think you should stop now'. She is smiling and by using his name, she is clearly familiar with the man. The caption asks whether she is in danger. An immediate response to that question would be 'no' because she is clearly familiar with the man and she is smiling. Her smile indicates that she is enjoying herself and her language is not clear and assertive

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because she says, 'I think' you should stop now. Thus, she is unclear whether she wants him to stop and is potentially 'asking for it'.

Question 3 of the activity requires that learners say what they would do if they were the person in danger. What has been made clear here is that these are all unsafe situation for women. Men are the perpetrators in all six scenarios. A natural and expected response, particularly considering that a heteronormative worldview seems very clearly entrenched in this resource, would be to avoid the unsafe situation. That is, girls would be expected to respond to figure A that they would not leave their drink unattended, or to Figure B that they will not walk alone at night and so on. I think that there was a missed opportunity here to portray empowering images for girls and/or the opportunity to problematise misogynistic and sexist behaviour instead of victim blaming. The unit continues by exploring ways of protecting oneself from risky situations instead of educating against placing others in risky situations. By doing so, this text is acting in complicity with rape culture by silently acquiescing to what are essentially acts of male violence designed to keep women living in fear.

All the male actors in these illustrations have autonomy. They use this to act to the detriment of the women in the illustrations. The autonomy granted to them does not give them the power to critically consider their actions, but endorses their actions by awarding them self-confidence and power to control the narrative.

4.2.1.5   Conclusion

The Via Afrika text in sum explicitly involves many problematic elements. Viewed through a feminist lens, the discourses of victim blaming, rape culture, stereotyping and heteronormativity – so evident in this text and in the examples discussed above – are harmful to South African society. The intersections between race, class and gender become clear when taking cognisance of discourses that act in complicity with domination in the form of whiteness, maleness and middleclass-ness.

Deeply entrenched in the Via Afrika text are narratives of heteronormative discourses. For example, this book assumes and specifically states that sexual partners are always of the 'opposite sex'; it also assigns specific gendered roles to women and men, and privileges

certain types of masculinities and certain types of femininities. In addition, there is also strong support for normalisation of rape culture as the text continuously asks women to protect themselves from risky situations without problematising or stigmatising the type of misogynistic behaviour that puts women in danger. It is therefore reasonable to assert that the gender discourse in Via Afrika, as read through a feminist lens, is patriarchal as it reinforces discourses of domination. The sexist elements are wholly alienating to girls as the text does nothing to challenge hegemonic patriarchal discourse. This text serves to socialise women to accept their subordinate station in life.

The discourses used as socialising tools in this book have demonstrated success as a phenomenon experienced by white men, and that this success grants them access to the world. These characters are the natural possessors of intangible social resources like self-confidence, credibility, status, and respect. On the other hand, black womanhood remains an unnamed figure with limited access to intangible social resources. Possessing confidence in a black female body has been presented as undesirable and not enough to be granted access to act in public spaces, and to see and be seen. We see that some of the white female characters – while portrayed as having a problem or as victims – are named, but none of the black female characters are named. All of the victims in the book are women, while all of the aggressors are men. This dichotomy between the representation of male characters and female characters and between white characters and black characters highlights how race intersects with gender to inform different experiences of the world, which are normalised in this text book.

Qualities that are desired or associated with men, for example, success or confidence are seen as threatening when embodied in brown bodies. Furthermore, the assumption of middleclass-ness through eating healthy as a way to improve self-image is a brutalising one when one considers the millions of South Africans living in poverty and who lack access to high-quality healthy food. This type of implicit messaging, or subtext, when read in the political and social climate of South Africa is highly problematic. Discourses of race which assume equality because of representation are harmful when consideration is not given to who has the power to represent and how 'othered' identities are represented. Furthermore, while brown bodies are highly visible in the text, their invisibility in terms of anonymity and lack of autonomy is dehumanising. Their presence serves only as a vessel upon which whiteness or maleness may act. This firmly holds unequal power relations between races, classes and

genders in place. In context, if you are a poor learner with limited access to quality foods, are a person of colour, and especially a girl, you are receiving multiple messages through this book that invalidates your existence through degradation.

4.2.2   SHUTER AND SHOOTER: TOP CLASS LIFE ORIENTATION

4.2.2.1   Self-image

This unit starts off with a discussion on self-respect and self-image. It engages learners in activities that require them to identify their positive qualities. The text employs gender neutral pronouns. Images associated with self-image are only images of girls. The two images employed are positive female images; one image shows students standing in front of a mirror smiling and asking, 'What do you see when you look in the mirror?' and 'What picture do you have of yourself?'. The second image is a collage of the positive qualities and abilities of a girl named Susan. These seemingly positive portrayals are very important and serve the text well, however the absence of boys in this discussion might lead one to believe that boys do not have issues with self-image.

The unit also discusses respect for others and for diversity. The text states

> People have different cultures, skin-colour, languages, religions,
> genders, sexual orientations, appearances, ages, disabilities,
> beliefs, attitudes, families, incomes, likes and dislikes, strengths
> and weaknesses (pg. 6).

This is a positive discussion to have, particularly with respect to gender and sexual orientation. This text advocates for the respect and worthiness of celebration that should be afforded people. No further exploration or discussion ensues. The statement is a standalone and misses an excellent opportunity to address diversities.

4.2.2.2   Puberty and gender constructs

While the previous unit made mention of the diversities of people, including specifically mentioning that people have different genders and sexual orientations, this unit employs the nouns 'boys' and 'girls'. In discussing gender constructs the text becomes highly problematic. The text takes an essentialist stance when it states that (pg. 15):

-Male children become adult males and female children become adult females.

-Biological differences decide which sex you are: male or female.

The text further goes on to explain gender constructs as ideas about what it means to behave like a man and what it means to behave like a woman. A stereotypical example follows in the statements "Men don't cry and women cook'. None of this is problematized in any way. Rather, this is presented as self-evident or obvious truths, not open for discussion. In the activity that follows the text also requires that learners answer what it means to behave like a man or woman. Again, assuming gendered roles and behaviours as doctrine.

Even though diversity in the context of gender and sexual orientation was mentioned earlier in the text, the text clearly portrays gender as binary and propagates stereotypical gender roles. There was, I believe, an opportunity to potentially subvert hegemonic discourses but instead, it reinforces a heteronormative, patriarchal paradigm. The text does not call for questioning or meaningful discussion but rather requires the reproduction of heteronormative gender thinking. The activity also requires learners to discuss whether they know men or women who do not behave in the way that they should and the example given here is 'men who cry and women who are the heads of the house' (pg. 16). This question associates emotions as negative in men and financial stability as abnormal in women. This underscores the power dynamics at play: it is normalised that men hold the economic power in a necessarily unequal heterosexual arrangement. Further, that it is not normal – and by extension unattractive – or acceptable for women to yield economic power or have financial independence. Similarly, it perpetuates toxic practices of masculinity that require men to be macho and without emotion when it stigmatises men who cry (mentioned twice) as abnormal and unacceptable. These 'regimes of representation' (Hall 1997) that stereotype 'correct' ways of being a man or a woman, are an exercise of symbolic violence by which the patriarchy is able to manage and produce gender and maintain power relations.

Further exploration of the development of self to become successful adults, the text is positively worded in that it states that one must 'explore the potential' in oneself, that learners have the power to become the best adults and that they should concentrate on the positive aspects of themselves. These positive steps are accompanied by two images (Figure

6), one of a boy's thought bubble, which shows him flexing big muscles as well as with his arm around a girl; and a girl's thought bubble, which shows her jumping rope with two friends. The images then imply that success for a boy is achieved if he is physically fit and has a girlfriend. Whereas, it also potentially implies that female respect is only gained through other females, that is, with the same sex. A further implication is that respect is gained through conforming to heteronormative and gender stereotypes. Advocating this type of narrative is not only detrimental in developing a critical consciousness in learners, but further entrenches prejudice and ignorance and intolerance for anyone who does not conform to these ideals.

Looking more closely at the images, the stance of the male and female characters in the illustration clearly show the imposition of the embodiment of normative femininity versus the space taken up by normative masculinity. The exercise questions that accompany the pictures read (pg. 17):

> 1. Discuss the following questions about the boy and the girl:
> a. How has each of the people in the picture changed? Think about physical and emotional changes as well as changes in social expectations.
> b. What do you think each person's relationship with himself or herself is like.
> c. What do you think their relationships with others are like? Think about their relationships with people their own age, both of the same and opposite sexes.
> d. What advice would you give each of them about their relationships? Think about their relationships with themselves and others.

The girl and boy to whom these thought bubbles belong are both wearing school uniforms. In the boy's thought bubble, he has clearly grown and has become physically and sexually attractive, while the girl's thought bubble portrays her still in school uniform. This infantilising image potentially communicates the problematic message that her maturity – in this case being out of school uniform and grown – is only validated by a male presence.

Figure 6
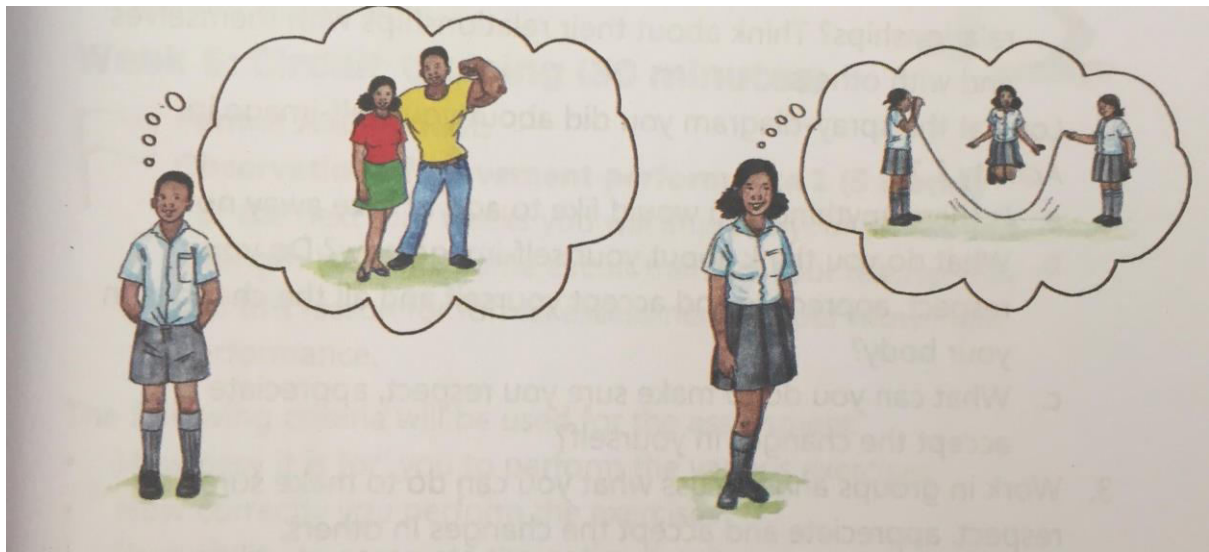
4.2.2.3   Peer pressure: the effects of peer pressure

This unit opens discussing the effects of peer pressure. There are five comic strips (Figure 7) titled under pressure, cool in the gang, life in the fast lane, mall rats and rebel without a cause, respectively. It should be noted that most of these are western tropes. These are given as examples of negative types of behaviour, falling into the categories of use of dangerous substances, crime, and unhealthy sexual behaviour.

The comic strip labelled 'under pressure' depicts learners being pressured to try drugs, alcohol and smoking. 'Rebel without a cause' depicts learners as pressuring each other to get tattoos and piercings and leave through their bedroom window to meet their friends. Both skits include a mix of boys and girls, and the imagery clearly depicts that these types of pressures can befall anyone. The 'cool in the gang' comic strip portrays a group of what appears to be young men of colour wearing beanies and standing with their hands in their pockets while pressuring a friend to shoplift. This portrays boys as the perpetrators of crime.

The most problematic comic strip is the one titled 'life in the fast lane'. This portrays a young couple where the girl is pressuring the boy to have sex. To try to goad him into doing it, she says that everyone is doing it and asks 'Are you a moffie?!' She also states that it does not matter if they do not have condoms.

The 'mall rats' comic strip shows a group of mean girls making fun of another girl's clothes. They say it is a crime against fashion and one asks 'Do you have a Virgin cell phone? Just like you.'

These skits firstly overtly portray boys as the perpetrators of crime while portraying girls as the perpetrators of unhealthy sexual behaviour. The use of the word 'moffie' is problematic because it is homophobic slur. It feeds into a heteronormative paradigm and toxic practices of masculinity. The homophobic intention here is to insult a possibly straight boy by calling him gay, thereby asserting that gayness is abhorrent. This homophobic slur is normalised in the book as it is printed twice. It rejects homosexuality and in so doing, normalises heterosexuality. This propagates heteronormativity in communicating that using homophobic slurs is acceptable and it potentially and indirectly incites homophobic violence. The female character not being concerned with the use of condoms also speaks to the idea of women trying to trap men by getting pregnant. This imagery is problematic in that it is not reflective of the reality that overwhelmingly and consistently, a high proportion of young women describe varying incidence of sexual coercion and harassment, and that the degree of sexual coercion is substantially underestimated (Jewkes and Abrahams 2002).

Using 'virgin' as a slur is also problematic in that it is meant to insult. Patriarchal culture polices and controls women's bodies by ostracising them for being 'prudes' or not sexually active or sex positive or for being virgins. At the same time, patriarchal culture demonizes women as sexually risqué or a 'slut' if they are sexually active or sex positive. By labelling young women who are sexually active as 'sluts' and insulting those who are virgins, there is no 'right' course of action. The girls who are bullies in the 'mall rats' illustration clearly are representative of 'bad girls' who think that being a virgin is bad. In contrast, the one they are bullying must then be 'good' and a virgin.

Later, the comic strip 'life on the edge' is continued. The boy explains that he likes her but is not ready to have sex and she responds by apologising for calling him a 'moffie' (Figure 8). She states that she did it because she was hurt as she though he didn't like her. Here, 'like' is equated with sex which is a problematic message to purport. It is portrayed in a normalised way. The simplicity of the resolution is insufficient when compared with the stacking of problematic stereotypes and normalisations of dominant and repressive gender forms.
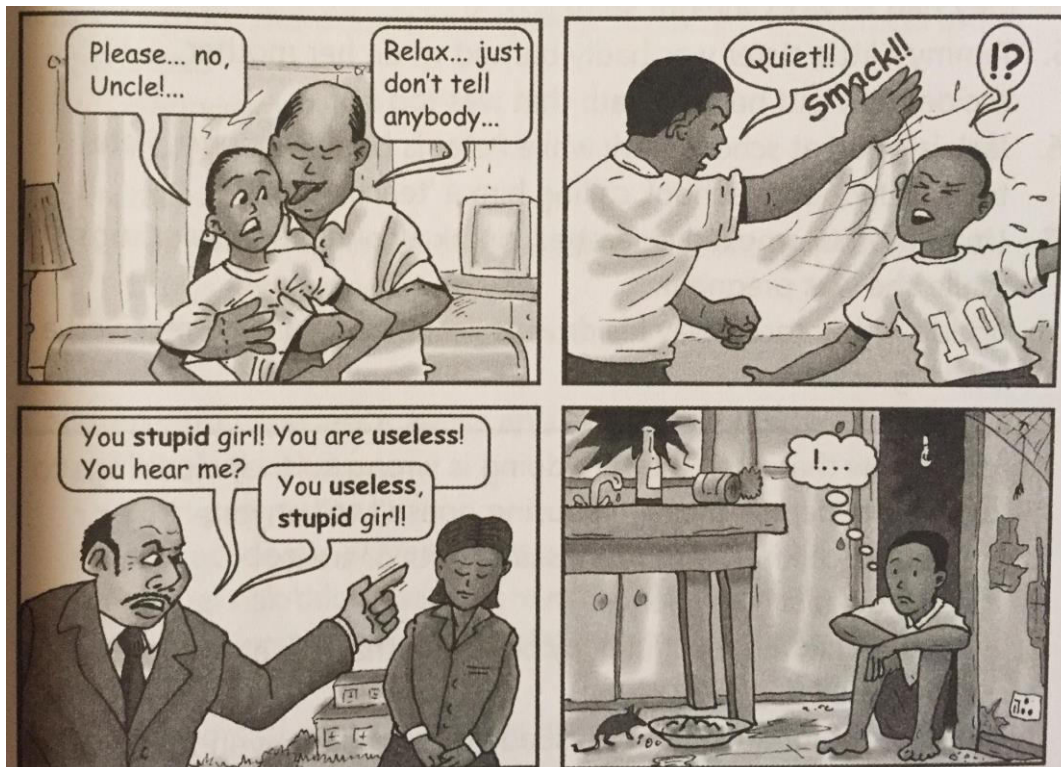
Figure 7

Figure 8
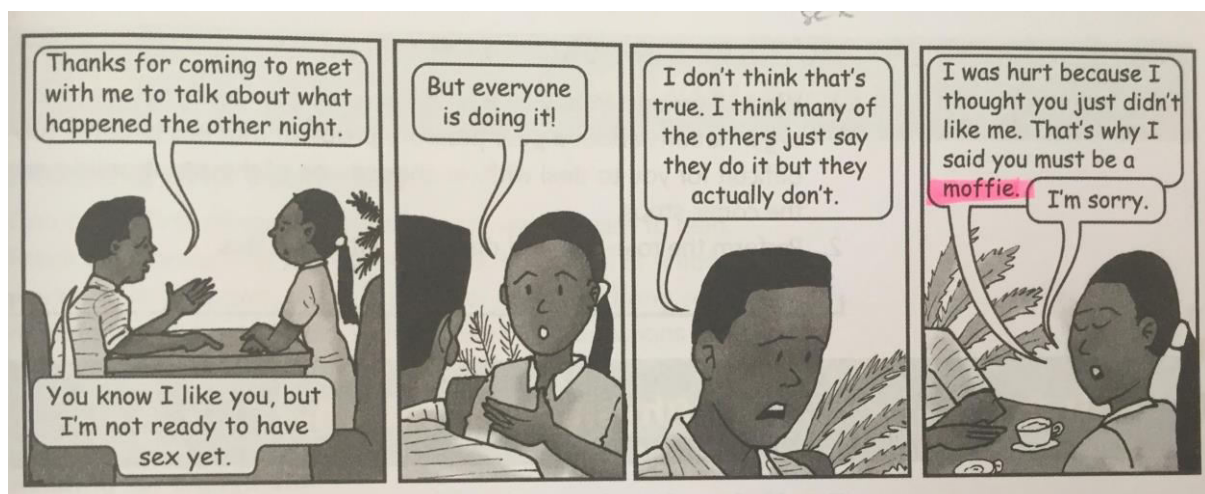
4.2.2.4   Dealing with abuse in different contexts

The unit specifically tackles physical, emotional and sexual abuse, as well as neglect. A glaring positive aspect is that abusers are framed as someone potentially close to the victim and not as some stranger in the night. This can surely be productive in learners thinking of victimization and to be weary of their situations.

The accompanying illustrations portray a young girl being touched inappropriately by her uncle, a young woman being emotionally abused by an older man, possibly a father; a young boy being physically abused and a young boy being neglected in squalor. Young women are then being portrayed as the victims of emotional and sexual abuse and young men as the victims of physical abuse and neglect. While these notions may be the dominant idea of the victims of these types of abuses, it is important to have a conversation about young men being sexually and emotionally abused to begin to remove the stigma from male victims.

Figure 9

There is no resolution offered for the situations portrayed in figure 9. The conversation that follows is an answer to 'Why do some people abuse others?' It explains that an abuser could

be anyone in the community and that it sometimes happens when people are under the influence of drugs and alcohol or when people are unable to cope with their own feelings. The section that follows caution learners to identify risky situations and risky people. With no resolution or real discussion, other than to portray visually different types of abuse, these images could serve as a normalisation of violence and child victimisation under the guise of education.

The book further goes on to note that virtual situations can be just as risky as real life ones and tell of two women, one raped and the other killed by men they had met on the internet and subsequently gone to meet. Here the text alludes to victim blaming in that if these girls had not engaged in this risky online behaviour then they may not have fallen victim to these crimes. While rightly cautioning youngsters to be alert and aware when online, there is another missed opportunity here to problematise the entitlement to women's bodies that a patriarchal culture bestows upon men.

4.2.2.5 Conclusion

A glaring similarity between the Schuter and Shooter publication and the Via Afrika publication are the 'regimes of representation' (Hall 1997) used by these publications to represent women and men. Hall (1997:258) states that stereotyping reduces, essentialises, naturalises and fixes 'difference'; that it is part of the maintenance of the symbolic order; and that it occurs when there tends to be gross inequalities of power.

These regimes of representation are additionally significant because they reinforce toxic practices of masculinity, such as asserting that men do not cry and women cook. The text has shown support of unequal economic power in heterosexual relations through these reductive tropes by prescribing 'correct' ways to be men or women.

More than the entrenched heteronormative worldview, which erases marginalised identities through invisibility, Schuter and Shooter sanctions the use of homophobic slurs. When one considers the multiple actors involved in compiling and editing a resource, it becomes even more jarring that Schuter and Shooter felt it appropriate to print a homophobic slur multiple times.

The gender discourse in this text is patriarchal in that it reinforces hegemonic patriarchal discourses through stereotypical representations, unequal power relations and homophobic hate speech. The stereotypical gendered representations reinforce stereotypes as they require male validation of the feminine (such as Figure 6), and encourage toxic practices of masculinity in their discussion on puberty and gender constructs. While the text made a commendable mention about respecting diversity, the opportunity here was missed to provide an inclusive narrative.

All of these practices link to the current socio-political climate of South Africa by reinforcing behaviour that creates and sustain an unsafe environment for women and LGBTQIA++ persons. Deeply entrenched heteronormative patriarchal values promote the maintenance of the status quo.

4.2.3   MASKEW MILLER LONGMAN: LIFE ORIENTATION TODAY

4.2.3.1   Self-image

Unit one examines the concept of self-image. It speaks mainly to developing positive relationships with oneself, family and friends. Images include two girls looking in the mirror, the one seeing positive qualities and the other seeing negative qualities. There are additional images of two boys, one who says he enjoys playing soccer and the other thinking the same and that if he practises hard enough he would be able to play for the national team. Again, while employing gender neutral pronouns throughout, like 'you' and 'your', the images to some extent perpetuate a patriarchal worldview in that the boys talk is overwhelmingly linked to success in sports as synonymous with masculine accomplishment. The text does not provide any further discussion other than tips on improving self-image and highlighting one's good qualities.

Under the strategies to enhance others' self-image, that is through treating them well, the text mentions diversity and respecting others through trying to' understand them regardless of their culture, gender, race, religion, nationality, age or disability'. There is no actual discussion on diversity or differing gender orientations, races and so on.

4.2.3.2   Puberty and gender constructs

On the topic of puberty, the text takes an essentialist stance in that it states that boys become men and girls become women. That is, that someone assigned male at birth will necessary grow into an adult man and identify as such, and someone assigned female at birth will necessarily grow into an adult female and identify as such. While it makes mention of gender constructs by defining it as 'beliefs about how men and women should behave' there is no interrogation of gender constructs either in the text or in the exercises which follow. The text here employs gender neutral pronouns of 'you'; 'your', and 'everyone'.

In the discussion of how puberty affects relationships, there are six illustrations (Figure 10). The first one is one a teenage girl who is wearing shorts and her dad tells her that she will not be wearing those. She states that everyone wears them and that he has no style. The second image is of a mom telling her son that they are going to his grandmother for lunch but he

refuses because he wants to spend time with his friends. The third illustration depicts a boy looking at others who seem 'cool' and wishing he could be like them. The fourth illustration depicts a boy and girl sitting on a bench and his speech bubble reads 'This feels weird and a bit awkward but I really like her'. The fifth illustration is of a girl looking in the mirror and feeling uncomfortable with her appearance. The last image reveals a boy who is also looking in the mirror at his pimples and asking why this isn't happening to anyone else.

Figure 10
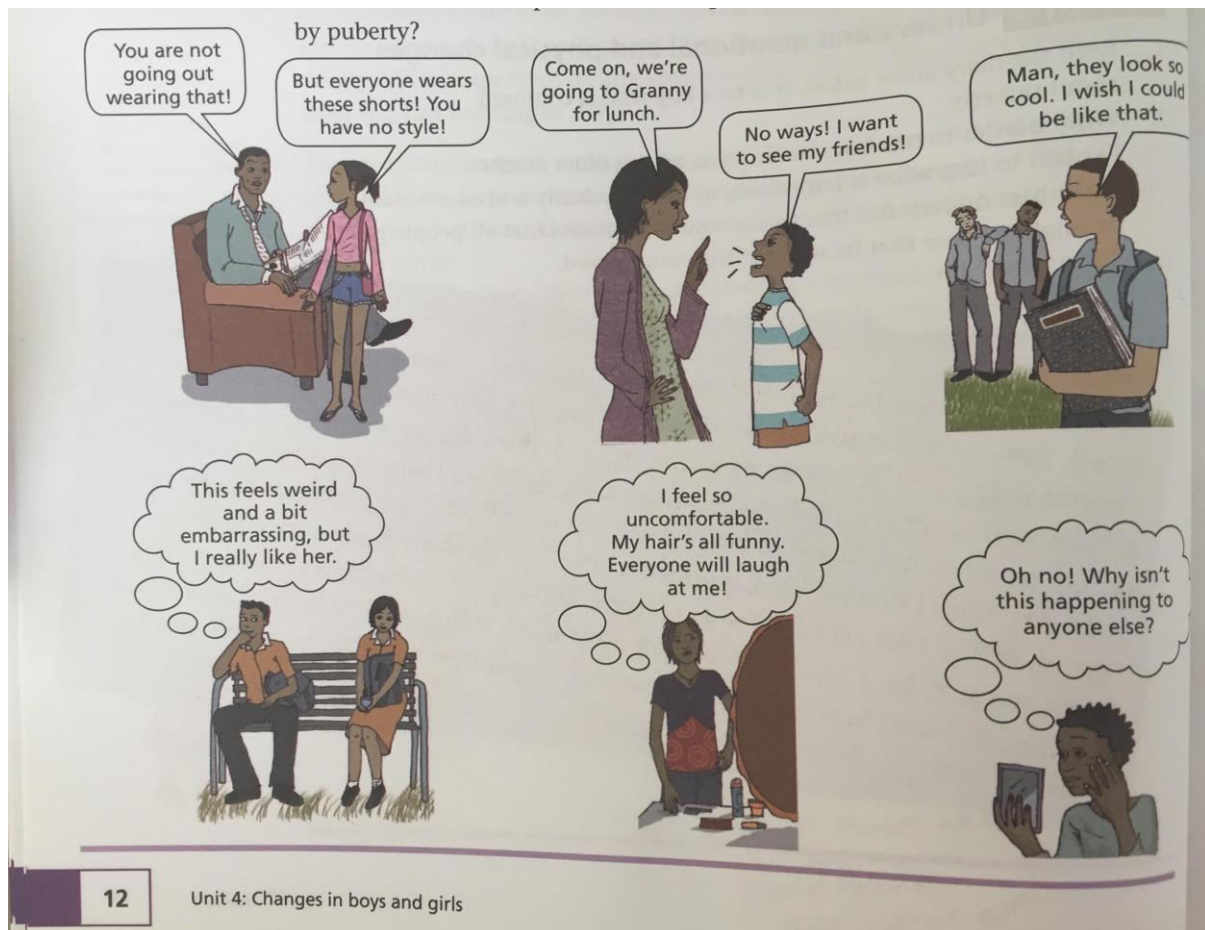
These images are meant to depict the changes in relationships with parents, peers, oneself and the 'opposite sex'. In illustration one, patriarchal discourse is perpetuated through the controlling of what the young daughter is wearing. In a parent-child relationship, it is easy to understand that a parent would want to keep their children safe for as long as possible. However, if we view this through a feminist lens, the common discourse that follows is the negative labelling of women based on their clothes. Women in short skirts or shorts are thought to be 'asking for it' and so on, which stems directly from rape culture. Other popular

heard comments are fathers not wanting their daughters to date until they are much older because they know what young boys want. This then forces the control of the young women's behaviour and dress instead of addressing the toxic misogynistic culture that entitles men to women's bodies, particularly based on their dress or behaviour. The power exerted over a daughter by a father is sometimes mirrored in the dynamics of a heterosexual relationship in that daughters or girlfriends or wives must be 'respectable' according to the hetero-patriarchal gaze.

The fourth image is also problematic in that the boy here is seen and sees her, he is also allowed to comment on how he feels and that he likes her. She has no speech or thought bubble so is therefore portrayed as passive, the object upon which his will or desire be bestowed. The power relation here is obvious in that he possesses it because he can speak and she cannot. The way her body is presented is also instructive in that it is collapsed inward without male affirmation. She does not take up much space on the bench, whereas his legs are opened, taking up as much space as he needs.

This unit goes on to talk about the appreciation and acceptance of the self and others. It includes the example of Amrita, who is of Indian decent and lives in California. Amrita speaks about how she feels that society privileges blonde hair and blue eyes as beautiful and that she sometimes feels disappointed in the colour of her skin; her hard to pronounce name; the thick Indian accents of her relatives; and the smell from her house when her mom is cooking. She reminds herself that those people that love her don't care about those things, that the things that embarrass her are superficial, and that it is more important to show others her kind heart. It seems to overwhelmingly be incumbent upon the oppressed to show their kindness and benevolence to their oppressors. Amrita needs to make herself less threatening and more palatable to whiteness and western culture. She does so by allowing others to refer to her as Amy so that she does not need to feel embarrassed when they mispronounce or misspell her name. She also invites friends over before her mom starts cooking so that the house does not smell of spices. It is further Amrita's responsibility to educate friends on Hinduism and Indian culture so that they are 'engrossed and fascinated' and benefit from Amrita's emotional labour instead of doing work to educate themselves. This demand for – and entitlement to – emotional labour is often placed on women of colour by whiteness and maleness. What is problematic here is that Amrita cannot express her feelings of pride of

culture or anger at racism – she must disappear her own feelings so that others do not feel uncomfortable or alienated around her. Her comfort is not of consequence.

4.2.3.3   Peer pressure: the effects of peer pressure

With regards to peer pressure, the unit mentions pressure to drink, smoke, have sex, bully and disrespect elders. These matters are not equivalent, yet they are listed as such with neither a discussion nor any additional information around these varying forms of peer pressure. The section employs gender neutral pronouns and discusses peer pressure generally, just naming examples without going into any details of these pressures.

The activity includes two scenarios (Figure 11) of peer pressure. It classes peer pressure as having positive forms and negative forms. The text that follows states that

> we now understand that peer pressure can have a positive
> influence like encouraging us to study, take part in sport or
> become involved in helping our community. However, it can
> also have negative influence like encouraging us to drink,
> smoke, have sex, bully others, disrespect elders (pg. 21).

Scenario two, which is meant to be the example of positive peer pressure shows two schoolmates studying together. The boy's speech bubble reads that he enjoys helping her because studying together is fun, while his thought bubble reads that she is friendly and he really likes her. She thanks him as she believes it is important to do well at school. His motivation for helping her – that he likes her – is potentially problematic here as his concern is obviously not that she do well. This has the potential to become a negative example of peer pressure when her gratitude is no longer enough and he starts to feel like something is owed for his help. Sexual coercion often takes such insidious forms.

This section also includes an article about peer pressure slowing down the battle against AIDS. It refers to teenagers, students, young people, and adolescents. It also mentions teenage pregnancies and the pressure to have sex and taking sexual risks 'like in the movies'. This article is perhaps meant to encourage a discussion about the pressure to have sex, but

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there is no meaningful engagement with the topic. Is 'peer pressure slowing down the battle of AIDS' perhaps 'well intentioned' to instil fear in learners? While the article itself seems very applicable to what learners may be going through, the accompanying questions lack purpose and the impact of the article is lessened. The questions are as follows:

1. Why is Mandy under constant pressure?
2. What does she say she and other young people are under constant pressure to do?
3. What do you understand to be the results of being pressured to have sex?
4. Name five reasons why young people give in to peer pressure? (pg. 21)

Figure 11

4.2.3.4   Dealing with abuse in different contexts

This unit consists of five pages only. It discusses the effects of abuse, protecting yourself from risky situations and communication for healthy relationships. There is no real substance to this unit. Unit 5, which is titled 'Dealing with abuse' includes the subsections of 'identifying threatening and risky situations. This subsection encourages learners to be on the lookout for 'danger signals', like someone being drunk or drugged, when they threaten violence, touch you inappropriately and so on. In the following 'Effects of abuse' sub-section, the text talks about healthy relationships and unhealthy relationships – which include abusive and destructive situations. What follows is the inappropriate and untimely recommendation that laughter is the best medicine. Here a prescription for laughter as a physical, mental and social benefit follows a very inadequate discussion about unhealthy relationships. The text does make use of gender neutral pronouns such as family members, people, children, adults. It also talks about healthy and unhealthy relationships as well as friends, boyfriends, girlfriends and life partners.

There is a discussion about good communication for healthy relationships. In this discussion, there is a script of a conversation happening between four friends. Two of them are girls and two are boys. The conversation is essentially about gendered roles. Philip wants coffee and expects Sakhina to go and make it. She refuses because she states that she is not his servant. She feels disrespected in the way that he asks. The other friends, namely Ellouise and Mzwi agree that in their homes, the roles are clearly defined where the women do the work in the kitchen. Once the friends have had the discussion about being treated equally and with respect, Sakhina agrees to make the coffee and enlists Mzwi's help. There is no actual conclusion except that Sakhina decides to make the coffee. There is no apology for having treated her disrespectfully or understanding of equality in roles in the home.
Questions from the activity that accompanies this conversation are open ended asking whether this is the way that some boys behave; whether a man loses his dignity by working in the kitchen. It further asks how Sakhina wants to be treated by boys and whether men and women can have the same rights. Positive qualities of these questions invite differing opinions and a possibility for meaningful discussion. However, the resolution to the proposed problem is that the girl conforms to gender role expectations associated with femininity, thereby foreclosing such discussion.

4.2.3.5   Conclusion

A recurring theme in the Maskew Miller Longman publication is that of male autonomy. Boys' talk and masculine accomplishment are often represented as being linked to sports. Male autonomy is further foregrounded as it is a requirement for female validation. One telling indication of this is the stance of female characters versus male characters when they are presented together. The female characters do not appear to possess autonomy in these instances. The conversation between Sakhina and her friends is a missed opportunity for providing a female character with self-confidence, credibility, respect and leadership qualities, but the lack of resolution in that conversation undermines her autonomy as she ultimately conforms to what is expected. These depictions reinforce unequal power relations between men and women. These unequal relations are presented as normal and self-evident.

Amrita's story demonstrates the intersections of race, class and gender as Amrita is required to fashion herself into someone that fits into dominant discourses. Amrita is an American citizen, yet her skin colour, name, and heritage all alienate her from mainstream society. She is required to justify her existence through becoming palatable for a mainstream audience. Her description of fascinating her friends with her religion and culture could very well be a function of western voyeurism. Furthermore, Amrita's story does not challenge the demand for assimilation and emotional labour that many women of colour experience – the monitoring of self to be palatable to maleness and whiteness. Rather, Amrita is accepting of her situation, even though she is not happy about it.

4.2.4   MACMILLAN: SOLUTIONS FOR ALL

4.2.4.1   Self-image

The self-image theme in 'Life Orientation: Solutions for all' focusses on being aware of personal qualities, strengths and strategies to improve self-image through respect of self and others. The text only makes use of the pronouns you, your, nobody, people. There are no associated gendered images.

In the discussion on making good choices and how self-image affects that process, the text uses only neutral pronouns with the accompanying image of a boy looking in a mirror and seeing himself as he is, and a girl thinking of herself as she is and all dressed up with make up on (Figure 12). One can infer that these are meant to portray seeing ourselves as we are or potentially not being happy with ourselves and wanting to be or be seen as different. The gender bias implicit here is that girls can always be improved or made more beautiful with make-up. The use of make-up to beautify is yet another way that women are policed in a patriarchal society to 'fix' themselves for the male gaze. Women are considered more beautiful while wearing make-up, but are also mocked if they wear too much make-up.

Figure 12

4.2.4.2 Puberty and gender constructs

This section highlights physical and emotional changes. The text uses gender neutral pronouns throughout, barring when speaking about ovaries versus testes, and the different physical changes that occur in relation to testosterone or oestrogen.

The section continues with a discussion on how puberty affects relationships with peers and family. It mentions emotional intelligence and empathy. In the section on emotion, learners are asked to write a script for a cartoon that tells what happened before the moment pictured. One problematic image here is Figure 13. When comparing the dress of the man and woman, she appears well-dressed with make up on. She is being very mean to him. He does not appear well-dressed as his suit seems very baggy, and he is innocently standing there taking her abuse. It is not difficult to infer that she has taken advantage of him, by her aggressive portrayal versus his mousy and bewildered expression. He is clearly the unsuspecting victim of her sexuality.

Figure 13

"IF OUR BLIND DATE WAS A VIDEO I WOULD HAVE FAST FORWARDED IT!"

Later in this section, mention is made of gender but only briefly, in that it will influence how one works out one's place in the world and who one is. The text also mentions that 'some teenagers will explore their sexual identity by going out with people or looking for a romantic relationship'. This is a positive statement in that it does not necessarily imply that sexual identity needs to be heterosexual. The use of 'sexual identity' is a great opportunity for discussion of non-heterosexual identities (provided the teacher chooses to facilitate such a discussion). This neutral wording does much to include marginalised sexualities into the conversation. The theme continues but explores 'appreciation and acceptance of the self and others'. It discusses qualities and abilities and promotes a positive self-attitude.

The text provides some positive images of gendered representations. Figure 14 shows a boy who mentions that he is good at soccer, but also has a number of other positive characteristics and qualities associated with him. His success is not entirely linked to sport, he has academic interests and he enjoys cooking and laughing. There is additionally an image of a girl who, while not as complex as the boy in terms of interests, looks in the mirror and sees herself as she is. On top of the mirror the text reads 'I love me'. For the first time, we are encountering an image of self-love associated with a girl who sees herself as she is (Figure 15).
The only notable difference here is that the boy speaks. He displays autonomy because he can use his own words to add depth to himself. The girl does not speak. The image of the girl would have been so much more powerful had she spoken them herself instead of them being printed on the mirror.
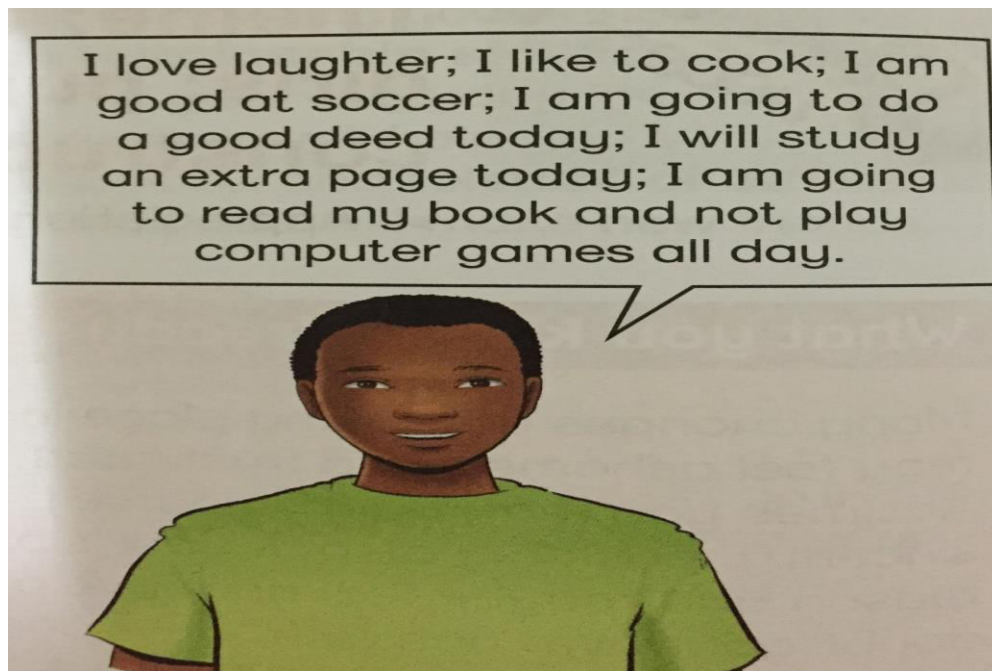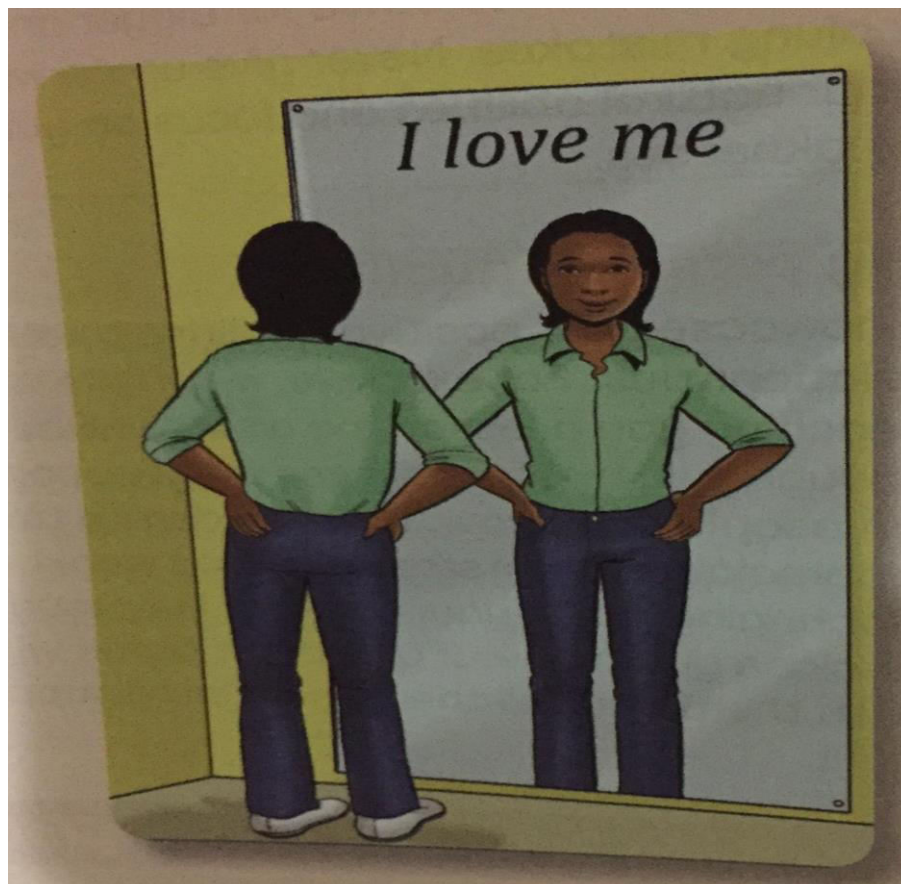
Figure 14

Figure 15

4.2.4.3 Peer pressure: the effects of peer pressure

This unit mentions that peer pressure can involve the abuse of drugs and alcohol, taking part in criminal acts, unhealthy sexual behaviour or bullying and rebellious behaviour. It explores why people may give in to peer pressure and how to resist peer pressure. The unit also discusses why we need friends and what makes good friends. It further explores appropriate responses to pressure. It discusses 'good peer pressure' thereby saying that it is okay to pressure others as long as it is good. For example, pressuring others to be nice, not to smoke and drink and so on. It also discusses how to be assertive to resist negative peer pressure. The following unit continues the theme of peer pressure and discusses the effects of peer abuse under the theme of peer pressure. It focusses on negotiating skills when there is conflict. These skills explored in this theme are potentially helpful to students and are good discussions to have. They focus on practical and positive strategies to employ when navigating peer pressures.

On the one hand, the consistent use of neutral pronouns aids in providing a text that does not perpetuate heteronormative or patriarchal worldviews. One the other hand, the writers seem almost afraid to employ the term 'gender' or 'sexuality' and invite any kind of discussion. Is it better to omit gendered talk and avoid certain topics in order to play it safe? I think that the omission of gender is just as detrimental as being explicitly biased. There was additionally no discussion of gender constructs as is outlined by the curriculum.

CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITES

This unit discusses rights according to the constitution and equality. Under equality, it is states that 'Your responsibility is to respect the equality of others, irrespective of their background, language, culture and religion. It further discusses other rights and respective responsibilities to those rights. There is no mention of gender or sexuality under these rights. In a heteronormative culture, these rights are disregarded instead of assumed. The invisibility of sexuality or gender in these texts is very significant. Pertinent to this study, The Constitution of South Africa (section 9) specifically states that no person may be unfairly discriminated against (directly or indirectly) based on gender or sexuality. Consistent assertion of sexual partners being of the 'opposite sex', and consistent stereotyping to socialise learners to integrate into the status quo, and most importantly, the invisibility of

queer identities all work to make sure that a heteronormative worldview is normalised. This actively normalises one worldview, while necessarily stigmatising the other. When an identity is stigmatised, this means that language exists to call out this phenomenon that is thought to be out of place, like the word 'moffie' used in the Schuter and Shooter publication. This language can take on a life of its own and become hate speech which, when sanctioned further potentially sanctions physical violence. This ultimately deepens fissures of inequalities in an unequal society.

4.2.4.4 Dealing with abuse in different contexts

The modules in this text are divided by weeks. Week thirteen deals with the theme of abuse in different contexts. This unit skims the surface of abuse. It opens by defining, physical, emotional, and sexual abuse as well as neglect. Thereafter, it goes on to discuss 'risky situations' and notes that some risky situations include violence, peer pressure, abuse, hate crimes, and exposure to drugs and alcohol. There is no meaningful engagement with the topic at hand. Week fourteen continues this theme with a focus on communication to promote healthy and non-violent relationships. It uses gender neutral pronouns and discusses mutual respect, honesty, and consideration amongst others to foster healthy relationships. In the units that follow, unit fifteen continues the theme focussing on protecting oneself from 'threatening and risky situations'. Unit sixteen talks about career fields and contains the only positive statement involving gender constructs. The text is a speech bubble, spoken by a girl and reads 'Don't let gender stereotypes influence you. There is no such thing as 'men's work', or 'women's work'. If a girl wants to be an airline pilot, she can choose to do so; if a boy wants to be a nurse, he can do so'. Besides that, this text completely shies away from contextualising the material to be applicable to learners.

4.2.4.5 Conclusion

Because of the glaring omission of gender and sexuality from the Macmillan publication, not much was left to analyse. In the sections where an image or statement was printed, it brought to the fore male autonomy, and the lack of access that women have to intangible resources such as self-confidence, status and respect. While none of the characters were named, it is

important to note who was allowed to speak and what they were allowed to say. For example, the boy who was allowed to speak (Figure 14) was able to add more complexity and depth to his character, while the women that was allowed to speak (Figure 13), did so in relation to a man. While what she had to say was negative, she did not have any autonomy of her own to talk about herself. Not only did she (as per the caption) have a bad time on the date, she also is painted in a bad light. We have no idea what happened prior to the incident on the doorstep, but it is not hard to assume she is a difficult and angry woman, who gets some joy out of being mean to men. While he stands, seemingly innocently, and lets her berate him.

The omission of gender and sexuality from this publication is also very problematic in the implications that it can have on South African society generally. The implication that these do not need to be discussed or addressed may lead some to think that there are no issues regarding gender or sexuality. The invisibility of queer identities is indicative of the stigmatisation that are attached to these identities. Hall (1997:236) posits that

> stable cultures require things to stay in their appointed place.
> Symbolic boundaries keep the categories 'pure', giving cultures
> their unique meaning and identity. What unsettles culture is
> 'matter out of place' – the breaking of our unwritten rules and
> codes.

This stigma functions covertly through various processes to incite violence against stigmatised identities. Ultimately, inclusivity in textbooks needs to be clear and unequivocal. One positive statement about the exploration of sexual identities in the Macmillan publication was encouraging, but unfortunately not taken far enough, and without any support to continue the conversation.

4.2.5 OXFORD: SUCCESSFUL LIFE ORIENTATION

4.2.5.1   Self-image

The unit about self-image shows eight images, four boys and four girls, making positive statements about themselves and their abilities. The text encourages learners to enhance their own self-image through positive thoughts and actions. The text then gives two examples of people with negative self-images. The one is of Leigh-Anne who is making negative statements about her appearance and her sporting abilities. The exercise invites a discussion about how Leigh-Anne might improve her self-image. The second illustration is of Abdul, who is also lacking in confidence. He has pimples and greasy hair and has lost confidence. He has been dropped from his team because he has missed practices due to illness and this is all having a negative effect on his school work. His brother, Riedwaan, is very empathetic and helpful and the conversation between them seems to have a good result. In terms of portraying teenage issues, Oxford shows a balance of positive and negative images associated with boys and girls, which also seem to not fall into gender stereotyping when compared with previously discussed publications. They show both boys and girls as wanting to do well in sport, and both as having confidence issues. This balance is important when considering the target audience. This potentially eschews stereotyping in terms of certain issues being associated with boys and others with girls.

4.2.5.2   Puberty and gender constructs

The book employs the use of the pronouns 'girls' and 'boys' and 'boyfriends' and 'girlfriends' and speaks scientifically about the physical and emotional changes one can expect during puberty. It also discusses gender constructs in that 'gender construct' is defined (pg. 15) and the examples are given.

> Gender constructs are the ways we see genders: how we expect
> boys and girls to look and behave, and our attitudes towards
> them. For example, the belief that girl babies should wear pink
> is a gender construct. So is the expectation that the man must

be the head of the household, or that boys should have short

hair and girls should have long hair. As we reach puberty, we

are expected to conform more to accepted female and male

gender roles.

Commendably, this is the first productive definition and discussion of gender constructs encountered in this study of grade 7 Life Orientation textbooks. The wording also makes clear the tentative and changeable nature of these constructs. However, the book conveys the information on gender constructs as self-evident. This is evidently problematic. It presents as fact, and normalises, the expectations associated with gender constructs. It encourages adherence to gender constructs without discussion or questioning.

The book further states that (pg. 19)

Another change that you might experience in your family is

that there could be different expectations put on boys and girls.

A girl might not be allowed the same amount of freedom as a

boy in the same family. Although the reason for it may be to

protect, it may be experienced as unfair.

There is an opportunity for discussion here, but the idea of boys having more freedom than girls is punted as a normal and acceptable occurrence that should not be questioned. This is problematic as this idea of protection is not protection at all. It is the policing and controlling of women's bodies. This 'protection' is from sexually violent misogyny that victimises women and keeps them in a constant state of fear. Perpetuating the idea of protection for girls as the reason they should not be allowed as much freedom as boys is highly problematic, and there is no discussion or questioning about why it is so unsafe for women. Ironically, most women die at the hands of those who are ostensibly their 'protectors', that is, their intimate partners. In 2009, a study was undertaken to describe the mortality rate from Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) of all female suicides. This study (Abrahams, Jewkes, Martin, Matthews, Vetten and Lombard 2009) was the first of its kind and described that 50.3% of female homicides were the result of IPV. This means that female homicide is equally attributed to interpersonal violence and IPV.

4.2.5.3   Peer pressure: the effects of peer pressure

There are five types of behaviour associated with peer pressure. These are committing criminal acts, engaging in unhealthy sexual behaviour, using substances, becoming a victim of bullying and behaving in a rebellious way. In the first illustration, a girl is pressuring her friend to eat chocolates before they reach the checkout so that they don't have to pay (commit a criminal act); in the second illustration, a girl is out at a party with her older brother and she wants to go home but his friends are trying to convince her to have a drink so she can have more fun (use of substances). The illustration concerned with the pressure to engage in unhealthy sexual behaviour (Figure 16) is of a young couple who cannot 'stop touching each other and thinking about sex'. The text says that they 'feel guilty about this because they know their families will not approve. They also know that, in their religion, sex is meant for married people only'. Sandike's friends are pressuring him to have sex with Noma because all of them have already had sex and one friend asks, 'Aren't you a man?' (pg. 24).

Religion is employed here as a mechanism of control. The combination of religion and family shame serves to guilt these learners about their natural feelings about sex. Religion functions as a purveyor of sexual shame. Sex before marriage is clearly viewed as sinful and a natural element of development for these learners is being marred by guilt. This example is one given of 'unhealthy sexual behaviour' which immediately casts the youngsters potentially wanting to have sex as unhealthy. There seems to be no sex education in that they are aware that their feelings are completely normal. Deciding not to have sex should be a decision taken apart from religious responsibility. Truthfully, many youngsters are engaging in sex, as can be seen in the high teenage pregnancy rates, for example, so realistically we should be educating learners in safe sexual practices should they choose to have sex as opposed to shaming sexual desire. Here religion both shames and is indicative of the reality that religion is often used to control young people's sexuality. There should be a separation between religion and education so that learners can get accurate information and make informed decisions, not decisions based on fear and shame. The text is essentially preaching abstinence or an undesirable outcome.

In the exercise to identify appropriate response to peer pressure, the options given for the situation with Sandike and Noma are as follows (pg. 26):
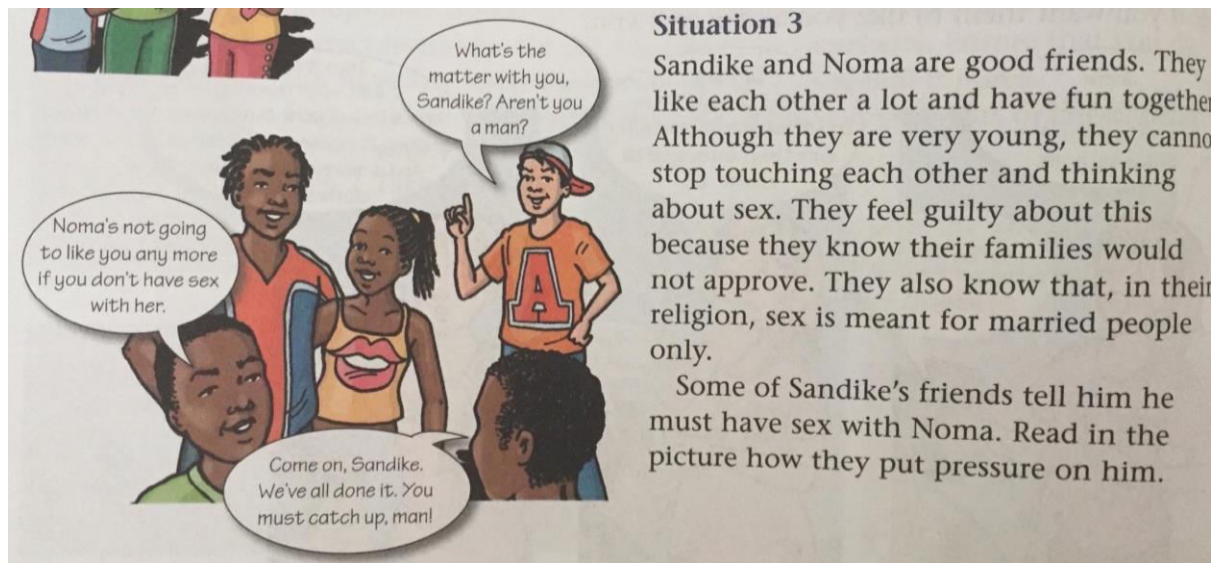
-choose to have sex and hope Noma doesn't become pregnant?

-break up and end the relationship?

-go out in groups of friends so you are not alone together?

These options are once again problematic as it forces learners to choose the last option, where the couple goes out with friends and are never alone. This is not necessarily a realistic option. The other two options are quite dreadful: give in to sexual desire and hope that she does not become pregnant or break up. There are no other outcomes listed and sexual education by fear is hardly effective. On the other hand, these questions do have the potential to stimulate a productive conversation in the classroom. As I have mentioned before, this will depend on whether the teacher is willing to support such a conversation, but there is an opportunity here for subversion of oppressive norms. Furthermore, it is notable that these options present no apparent gender bias. They are equal here in deciding to break up or to have sex and possibly get pregnant. The responsibility belongs to both.

In the absence of classroom discussion, there is no option for Sandike and Noma to stay together and not have sex, or to have sex and not get pregnant. The options are so undesirable that through a lack of options, the book seems again to be supporting abstinence. We need to also consider the possibility that preaching abstinence attributes to high teenage pregnancy rates because there is no option for them to have sex and not get pregnant, she undoubtedly will get pregnant without sound sex education.

The illustration that accompanies is an illustration that shows Sandike's friends asking him whether he is a man or not. This not only equates manhood with sexual prowess, but is indicative of how manhood is constructed through sexual 'conquest'. They also say that Noma may not be interested in him anymore if he does not have sex. None of these discourses take Noma into consideration. It is about manhood and its dominance. Manhood is seen and speaks while Noma does not speak. The text does problematise this toxic practice of masculinity by pointing out that his friends are putting pressure on him. By naming this, discussion is invited and yet another opportunity to problematise this behaviour in the classroom arises. This is exceptional as this analysis has not yet encountered an overt problematising of toxic masculine behaviour. The text could have benefitted from giving Noma a voice to express her own thoughts and desires.

Figure 16

Situation 3

Sandike and Noma are good friends. They like each other a lot and have fun together. Although they are very young, they cannot stop touching each other and thinking about sex. They feel guilty about this because they know their families would not approve. They also know that, in their religion, sex is meant for married people only.

Some of Sandike's friends tell him he must have sex with Noma. Read in the picture how they put pressure on him.

What's the matter with you, Sandike? Aren't you a man?

Noma's not going to like you any more if you don't have sex with her.

Come on, Sandike. We've all done it. You must catch up, man!

4.2.5.4 Dealing with abuse in different contexts

The unit dealing with abuse in different contexts opens with a case study of a child raped by her uncle. Her sister reported it to the police but her mother tried to get the uncle released saying that "He is my sister's husband and therefore also my husband". The exercise involves evaluating the best outcomes for the girl who was raped. It is important that abuse is not only framed in the context of rape by strangers but also people close to victims. The text asks if indigenous knowledge played a part in the mother's reaction, but offers no further information or discussion about sexual abuse. This is potentially harmful in that it frames abuse between an adult and a child as tied to indigenous knowledge, something potentially far from families who do not ascribe to these cultural epistemologies. Commendably, it is inclusive of indigenous cultural practice, which is part of the lives of millions of South Africans, so this example is very fitting for the South African society. This is the only time in this study that indigenous knowledge was foregrounded, even though not in a positive context.

This unit continues by discussing bullying as the form of peer abuse and the effects of abuse on personal and social health. There is not much depth or detail in discussing abuse and the contexts are not necessarily relatable to every student. Boys are framed as perpetrators of violence in the context of riots and drunken aggression, while girls are framed as silent victims who are lonely and should talk to friends.

4.2.5.5.   Conclusion

The Oxford Successful Life Orientation publication seems to be the least problematic of the texts analysed. While it does show some support for a heteronormative patriarchal discourse through heterosexist discourses, including male autonomy and the invisibility of queer identities, there are a number of commendable elements.

The first unit shows a marked lack of stereotypical representations. Instead, there is a balance of images of boys and girls all having positive and negative experiences without attributing any problem to one gender. There seems to be a concerted effort to avoid stereotypical representations in image and text. Later, the text gives in to some normalised stereotypical assumptions and gendered roles, but this element is not a consistent theme throughout the analysed sections.

Furthermore, a productive definition of gender constructs is provided with an opportunity for critical discussion. There are also named black characters in this publication, although the autonomy to speak is allotted to black men. In the discussion of Sadike and Noma, there is no blame attributed to them individually or according to stereotypically. The possible outcomes stated implies equal responsibility for both parties.

4.2.6   OXFORD: HEADSTART LIFE ORIENTATION

4.2.6.1   Self-image

Unit one focuses on self-image and getting to know one's personal qualities. This unit uses gender neutral pronouns and is focussed on enhancing personal attributes for a positive outlook.

Images in this unit, like Figure 17, is representative of a twenty-first century South Africa. They do not appear to be gender or racially biased in any way. In fact, characters of colour are foregrounded in this image. Besides, the notable omission of gender, the chapter does well to speak to its entire target audience.

Figure 17
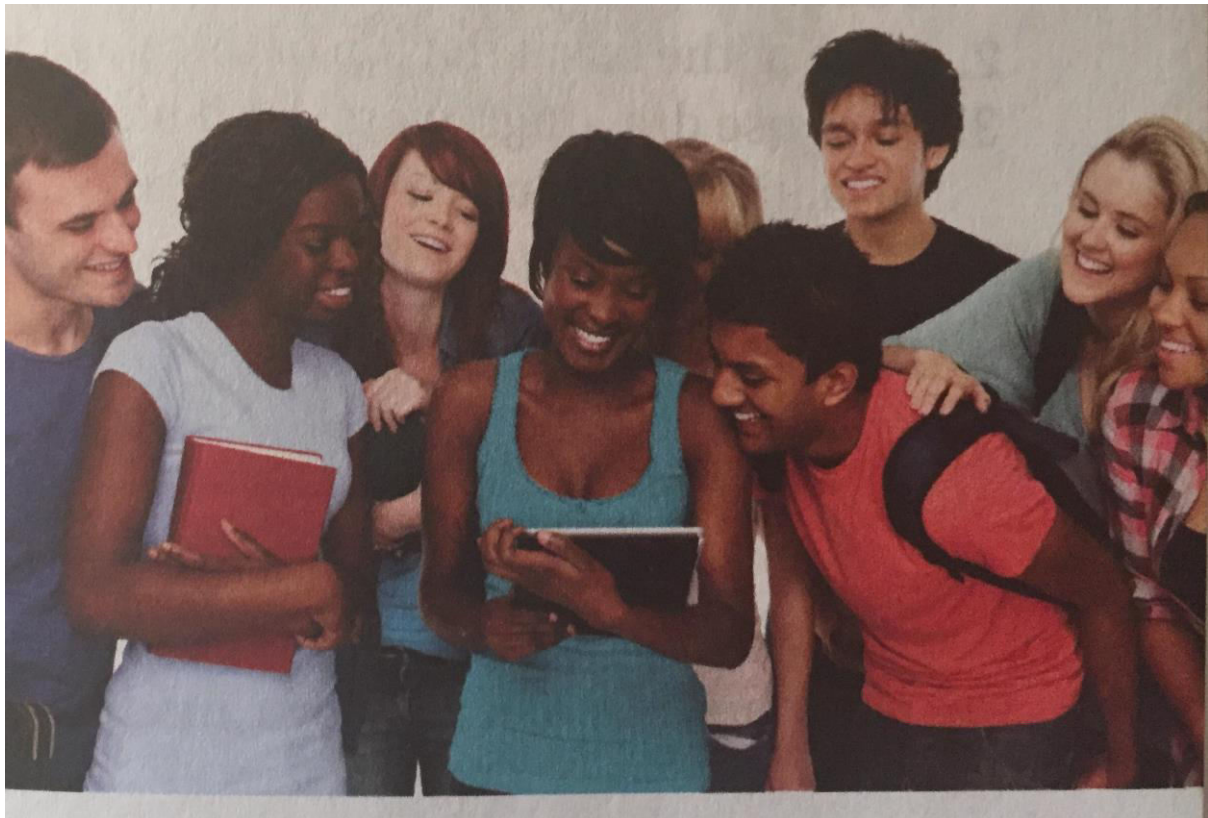
4.2.6.2   Puberty and gender constructs

In unit three, puberty and gender constructs are discussed. While the term 'gender constructs' is mentioned, there is no discussion or further mention on the topic. The unit presents changes in girls' bodies and changes in boy's bodies in mostly a scientific way in which it details the changes in bodies during puberty. There is mix of gendered pronouns and gender neutral pronouns being used to discuss the impact of hormonal and emotional changes on relationships. The text mentions that 'Testosterone also encourages boys and girls to feel sexually attracted to others or to begin thinking about sex'. This is a positive statement in that it does not imply or assume the attraction of boys to girls or girls to boys, but allows a space for the consideration of alternative arrangements of sexual attraction. Of course, how this is explored in a classroom setting depends on many factors, but the potential for subversion and inclusivity is there.

The book also presents the text as a very mature conversation with grade 7 learners. It does not necessarily prescribe correct ways of doing things and being, but presents mostly as an informative text acquainting learners with the normalcies of puberty. There is a clear lack of child-like illustrations, and more photos of real youngsters. While these photos do not necessarily involve people in a particular dialogue or context, the photo also comes across as communicating with the target audience maturely as opposed to many childish illustrations in other textbooks. The book is very straight-forward in describing menstruation as food and nutrients being 'released as dark blood from the vagina' each month, it does not skirt around issues like erections, ejaculation, wet dreams or emotional vulnerability. It communicates information that grade 7 learners might need to know in a very succinct way. It even talks about the weight gain in boys as girls, without falling into the trap of presenting it as an issue experienced by girls with poor body image.

Included in this unit is a case study. It tells a story of Shaun and Alicia who become friends and discover they both like to sing. While the story and associated questions present their relationship as a friendship, there is an accompanying picture of them holding hands. Students are asked to create a short play in which either of the characters (Shaun or Alicia) discuss attending an evening choir practice with their parents. A follow up question to the play is whether there were gender inequalities in the role-plays. That is, were they treated differently by their parents, or did their parents have different concerns about either of them

going to an evening choir practice. This brings gender inequalities into question. This is worth mentioning as the text does not simply reproduce and normalise gender difference and discrimination. While the accompanying image is indicative of support or preference for a heteronormative worldview, the text works to subvert this by questioning whether what might be considered 'normal', is 'normal.'

4.2.6.3   Peer pressure: the effects of peer pressure

Unit five explores the effects of peer pressure. It makes use of gender neutral pronouns. It discusses unhealthy sexual behaviour and states that if teenagers have sex before they are ready, or without a condom, there is the potential for contracting HIV or becoming pregnant. It does not prescribe marriage as the right time, and leaves some space for learners to explore that they have some autonomy in that they can decide when they are ready. A positive aspect of this section is that it communicates the normalcy of sexual attraction, and mentions some of the possible outcomes. While all these outcomes are bad, they do not prescribe 'good behaviour' to avoid these and the text leaves room to explore engaging in safe sex or non-heterosexual relationships. The paragraph further mentions that teenagers often begin thinking about having a girlfriend or boyfriend. While this is not specifically named as a heterosexual orientation, I believe it is assumed. The text could be used in a subversive manner to include non-heterosexual attraction but there is no further exploration or support for this in text or image.

The unit further discusses peer pressure and appropriate responses and coping skills using gender neutral pronouns.

4.2.6.4   Dealing with abuse in different contexts

The unit that deals with abuse in different contexts provides a superficial discussion on types of abuse. It merely mentions that 'adults may neglect children or abuse children physically, emotionally or sexually'. It talks about peer abuse and identifying and avoiding risky situations. Later, there is a discussion on the effects of abuse and protecting oneself in risky situations. There is no use of gendered pronouns and no in-depth discussion of types of abuse. There is a glaring omission of gendered talk in this text. There is one gendered

representation: an image showing a girl as a victim of abuse. This is a stigmatising image with her covering her face and sitting on the floor, with a man's silhouette aggressively towering over her. The stigmatising nature of these images is an unfortunate maintenance of the discourses of girl victims and male aggressors, as well as associating shame with abuse. The text provides no resolution and thus functions as normalising abuse under the guise of education. This type of image functions as a recognisable image for abuse without any substance to the accompanying discussions.

4.2.6.5   Conclusion

The Oxford Headstart publication appears to be the most user-friendly guide in the sections discussing puberty and gender constructs. It presents a mature communication with learners about what they may be experiencing. Considering the manner in which the conversations around puberty are structured, it is possible to argue that there was an effort to produce a non-biased text.

The text in this book does not overtly show a conspicuous gender or racial bias. While there are not many images to analyse, there are three illustrations, which feature girls, which are all problematic. One appears in the puberty section, one in the peer pressure section and one in the constitutional rights and responsibilities section where girls are bullying each other. The first is where one girl makes fun of the other, saying that she is 'too big for sport'. The second image describes one friend pressuring the other to go to a party because a boy she likes is going to be there. The final illustration shows two girls who want to fight because of name-calling. These are incidentally the only characters in the book that speak. Only girls in this book have been given the autonomy to speak, but they are unfortunately not allowed to use the autonomy to speak positively or to serve themselves. Their voices are rather used for cautionary tales of bullying and peer pressure.

While this publication is not without its problematic elements, it has many commendable attributes. While there are some subtle suggestions of a heterosexist worldview, it does not overtly or consistently compel a patriarchal or heterosexist worldview. It provides opportunities for open discussion and an opportunity for critique of gender equality. This is an important start to inculcating critical consciousness in students.

4.2.7 VIVLIA: LIFE ORIENTATION FOR THE REAL WORLD

4.2.7.1 Self-image

The unit begins by discussing self-image and getting to know and grow one's personal attributes and positive qualities. The unit uses mostly gender neutral pronouns. In the introductory section, we are met with two images. One (Figure 18) shows jealousy over friends. That is, a friend is jealous that another classmate is befriending her friend. The following figure (Figure 19) shows Mei, whose shyness is her downfall.

Figure 18
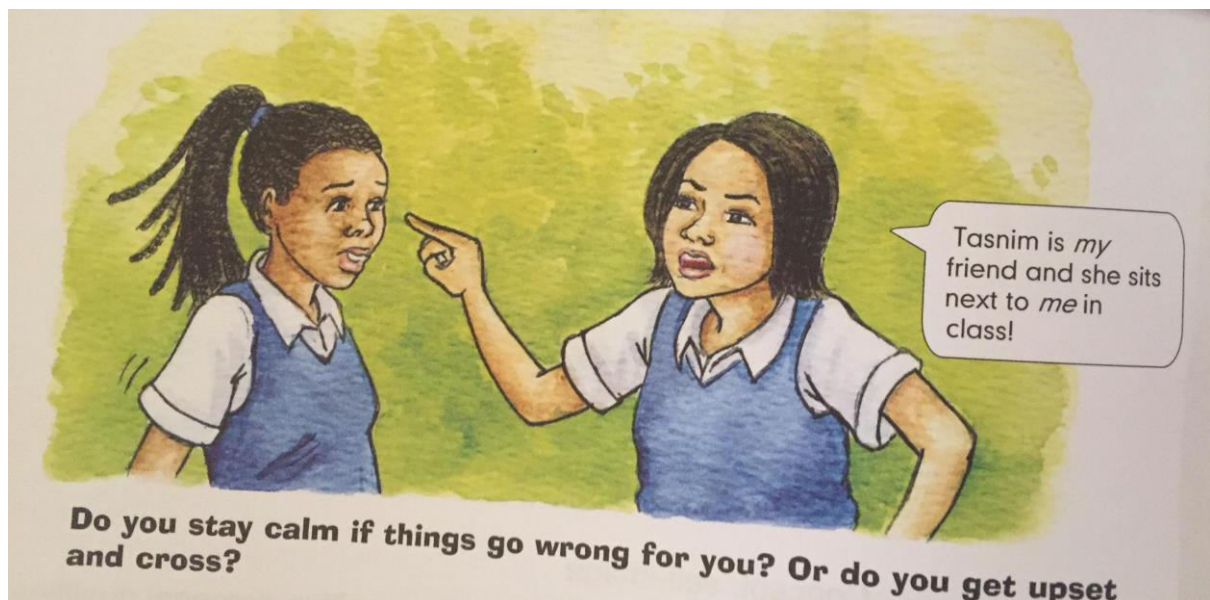
On the same page (pg. 9), there is a 'new word' box that defines stereotype as 'oversimplified views of people based on their race, culture, language or some group they belong to'. Rather ironically, the images on these pages provide stereotypical behaviour associated with girls. This unit further includes girls in a continuation of Mei's story and how she might be able to make more friends. Additionally, a case study wherein Lerato invites Tasnim to join the chess club shows Tasnim as grateful for the invitation because she is learning so much and making new friends. Here, chess is not considered a competitive sport, but rather a social activity. This contrasts with the pervasive narratives and images, in the other publications analysed, of boys being revered for prowess in sport. None of these girls are white.

Figure 19

The images in the unit that include boys or men are distinct from those including girls or women. There are three illustrations, Figure 20, Figure 21 and Figure 22 respectively.
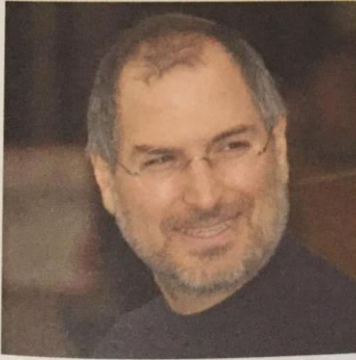
Figure 20

In figure 20, we see an older male being very compassionate and gentle towards Stefan who seems to be having issues with his sibling. Stefan is not presented negatively here, but rather as a child needing help. Figure 21 shows white male success through technology. The articles tell of his ingenuity and later success. Yet another success story is told by figure 22. Sam has natural talent is very good at dancing and MMA.

Figure 21

Case study: Steve Jobs from Apple Computers

One of the most famous people in the world was Steve Jobs. Steve became interested in computers while in high school. He started going to lectures at a computer company in the afternoons. Because of his interest he became an expert in computers. After school he became a technician at a company that made video games. Steve and a friend started making and selling their own computers. They were so successful that they became world famous.

Figure 22

Case study: Hip-hop dancing

Sam has always had good rhythm. His mom tells him that he started dancing as soon as he could walk! Sam's friend Lerato invited him to one of her hip-hop dance classes. He really loved the class, and it wasn't long before he could do all the moves. He learnt very quickly, as he was already interested in dance and had a natural talent for it. It also helped that he was already taking lessons in mixed martial arts (MMA).

When contrasting the representations of girls and the representation of boys in the first unit on self-image, we see that girls are represented as problematic – jealous and bitterly shy. On the other hand, boys are presented as needing understanding and compassion, and highly skilled and successful. While these images individually are innocuous, put together they tell a story. They continue stereotypical gendered representations while at the same time marking the difference between boys and girls as talented, skilled and charismatic versus jealous and shy. This covertly functions as a prescription for who can be successful and skilled and who is problematic. Furthermore, the only autonomy to speak was given to the girls, and yet again, their speech does not say anything positive or encouraging. It is used to negatively cast girls as jealous, catty and possessive.

When discussing building self-image, the text urges students not to try to be the 'perfect daughter/son' or the 'perfect sportsman or sportswoman'. Using gender neutral pronouns here would not have been a difficult task as 'sports person' is very widely used.

In the discussion of respect for diversity, the unit highlights that you can harm others by judging them according to 'racial, cultural or language stereotypes'. No mention is made about gender stereotypes at all. The accompanying activity question asks students to answer a question about how people are classified according to racial, cultural and language stereotypes, while the subsequent questions asks, "What gender would normally be called 'a chatterbox' or 'bossy', or 'emotional' Why?" The former question seems like an opportunity for critical discussion about race and culture while the latter questions merely serves to reinforce gender stereotyping. Students are expected to perform other tasks for assessment which includes assessment criteria as 'demonstrating and outstanding grasp of the concept of respect for others and diversity' without there having been a meaningful discussion on the topic besides the instruction to respect others and not discriminate based on culture, religion or language.

4.2.7.2 Puberty and gender constructs

An activity associated with the discussion on physical and emotional changes during puberty has Lerato (Figure 23) stating that she is a woman now that she has her period. She discusses how this gives her more responsibility at home through her mom, and how her dad has a hard time seeing her as a woman. This is problematic in that it assumes acceptance and happiness of womanhood that young girls should experience as they begin to menstruate. This is highly problematic as it negates the gender dysphoria experienced by gender non-conforming, non-binary or trans youth. The text should be augmented with recognition of other experiences, because while gender dysphoria may not be a well-known or much discussed topic in general conversation, we need to consider that it may be more prevalent than people are willing to consider. We do not live in a social climate very accepting of ideas such as gender non-conformity, non-binary or trans. Furthermore, queer youth are at elevated risk for school victimisation and this is significantly associated with poor psychosocial adjustment (Toomy, Ryan, Diaz, Card and Russel 2010). Taking cognisance that experiences of menstruation and

womanhood are varied could potentially contribute to safer school environments for queer youth as well as educate against ignorance.

This image conveys that it is natural to feel like a woman after the onset of menstruation. Perhaps even, that one should feel like a woman. This also then implies that there is a way in which all women experience womanhood. The difficulty of Lerato's dad seeing her as a 'woman' after she self-identifies as a woman is also problematic. It speaks to the control over the bodies of woman that men feel entitled to. It speaks to policing of sexuality as well as toxic practices of masculinity.

Figure 23

There is an additional image (Figure 24) of friends talking about a boy. In the speech bubble, the unnamed friend tells her friend about a boy who tried to kiss her but was respectful when she declined. Strangely, this makes her like him more. Respecting of boundaries and consent culture should be an expectation not a lovely surprise that increases the likeability of a person. When speaking about the ill treatment or abuse of women, physical violence is quickly associated with the term abuse. Male violence is inflicted upon women through patriarchal society in many other less obvious ways. For example, the beauty industry, the fashion industry and even the food industry are examples of insidious ways emotional violence is inflicted upon women. These industries, and the list is not nearly exhaustive, sell

some way for women to improve themselves, to make themselves feel better after society has told them that they are unattractive, or ugly, or fat. Gqola reminds us that (2015:39)

> Part of violent gender power is in celebrating attributes associated with the masculine, and ordering the world in terms of opposites, or binaries. If masculine and feminine are opposites, and there is nothing in between, then when masculine is celebrated, feminine as its opposite has to be debased. This means that those marked as feminine are also debased in relation to those marked as masculine.

These insidious forms of 'violent gender power' or male violence is so normalised and entrenched in society, that the girl in the illustration firstly, seems somewhat apologetic for setting a sexual boundary; and secondly, seems grateful that he respected her boundary. In fact, she is so grateful that this has made him even more attractive to her! The 'nice guy' trope rewards men for behaviour, like showing the smallest modicum of respect, that should be the expected minimum. It is not only insidious, but also manipulative. It potentially coerces women into sex as discourses purport that this 'nice guy' is desirable. It leaves women in want for male respect or approval. Moreover, if such a small act of respect renders women so grateful, one must interrogate why this is the case. These unequal power relations maintain men's dominance and women's subordination.

Figure 24
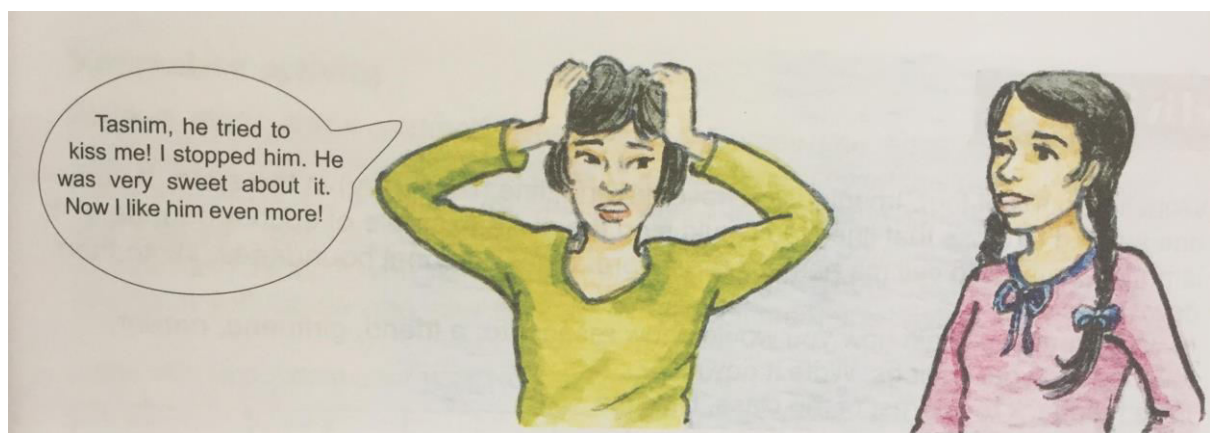
4.2.7.3   Peer pressure: effects of peer pressure

The unit lists some bad effects of peer pressure. A bad effect is listed as substance abuse. Another effect is that groups create new rules, such as involvement in criminal activities where youth are pressured into shop lifting to be accepted. Yet another effect named is that of a bad attitude, which discusses rebellious behaviour and bad treatment of others, or rather bullying, is the final negative effect of peer pressure according to this unit. This discussion also lists new boundaries and unhealthy sexual behaviour. There is not much said here except the mention about practices that cross boundaries about sex and relationships. This is accompanied by the following image (Figure 25):

Figure 25
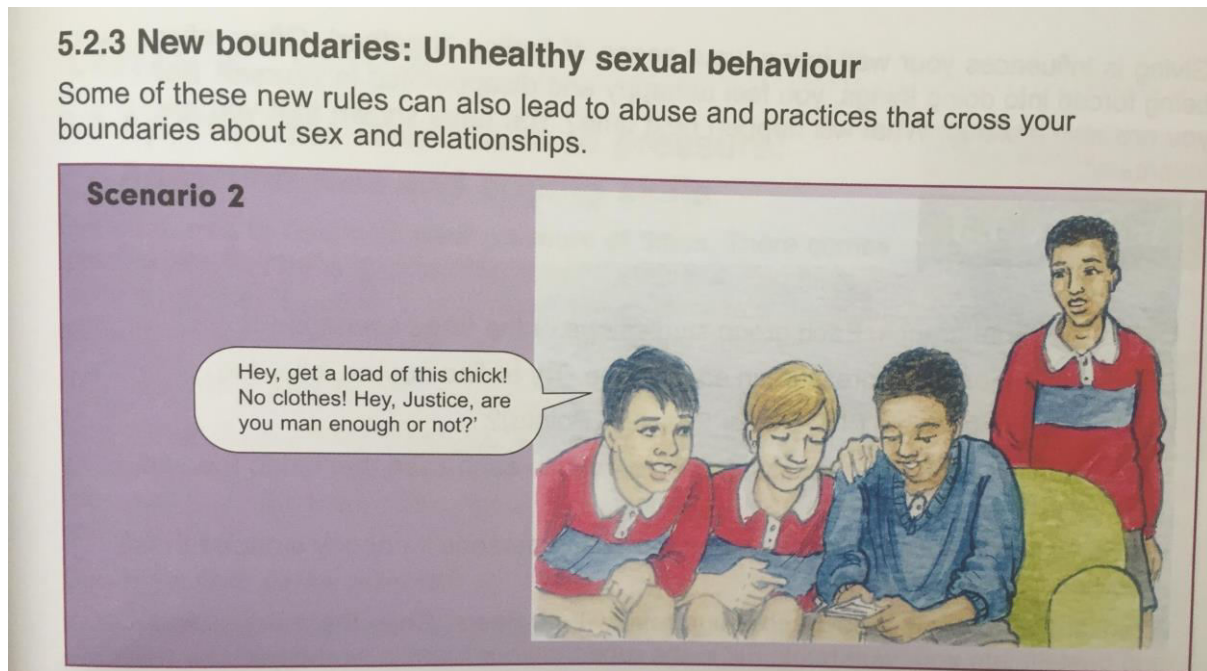
There are potentially many implications associated with this image. One being that one must indeed be 'man enough' and partake in practices of sexual objectification to assert one's manhood. The image and associated text does not problematise this behaviour but can be seen to be reinforcing it as a natural development.

4.2.7.4   Dealing with abuse in different contexts

 The text mentions that often the abuser is not a stranger but someone close to the family. The text also mentions that 'It's not only girls that get abused. Boys are also abused.' This is the

first text analysed that makes mention of this. These two points are critical in discussions about abuse. It is important to destigmatize boys as abuse victims. Patriarchal discourses teach boys not to be emotional or weak. Presenting only girls as abuse victims further stigmatises boys who are abused, because patriarchal discourse tells them they are weak to have been victims. It tells them that they are not men or masculine.

The unit also mentions that parents can be abusive emotionally and that siblings can be abusive sexually. It is of utmost importance to discuss these dynamics although there is unfortunately no further discussion.

Another problematic point is how the text discuss the effects of abuse (Figure 26). It mentions potential behaviours associated with the effects of abuse but discusses them alternately using 'he' and 'she'. Anyone can be a victim of abuse and using gendered pronouns unnecessarily complicates the conversation that needs to be had. Is the text implying that only boys or only girls experience certain side effects? Is it attributing certain tell-tale signs to genders?

Figure 26

Figure 27

When they become adults themselves

Sexual molestation also has long-term effects. When the molested child grows up, he or she tends to go into self-destruct mode if there is nobody to help.

- He turns to drugs to help him forget. He can even become homeless, begging on the streets.
- She overeats and does not care how she looks.
- He thinks about suicide and may go through with it.
- She takes big risks and does not care what happens, like unsafe sex with a lot of partners.

Such abused children can become victims again – like a deer caught in the headlights of a car. Worse, they can become abusers themselves because that is the only 'affection' they know.

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The image in Figure 26 is a stigmatising representation of abused children. Firstly, one can see the menacing hand and weapon of the abuser. This could be triggering to learners who are being abused. Secondly, the child is positioned in a corner with their face and body positioned towards the wall. This clearly shows that they do not want their faces to be seen. Not only are they seeking refuge from their abuser, but they do not want to be seen. This is indicative of shame and self-blame. Feiring, Simon and Cleland (2009) define shame as 'a desire to hide the damaged and degraded self from exposure to the censure of others'. This type of image, highly recognising as being of an 'abused child', that the text says may be hanging around your home or school because they do not want to go home. This is problematic as well. Learners may be on the lookout or quick to label any child as abused.

Figure 27 states that 'he turns to drugs'; 'he thinks about suicide'; 'she overeats'; 'she takes big risks, like unsafe sex with a lot of partners'. This creates an image of drug-addicted homeless men who may commit suicide as a result of childhood abuse, and similarly, the image of overweight and sexually promiscuous women. This is very problematic. It implies that female or male victims of abuse end up walking a prescribed path because of their

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childhood abuse. While these outcomes may be prevalent, because child victims did not have access to treatment which taught them coping skills, or could not escape their abusers for an extended period of time, this is equally as stigmatising as the recognisable image of the 'abused child.'

4.2.7.5 CONCLUSION

The Vivlia publication for grade 7 Life Orientation, like many of the other analysed texts fell into a pattern of stereotypical representations which maintain and reinforce unequal gendered power relations. Girls were, quite noticeably, represented in negative contexts with regards to self-image, while positive images were portrayed of boys and men. This text also presented the onset of menstruation as the start of womanhood. Womanhood is experienced in many ways and this singular experience of it can be problematic or alienating to queer youth.

Further issues that emerged from this text were the insidiousness of male violence which compel women to seek validation and respect of men. Not only was this portrayed as normalised, the text did not do enough to problematise male sexual objectification of women.

Lastly, the stigmatisation of abused children and what happens to them when they become adults is highly problematic. This does not seem to provide any hope for children of abuse to become healthy emotionally well-functioning adults. There does not seem to be any sensitivity applied to the talk around abuse and possible effects, or potentially triggering images for abuse victims.

4.3   CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed prominent features of each text analysed in the context of gender decolonisation. This analysis employed a feminist lens to interrogate relations of power in relation to the framework of analysis employed. This analysis overwhelmingly shows the perpetuation of a heteronormative and patriarchal discourse and a lack of inclusivity, particularly as it regards gender and sexuality in South Africa.

I have attempted to place this analysis in the socio-historical context of South Africa in order to make tangible the results of analysis. All of the texts are complicit in maintaining a heterosexist patriarchal order through the stereotypical representation of men and women, and through the invisibility of queer identities. Half of the texts are guilty of providing stigmatising representation of abused children, as mentioned in the Vivlia analysis. Additionally, one of the texts illustrated the role of religion in maintaining sexual shame, while many of the texts supported discourses that linked sport to masculine success, as well as discourses that represent women as perpetual victims and men as predators.
Other prominent discourses encountered in the grade 7 Life Orientation textbooks included rape culture discourses, like victim blaming; toxic practices of masculinity, which included but is not limited to male violence and entitlement to women's bodies.

A full interpretation of the data follows in the concluding chapter of this study. This interpretation will include a discussion on the research questions. In addition, recommendations will be made and a final conclusion discussed.

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

This qualitative study was undertaken in a quest to ascertain how gender is contextualised within the grade 7 Life Orientation textbooks. With the decolonisation of education in South Africa a much-debated topic, mostly with regards to higher education, I was curious about the role that textbooks play in upholding or contesting hegemonic discourses at the school level. The Life Orientation curriculum, as discussed in chapter 2 (section 2.2), has the goals of upholding the constitution, teaching critical thinking and preparing students to be productive citizens and could potentially function as a site for decolonisation.

The purpose of this chapter is to reflect on the research questions and the objectives of this study as outlined in chapter 1. Here I will provide a further discussion on the findings and put forth recommendations for further study.

5.2   MAIN FINDINGS WITH REGARDS TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

All of the textbooks analysed, with the exception of the Oxford Headstart publication, showed support for a heteronormative patriarchal worldview. A variety of mechanisms were used to maintain this worldview, and each publication upheld these discourses to varying degrees. Some of the discourses used to sustain this perspective included stereotypical gendered representations of boys and girls, queer invisibility, male autonomy versus a lack of female autonomy and consistently portraying girls as the victims of male predators. There was a significant lack of opportunities provided in the texts for critical interrogation of hegemonic discourses, as many of these discourses were presented as self-evident.

In texts where a hetero-patriarchal worldview was not explicitly sustained throughout, like the two Oxford publications, dominant discourse was not explicitly challenged. However, I argue that the subversiveness of these texts lie in their conspicuous lack of support for hetero-

patriarchal narratives. Unfortunately, the neutrality of the text was (ironically) at times weakened by a marked omission of gender or sexuality from certain areas of discussion.

Links between the socio-political context of South Africa and the curriculum materials are clear. A sustained hetero-patriarchal outlook necessarily reinforces unequal power relations in gendered relationships. These power relations, maintained by unchallenged hegemonic discourses underpin the status quo. Additionally, taking cognisance of the characters in the texts bestowed with the autonomy to speak and their utterances; as well as the characters who are named and unnamed; and those who have access to the intangible resources of self-confidence, credibility, status, respect and leadership qualities paints are clear picture of the manner in which South African society is shaped.

The maintenance of skewed relations of social power is dangerous for women and LGBTQIA++ individuals. Masculine dominance over the feminine, and heterosexual dominance over queer people directly translates into physical danger in South African society. The increased vulnerability of women and other marginalised people to physical and emotional male violence has been noted in this dissertation. The evidence shows that we are not close to attaining gender equality or a safe environment for women and queer people.

Inculcating hegemonic discourses at the school level is antithetical to developing a critical consciousness. This functions to narrow learners' developing worldview and it requires the acceptance of toxic hegemonic discourses. The decolonial project compels the interrogation of unquestioned and self-evident 'truths'. To envision gender differently, De Lauretis (1987:17) believes that we should 'walk out of the male-centred frame of reference in which gender and sexuality are (re)produced by the discourse of male sexuality'. I similarly assert that the decolonising of gender requires a feminist point of reference in order to envision gender apart from the male frame of reference.

Both Lugones and Oyewume call for a decolonisation of gender that requires a re-centering of gender away from maleness and whiteness. While Oyewume leans more to toward the rejection of Eurocentric gendered arrangements in favour of Afrocentric epistemologies, Lugones does not call for a complete rejection of the modern/colonial gender system. Both assert that gender need not be patriarchal or heterosexual. The interrogation of hegemonic

gendered discourse is required before we can begin to read and consider other epistemologies on gender or sexuality.

Envisioning gender apart from a male frame of reference requires the interrogation of power relations that uphold the patriarchal gender system. I do not argue for the abolition of gender. Rather, a recognition of the asymmetrical gendered power relations, then an interrogation of these power relations to subvert the status quo. It is only after this that we may be able to imagine gender differently, or picture it apart from a male frame of reference. This probably requires a multi-step approach. This study has begun to highlight the ways in which a male frame of reference is problematic in envisioning 'Othered' genders in Life Orientation textbooks. Privileging male characters with autonomy has necessarily meant subordinating female characters without that autonomy. This was a consistent finding throughout most of the texts.

The main findings of the analysis represented visually (and in relation to research questions) for comparison, are as follows:

TABLE 3: X indicates the presence of problematic discourses in the text.

PROBLEMATIC DISCOURSES	VIA AFRIKA	SHUTER AND SHOOTER	MASKEWMILLER LONGMAN	MACMILLAN	OXFORD SUCCESSFUL	OXFORD HEADSTART	VIVLIA
Heteronormative discourses	X	X	X	X	X		X
Rape culture (victim blaming)	X						
Male autonomy vs female lack of autonomy	X	X	X	X	X		X
Male success linked to sports or technology	X		X	X			X
Girls portrayed as victims	X	X		X	X	X	X

PROBLEMATIC DISCOURSES	VIA AFRIKA	SHUTER AND SHOOTER	MASKEWMILLER LONGMAN	MACMILLAN	OXFORD SUCCESSFUL	OXFORD HEADSTART	VIVLIA
Men portrayed as predators	X	X		X	X	X	X
Male validation required for femininity		X	X				
Free emotional labour required by women of colour			X				
Whiteness and maleness solely associated with success	X						X
Stereotypical gendered representations	X	X	X	X			X
Gender omission						X	X
Queer invisibility	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Homophobia		X					
Assumption of middleclass-ness	X						
No naming of black characters	X	X	X				
Stigmatising images of abuse	X	X		X		X	X

5.3   DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.3.1   Is the gender discourse in the Life Orientation textbooks potentially emancipatory or patriarchal, as read through a feminist lens? (Does the discourse on gender contain sexist elements that are potentially alienating? Does the discourse challenge dominant hegemonic patriarchal discourse?)

Gender discourse in the grade 7 textbooks for Life Orientation was overwhelmingly patriarchal. There are many ways in which patriarchal discourse is perpetuated in the textbooks. Most notably, six out of the seven texts showed support for heteronormative worldviews by normalising heterosexual relationships. This took many forms, with some

texts explicitly stating that romantic relationships are with the 'opposite sex', while others only represent this visually. In addition, unequal gendered power relations were sustained through allotting males the autonomy to speak for themselves, to see and be seen and to provide validation for female identities. This was usually found to contrast with the lack of autonomy granted to female characters. Even where female characters were allowed to speak, their talk was stereotypical, portraying negative qualities stereotypically associated with women and girls. Their talk did not allow them to represent themselves as autonomous beings, but rather in relation to patriarchal discourse or male sexuality.

5.3.1.1 Eurocentrism and masculine domination

Oyewume (1997:7) writes that from the ancients to the moderns, gender has been a foundational category upon which social categories have been erected'. She further notes that although the contents of these categories may change, they are always hierarchically placed in in opposition to one another. A central tenet of European thought, as articulated by Oyewume, is that only women are embodied, while men are walking minds – this gives rise to 'the man of reason' and the diametrically opposed 'women of the body' (1997:6). This bestows intellectual qualities upon men and emotional qualities upon women. These qualities allow men to speak for themselves, to see and be seen; while women are constructed as incidental and invisible. Men have autonomy and women do not.

As demonstrated in the texts, girls were perpetually portrayed as the victims (in six of seven texts) of predatory men (in six of seven texts). The stigmatizing images of abused children, often girls, are yet again depictions of existing in relation to men. Men have the autonomy to commit heinous acts of abuse, while girls are not named and hide or sit silently and shamed. The text necessarily stigmatises and disarms these victims as their shameful postures become highly recognisable as abused, without any discourses of empowerment or reclaiming of autonomy through healing.

Shuter and Shooter portray numerous images depicting male validation required for female identities. Girls are not portrayed as adults or with autonomy in the absence of male validation. Moreover, their inferiority is often portrayed through their hunched over postures in relation to the confident stances portrayed by the boys or men. Maskew Miller Longman

also depicts scenarios of male validation required by women. These discourses are cleverly interwoven into patriarchal society so that they appear normal, but they are not. Normal means innocuous, and these discourses are by no means innocuous. The critical interrogation of these discourses is required to further the decolonial project.

A patriarchal view was further sustained through the privileging of white male success in two of the texts. The highest level of success was attributed to white males, and, in the Via Afrika text, white men were granted access to all women. Conversely, lesser successes were awarded to black men and none to women. Representing white success on its own is not problematic. What is problematic is the hierarchical arrangement between gendered and raced bodies in relation to success. The white man in these texts is positioned centrally as successful, for example, an Olympic gold medallist and the founder of the Apple company. Men and women of colour are positioned away from this success. Men of colour closer than white women, and white women closer than black women. This intersectionality of gender and race determines the social arrangement of societies; when further intersected with class, poor black women are positioned the furthest away from success. This demonstrates the four racially distinct and hierarchical categories of colonisation, as articulated by Oyewume (1997), being replicated in Life Orientation textbooks. In the framework of western or colonial epistemologies, these depictions are communicating who can be successful, and how successful they can be. White male success is a Eurocentric construction, indoctrinating the 'other' to internalise their own inferiority.

Following that, we can see that race cannot be separated from gender on our quest to interrogate relations of power and decolonise. Race and gender are inextricably linked to inform lived experiences and perceptions. The hierarchies between races and gender in Oyewume's four categories are so deeply inculcated in society and western epistemology that they do not stand out as problematic.

Many of the conceptualisations of masculinity and masculine success in the textbooks are toxic. The text leaves no space for the permutation of masculinities that are not consistent with macho masculinity. Boys are overwhelming portrayed as desiring success in sports and having sexual prowess. Particularly problematic are discourses of 'Aren't you a man?' when it comes to romantic associations, implying that if you are indeed a man you would or should be having a sexual relationship. In these texts the female characters are seen by the male

characters but they do not speak. They are not given any agency in sex talk. The boys here are entitled to dictate or steer how those relationships will play out.

5.3.1.2 Men in sport

Many of the texts represented masculinity or male success as associated with sports. Bryson (1987:349) writes that sport is a powerful institution in which masculine hegemony is constructed and reconstructed. Bryson further asserts that

> Negative evaluations of women's capacities are implicit in the
> masculine hegemony in which sport is embedded. This has the
> effect of promoting male solidarity through the exclusion
> process which provides support and fuel for negative male
> attitudes towards women (1987:350).

By revering male sporting prowess and valuing the skill and aggression of sport, there is the implication that women are 'unable to do things that are skilful and valued highly' (Bryson 1987:350). Devaluing women as it regards sport trivialises women's sport and women in sport. Furthermore, promoting male bonding through exclusion directly gives rise to sexism and contributes to rape culture as it normalises so-called 'locker room talk'. The institution of sport is well known for protecting athletes that commit rape and other forms of gender based violence. While this has become more visible in media through cases in the American NFL (Kay-Phillips 2016), and university sport teams such as the Steubenville rape case, the most notable and extreme example in South African recent history has been the case of Oscar Pistorius and the murder of Reeva Steenkamp.

Out of the seven texts analysed, all demonstrated positive images of boys in sports or text that associates male success with sports prowess, while the appearance of girls with regards to sport is not associated with success and can be negative.

Macmillan portrayed three sports images in the Constitutional Rights and Responsibilities theme under the fair play section. One of the images showing a woman successful at sport, while the other two are of men. There is a hearty discussion about Cecil Africa, a Seven's rugby world number one. The discussion includes quotes from others about Cecil and an

encouraging quote about Cecil, his name is mentioned multiple times in the discussion. The other two athletes, a long jumper (Khotso Mokoena) and a hurdles runner (Wenda Theron) are mentioned as well. Their names only appear once in text. This demonstrates the types of sports that are revered versus those that are not.

Maskew Miller Longman portrays a small positive image of a woman in sport. It is an illustration of a girl getting ready to run a race (pg. 4). Her speech bubble reads "I know what I have to do. I will do my best. I CAN DO IT!'

Oxford Successful portrays balanced image of a girl and a boy who play sport but who are low on confidence and are receiving encouraging messages from peers (pg. 12-13). Oxford Headstart on the other hand, portrays a negative image in that Vutomi tells Sindiswe that she does not have to come to netball practice as she is getting too big for sports (pg. 29).

Vivlia portrays a dialogue of a girl who was encouraged by her friend to play chess and is improving her game and making friends (pg. 16).

This demonstrates that the way in which girls and boys are associated with sports in the curriculum materials is quite different. Boys are associated mainly with soccer and rugby which require strength and fitness and are seen as manly. Success is associated with sport in several different ways, like female adoration and male figures seen in national uniform on the sports fields. Girls, however, are associated mostly with netball and other softer sports like chess or running. Girls' sport is not framed as competitive as boy's sport is, nor are they revered for skill or strength as boys are. Aside from the image of Wenda Theron there is no success really associated with sport for girls except that it is good for making friends.

5.3.1.3   Rape culture and the policing of women

One of the texts engage explicitly in perpetuating rape culture. Rape myths, which underpin rape culture, are attitudes and generally false beliefs about rape that are widely and persistently held, and that serve to deny and justify male sexual aggression against women (Lonsway and Fitzgerald 1994). The text very obviously is communicating that women should not put themselves in risky situations as opposed to a narrative that creates a safer environment, like problematizing the behaviours of drugging unattended drinks or

victimising women who are out late at night or drunk. 'We have to eliminate the ridiculous claims that as women, we are so stupid, so passive and beaten down that we can only wear short skirts, revealing or tight clothes, get drunk, wear kangas, smoke cigarettes, or do drugs, do anything to signal to men that we are aroused and asking for it' (Gqola 2007:117). These myths function not only to control women's bodies and movements and dress but also to exclude or limit their presence in the public sphere.

Similarly, Via Afrika also talks about body image in the numerous negative associations of girls and their bodies. To reiterate Gqola (2016:39), these negative associations are designed to keep women working to acquire male approval. Patriarchal culture does not allow women the autonomy to be whole functioning and productive human beings without male validation. Most of the associations in the texts of poor self-image were related to girls feeling negative about their bodies. There were no discussions regarding boys potentially having body image issues except for a discussion about puberty associated with oily skin and pimples. This may be because the tendency to view oneself as an object to be looked at and evaluated by others negatively affects girls', but not boys', subjective well-being (Grabe, Hyde and Lindberg 2007:164). Grabe et al (2007:166) further posit that because of increased awareness, of women, of the sexualisation of their bodies, self-objectification leads to increased experiences of shame and self-monitoring. Framing body issues negatively contribute to the normalisation of body shaming discourses. For example, Via Afrika's story about Laura and her poor body image calls for students to act out Laura's feeling of being fat and unattractive as an informal assessment as opposed to modelling a positive body image. An activity like this can be very detrimental to students who are struggling with body image issues.

5.3.2   How is gender represented in the Life Orientation textbooks? (Is gender representation inclusive? Do these representations reinforce or challenge gender stereotypes?)

5.3.2.1   Stereotyping, heteronormativity, homophobia and the exclusion of queer identities

The data show that most texts portrayed men as predators and women as victims. Furthermore, six out of the seven texts analysed presented male characters as having autonomy and female characters as lacking autonomy. These practises of representation serve

to underpin patriarchal ideology which create and maintain unequal power relations through various practices, including stereotypical representations of gender. These representations maintain men as dominant and stronger, which necessarily requires that women be subservient and weaker.

The analysis of representation in the textbooks additionally brought sexuality to the fore as an important category, and this necessitated adding sexuality into the analysis. Except for Oxford Headstart, the analysed texts presented a heteronormative worldview. All, however, disappeared queer identities from discussion. In Via Afrika, the text makes explicit that boyfriends and girlfriends, in the romantic context, are of the opposite sex and friendships, in the platonic context are of the same sex. All of the images that involved an explicit or implied romantic relationship were heterosexual. While the presentation may not be seen as problematic, the absence of romantic associations across all textbooks of non-heterosexual relationships further erases and marginalises LGBTQIA++ students from the conversation and from society. While most of the texts had some statement regarding respecting diversity and some even mentioned diversity in gender or sexuality, the statements were shallow at best if one considers the various ways in which non-binary non-heterosexual voices are silenced.

Bhana (2012:310) asserts that schools are sexualised institutions despite the denial, through which heterosexual domination becomes an organising principle. While Bhana is referring to school cultures and the actors involved, this phenomenon is quite apparent in the textbooks as well, which serve to underpin and support a heteronormative culture. Queer identities are silenced through invisibility. The only instance in which queerness was referenced at all in all the texts was through a homophobic slur. What message does this communicate to queer students? That their identities are insults at best?

The Shooter and Schuter text was most problematic in that it used the homophobic slur twice in print, as a mechanism to emasculate. Using slurs whether homophobic or racial, normalises their use. It promotes hate speech by the various negative connotations it associates with the slur. Additionally, it relegates the effeminate as not fully human or deserving of respect. The text in no way problematised the use homophobic slurs. There is clearly no awareness of how the use of homophobic slurs contributes to creating an unsafe environment for queer students.

Verbal abuse was noted by Msibi (2012:518) as a prevailing theme across studies detailing the experiences of queer learners. Msibi quotes Smith (1998:310) that the language intends a course of action isolating the gay student and inciting to physical violence, and that verbal abuse functions as an attack as well as initiates attack. The homophobic slur printed in the Shooter and Schuter text implies that being labelled as homosexual is abhorrent and this often can incite violence in a homophobic society.

Other than a homophobic slur, queer identities are completely erased from all textbooks. All images were cis-gendered binary figures. Gender constructs were barely discussed even though it formed part of the title of a sub-section of the units on puberty. One text defined, and then went on to cement gender constructs in stating what men or women should behave like, and what behaviour is uncharacteristic of these binary gender arrangements.

The most problematic text in the exclusion of gender non-conforming individuals was the Vivlia text. The character talks about how she feels like a woman and that she is a woman now that she has had her first period. This discourse tells readers what they should feel like after the onset of menses. If a learner identifies as transgender or non-conforming the onset of menstruation can be an alienating and isolating experience. There is no space in the text for any other conversations to happen as the character in the images and texts already speaks for all individuals assigned female at birth.

5.3.3 Is there a link between the gender discourse and gender representations in the curriculum and the socio-political context of South Africa? (Is gender related to other forms of oppression- race or class?)

The discourse on gender in the Life Orientation textbooks was related to race and class oppression. One text (Via Afrika) detailed that it is necessary to eat healthily to maintain a good self-image. Implicit in the assertions and continuing discussion was the assumption of middleclass-ness. That same text was one of two which presented the pinnacle of success as whiteness and maleness. The intersection of these discourses communicates that whiteness is healthy, wealthy, happy and successful. This discourse inferiorises non-white identities and

successes in South Africa. It privileges white middleclass-ness and by default oppresses poor people of colour. This is even more perverse when one considers the millions of South Africans who are of colour and living in poverty.

Amrita's story in Maskew Miller Longman presented a similarly oppressive narrative of immigrant women of colour, who are compelled to provide free emotional labour so that those privileged in American society are not made uncomfortable by her 'otherness'. This demand for free emotional labour by women of colour is not uncommon. The 'angry black woman' trope requires that women of colour censor themselves and their behaviour to present as non-threatening. While they must work not to reveal any emotion that may be too raw or real or angry, they must equally carry the burden of expectation of others who demand this compliance of them.

5.4   INTERPRETATION

While we no longer have segregated classrooms and segregated curriculums, there is still segregation in the textbooks and in the school as an institution. Perpetuating hegemonic discourses as normal, continues to centre and venerate privileged groups. It grants access to intangible resources and allows only some to be named and to speak and operate in the public sphere. This skews power relations in the classrooms and ultimately in society. Recommendations put forth by the GETT in 1997 have not been heeded as textbooks still have not eliminated sexism or complicity in promoting a patriarchal world order.

As mentioned in chapter 2, the South African school curriculum (Department of Basic Education 2011) generally aims to:

> equip learners, irrespective of their socio-economic
> background, race, gender, physical ability or intellectual ability,
> with the knowledge, skills and values necessary for self-
> fulfilment, and meaningful participation in society as citizens
> of a free country;

Additionally, the purpose of Life Orientation according to the CAPS (Department of Basic Education 2011) curriculum statements is as follows:

> Life Orientation is central to the holistic development of learners. It addresses skills, knowledge and values for the personal, social, intellectual, emotional and physical growth of learners, and is concerned with the way in which these facets are interrelated. Life Orientation guides and prepares learners for life and its possibilities and equips them for meaningful and successful living in a rapidly changing and transforming society.

In my view, the textbooks fail to adequately equip learners with the values necessary for 'self-fulfilment' and meaningful participation in society. The erasure of identities and lived experiences not consistent with cis-gendered heterosexual identities and experiences is detrimental to the social, intellectual and emotional growth of all learners. The invisibility of othered identities does not assume their existence, but rather the opposite. Invisibility silences and provides no space for the 'other' to exist.

5.5   GENDER AND TEXTBOOKS IN SOUTH AFRICA

This study contributes to an emerging body of postgraduate and other research of gender and textbooks in South Africa. The findings of studies, mentioned elsewhere in this dissertation, support my conclusions. Gendered representation is skewed to the detriment of women, and heterosexuality is entrenched in textbooks, thereby upholding a hetero-patriarchal worldview. Furthermore, my study revealed the insidiousness of rape culture and toxic practices, and the normalisation of these in textbooks, and by extension, schools and wider society. The autonomy allotted to men in textbooks, and the consequent lack of autonomy of women, as previously demonstrated by Maistry and Pillay (2014), Chiponda and Wasserman (2011), and Nene (2014), as well as the erasure of queer identities (Potgieter and Reygan 2012; Wilmot and Naidoo 2017) are evident in this study. This reveals a trend over almost a decade, and across disciplines, of textbooks – an 'indispensable trustworthy source of disciplinary content' (Davids and Maistry 2018:35) – that are crafted to uphold hegemonic discourses and maintain the status quo. It is also symptomatic of raising generations without fostering a

critical consciousness, and a contributory factor to the state of gender relations in South Africa.

What will it take to strive for equality and extrication from sexist oppression? A deeper consideration of the processes and power relations in conceptualising and creating textbooks is surely required.

5.6   RECOMMENDATIONS

With inclusivity and subversiveness as aims for a decolonised education, education policy, learning materials and teacher training can only benefit from engaging meaningfully with queer theory and critical feminist pedagogy. Primary and secondary education have not usually been the focus of conversations around decoloniality and education in South Africa, but are a pivotal point for intervention and ultimately social transformation.

Sumara and Davis (1999:192) posit that,

> Queer theory does not ask that pedagogy *become* sexualized,
> but that it excavate and interpret the way it already *is*
> sexualized – and, furthermore, that it begin to interpret the way
> that it is explicitly heterosexualised. Moreover, rather than
> defining queer identities in strict reference to particular bodily
> acts and aberrant or quirky lifestyles, queer theory asks that the
> continued construction of narratives supporting that unruly
> category "heterosexual" be constantly interrupted and re-
> narrated.

All of the textbooks analysed for this study positioned heterosexuality as the 'normal' and gender as binary. Interrogation of hegemonic discourses around gender and sexuality will do much for inclusivity of queer students. Interrogating the power relations that exist in a hetero-patriarchal society is imperative to serve a decolonial and multicultural objective. Ignoring or denying queer identities in the curriculum materials does not disappear queer students from existence. The fact is that there are queer students sitting in classrooms learning a curriculum that does not recognise their existence, and being prepared for a society that is not prepared

for them. While addressing queer identities may benefit textbooks, it is also imperative to recognise that such a discourse in the textbooks will experience success or failure through the educators tasked with having those conversations for which they are ill-prepared.

According to hooks (1994:38), racism needs to be unlearned and educators need to learn about colonisation and decolonisation. Hooks further posits that "whiteness" needs to be studied, understood and discussed (19934:43) so that everyone learns that affirmation of multiculturalism. Similarly, masculinity needs to be studied, understood and discussed so that the normalcy of hetero-patriarchal can be interrogated. Educators, and actors involved in curriculum development would benefit from an intersectional approach and self-reflexivity and understand the role their positionality plays in influencing the curriculum and shapes society through the classroom.

As the classroom becomes more diverse, teachers are faced with the way the politics of domination are often reproduced in the educational setting (hooks 1994:39). This study would therefore benefit from triangulating document analysis with classroom practices or teaching practices. This may give the researcher a broader picture of gender articulation in the curriculum. The contextualisation of gender in the curriculum does not and cannot rely on one factor only. To gain a more robust picture of the enactment of gender in the curriculum, the researcher would need to involve students and teachers. Even then, this enactment would differ from one school to the next or from one context to the next. The performance of and learning about gender is not only influenced by our home, social and educational environments. With the global community becoming even smaller, many voices influence our experience of the world and the part we play in it.

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