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Representations of Masculinity in Selected Novels with South African Settings by Bryce
Courtenay

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DECLARATION

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, in the Graduate Programme in English Literature, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

I, Damian Richard Van Selm, declare that

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Abstract

This dissertation examines masculinities created by Bryce Courtenay as represented within his South African-set novels, *The Power of One*, published in 1989, *Tandia*, which appeared in 1991, and *Whitethorn*, published in 2005. The dissertation analyses the texts to expose how masculinities function within Courtenay's novels, focussing on representation of characters, particularly the main protagonists of the three novels: Peekay, Tandia and Tom respectively. Building upon work by theorists including Viktor Seidler, Raewyn Connell and Robert Morrell, the formation of individual masculinities within select societies such as apartheid South Africa is explored. In addition, the setting of the novels is used to shed light on both the hegemonic ideal of masculinity and marginalised masculinities within the scope of apartheid South Africa, all of which are essential to understanding the overall societies in which the stories are set as reflections of South African history, and with an influence on contemporary society. The dissertation examines marginal masculinities, the role of fathers and father-figures, and how masculinities function within physical locations. It reveals how masculinities and identity-formation are influenced by personal beliefs and social identities, the presence or absence of an immediate father figure and the resulting influence on identity development in children, and how physical spaces (such as the boxing ring and boxing gym, mines, and sites of education such as schools) contain, enforce and manipulate the formation and maintenance of social, group, and individual identities. This opens up possibilities in using authors like Courtenay (who fall under the banner of popular fiction and are therefore commonly seen as unsuitable for academic study) and their work to examine complicated concepts like gender in an academic setting using a wider range of examples previously discounted and/or ignored by academia.

Introduction

Literature is one of the most useful tools when it comes to examining complex concepts and understanding them. This applies to a multitude of topics, but for the sake of this dissertation the topic will be gender dynamics, more specifically masculinity studies. The range of masculinities covers a vast array, with masculinity arguably being unique for every person capable of understanding and expressing gender. How individuals develop, maintain and evolve their own identities and conception of masculinities sheds insight into the personal aspects of individual lives but also the state of the societies in which those individuals live. Therefore, studying masculinities through the lens of literature allows a microcosmic understanding of the complexities of the concept, which can then be applied to and understood in the larger context of the real world. This dissertation will examine masculinities created by Bryce Courtenay as represented within his South African-set novels to expose how masculinities function within his novels. In doing so, the setting of the novels (being apartheid-era South Africa) can shed light on both the hegemonic ideal of masculinity and of the marginalised masculinities, all of which are essential to understanding the overall societies in which the stories are set. By looking at marginal masculinities, the role of fathers and father-figures, and how masculinities develop and function based on the physical locations in which the characters are based, this dissertation will open up possibilities in using authors like Courtenay (who fall under the banner of popular fiction and are therefore commonly seen as unsuitable for academic study) and their work to explore complicated concepts like masculinities in an academic setting.

“Men and women are in crisis” is a buzz term that can often be seen splashed across media in some form or another. Almost daily there is another report of a woman missing, raped, or killed. Social justice movements like the #RURestoration of 2016 and the #AmINext movement of 2019 are an indicator of the state of our societies and how badly those societies treat women. Added to that is the popular idea that men are in a crisis, referring to the fading away of traditionally masculine values in favour of a more gentle, accepting modern man. These issues may be one and the same. Women are being attacked, raped, assaulted, and killed at a greater rate and with more visibility than ever before. In the modern age of social media, it is being reported and discussed within moments of it occurring, in some cases. The traditional idea of what a ‘man’ truly is has directly caused a surge in hatred and violence towards women, due to the fallacy that any attack on masculinity must be a direct result of femininity. Impactful social change cannot occur without these

discussions occurring. It is only fairly recently that men have entered the conversation in a way that they can engage with. Prior to this, the discussion about men has been that they are the abusers, the attackers, the violators. What is being discussed now is how men can change, can be taught to be better. This is the conversation that this dissertation will attempt to join. The world will not change until the concept of masculinity becomes one more suited to a modern social setting. It will involve facing some harsh and ugly truths, to be exposed to ideas that may seem alien or even downright offensive to some. However, these conversations desperately need to be had.

In 2017 I read K. Sello Duiker's novel, *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* as a part of one of my university courses. In it, Tshepo the protagonist ends up working for a male massage parlour, essentially becoming an escort for male clientele. West is another man who works at the parlour and it is made manifest that West does not know how to interact with other men to show them positive emotion or feeling except through sex, even though he does not consider himself a homosexual man. This happens because West wants to express to Tsepho how he feels towards him, just in terms of the close friendship they have developed, but he lacks the words to do so. All he knows is how to use his body, and how to use what he is good at to express himself, which leaves sex.

This, more than anything else I had learned that year, or perhaps even in my time at university, struck a chord with me. What was it that, even with all I had learned and with what all men learn throughout their lives, we are still lacking in some of the most basic human abilities? Why can we not express ourselves sufficiently? Throughout my time at university I learned much about feminism and society. What struck me was that men and masculinities are very often side-lined. If they are referenced at all, they are reviled or villainised. This seemed dissonant to my own experiences. While the university environment and personal growth I had experienced had most definitely left me with parts of myself I disliked or was unsure of, my own maleness and masculinity were something I was certain of, loved and appreciated. I struggled to understand the disparity between what was being taught about what masculinity meant and what I personally experienced. Why is it that something so intrinsic to so many people, an identity trait experienced by all people in fact, is registered as 'bad' by so many? Why were there seemingly little to no examples given as alternatives? Feminist theory had been provided extensively throughout my education; good examples are praised and explored; bad ones were condemned but they too were explored to show why they were deemed unsuccessful or ineffective. Masculinities and examples of such

were not. Men and masculinity often came off as bad, toxic, a blight on what was meant to be a better society. The patriarchy was the source of all evil. Or, at least that is how it seemed.

Because of all of this, I decided to continue researching the topic of masculinity. Books like Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* led me to the concept that positive models of masculinity did exist within academia, that masculinity could be recognised as something other than negative. Other novels, like Mark Behr's *Embrace* and *The Smell of Apples* further expanded my awareness of the topic, showing me that even though masculinity could indeed be corrupt and abusive, at least I had examples to contextualise it. After working through many novels and academic scripts, I settled on using the work of Bryce Courtenay, an author I was familiar with, having read many of his books before. I had never thought to examine them through the lens of masculinity research, and once I began to do so, I was struck by just how detailed and interesting his writing was. Courtenay's South African-set work enabled me to study what I wanted to, while also allowing me to add to the discourse of South African identity studies. I decided upon *The Power of One*, *Tandia*, and *Whitethorn* as the texts to focus on.

I realised that I was searching for relevance to my own situation. I believe that the human being wants to find itself in what it is observing. When we watch animals, we instinctively anthropomorphise them in order to make sense of their actions and activities, even though we have no actual way of knowing what is going through the creature's mind. When we watch a film, read a book, or listen to music, we immediately search for an anchor for our personal selves. We search for something in which to situate ourselves in order to feel comfortable enough to formulate an opinion on the topic at hand. We always search for something to relate to, because in this relation to the subject at hand we find knowledge and comfort. In my experiences at university, I struggled to find this comfort. Part of this was challenging my own patriarchal biases and assumptions, a necessary task. I struggled to correlate my own maleness, something I loved and loved in others, with what was being taught. I had no place to stand, no way to relate, because what was being shown to me and explained as something I was a part of did not feel like me. As my research progressed, I began to realise that this wasn't personal. I was in the lucky minority who are certain of and love their own sense of identity. Many do not have this certainty, and it is this instability of the self that very often seems to cause men to behave unacceptably and to lash out. And so, I could observe what was being taught about masculinity and reject it as not applying to

myself. Sadly that did not mean it would not apply to others, even those I loved and cared about.

Broadly speaking, what this dissertation set out to do is expand the knowledge base for examples of masculinities and discussions on what is acceptable, what should be emulated, what is not and should not, and why. Societies are predominantly based on men and masculinities. Only recently have women been included in politics, and even then the issues they bring forward are still to this day ignored, ridiculed, or otherwise treated as irrelevant or unnecessary. Male hegemonic power is what has driven many of what are considered societal necessities to the modern age. To this day, men are considered rational, logical, and unemotional, and applauded for it. Women by contrast are perceived as emotional, more in tune with intuition and faith, and reviled for it. Victor Seidler's book, *Unreasonable Men* (1994) discusses the history and socialisation behind men being linked to logic and women being linked to emotion. This discourse can often be seen in the constant refrain of jokes and pointed barbs at women's emotional states during menstruation.

To this end, discussing masculinity is important because it allows us to better understand our society. Many societies are built upon foundations of patriarchal values, refined over centuries of hegemonic patriarchal rule. The values that many societies hold most dearly and deem most valuable are invariably patriarchal: the 'manliness' of men, the 'femininity' of women (and how the two shall never cross those boundaries lest they be attacked for it). Understanding masculinity, how it is built, how it affects young people especially boys, where it comes from, and how it can be influenced are all important factors because they allow us to understand and therefore shape it to suit ourselves. There is much criticism by various feminist voices that call for masculinity studies to take up less space within feminist discussions and to start creating discussions surrounding feminism in male spaces, interrogating toxic masculinity culture, fostering positive forms of masculinity, and not demanding social and emotional labour of women while doing it. Men already take up an enormous amount of social space and energy, as explored by Sally Cline and Dale Spender (1987) in their book, *Reflecting Men at Twice Their Natural Size*. Therefore, it seems nonsensical to give men and men's issues more attention, even at the academic level. That being said, to ignore men and masculinity is a severe mistake. It is even more important now than ever before to be studying men. Only by understanding something can there be any hope to shape it to the needs of society as a whole. It is precisely because men are in a position of social strength that masculinity needs to be studied. Historically, social strength has almost

always been abused, and very often this has been by men. The world desperately needs men to improve in their social interactions. Men still hold an enormous amount of social power, and it is being misused in ways that have never been acceptable, but especially in the modern era are inexcusable. Only once men have been taught to be better, can there be progress towards addressing the gross inequalities in our society in ways that will actually make an impact. Unfortunately, due to the perceived anti-male attitude of many feminist writers and texts, men not educated in feminist discourse will often see any attempt by feminism to change maleness or masculinity as an attack. However, the only way to combat this misrepresented perception is to educate men on feminist discourse and have them encourage other men to engage. So far, the feminist agenda has predominantly been pushed by women, and therefore the perception of many men is that their very masculinity is being challenged or assaulted. As stated by Janice Roberston (2019), “Most contemporary feminists have [...] come to recognise that understanding men and the societal expectations on men could improve general awareness of the politics of gender and even have a positive effect on women” (17). To make the education of men easier and more productive, and to reduce the intellectual burden on women feminists, it is men who should be performing the bulk of feminist education towards other men. As argued by Judith Gardiner (2002):

This is also an argument that feminists need to engage masculinity studies now, because feminism can produce only partial explanations of society if it does not understand how men are shaped by masculinity. Reducing men’s resistance to feminism, moreover, is a necessary goal of a masculinity studies that responds to feminism’s crisis in frustrated progress towards equality. (9)

Feminism has studied women’s issues extensively and to a degree, masculinity. However, studying masculinity from an outsider’s perspective will only yield partial results. What are available are the tools created by the feminist movement to study gender, and tools of feminist literary scholars can be applied to men and masculinities. If they are not being applied by men themselves the results will always be incomplete. Ultimately, the hope of work like this dissertation is to try bringing cis and trans men, as well as transmasculine individual voices, to become more aware and introspective of their own identities and those of people like them. Only once people are looking inwards at themselves, how their identities are formed, and how they are problematic and can be improved, can masculinity studies truly add to the feminist movement in terms of gender equality.

Masculinity is a social construct. It is commonly accepted as social behaviour and traits associated with male human beings; a “confluence of multiple processes and

relationships with variable results for differing individuals, groups, institutions and societies” (Gardiner, 2002, 11). These include but are not limited to: male primary and secondary sexual characteristics (male genitals, body hair); behavioural traits such as confidence, logic and rationality, and leadership skills; and certain socially accepted movements (chivalry, codes of honour). Originally discussed by Sigmund Freud as a part of his studies into psychosocial development, that work has been expanded upon and succeeded by research of the likes generated by Raewyn Connell, Victor Seidler, and Robert Morrell, to name but a few.

Importantly, while masculinity (or masculinities) can be easy to point out in general terms, they are often extremely difficult to confidently define. A major challenge faced by feminist and masculinity theorists is how to “conceptualise their categories and how to articulate the interdependencies and conflicts between them, their divisions, the effects of masculinities and men on women and of women and femininities on men” (Gardiner, 2002, 9). Because masculinities are socially constructed, they tend to reflect the social values of the society in which they are found. As described by Connell (2005 [1995]) they are “deeply enmeshed in the history of institutions and of economic structures” (29). For example, the stereotypical American concept of masculinity would bring to mind the rugged frontier man, like Paul Bunyon, complete with beard, plaid shirt, jeans, and wood axe upon his shoulder, pipe in hand gazing off into the distant sunset after a hard day’s work. Comparatively, the British gentleman could be expected to exist in a tweed suit, accompanied by a monocle, elegant cane, posh accent and an affinity for tea and fencing.

It is unfortunate that when it comes to masculinities, outside of the hegemonic ideal of masculinity, all others are often perceived as deviant, or even an attack on the norm and therefore deserving of swift punitive measures. In more recent years academics such as Raewyn Connell and Janice Robertson have debated the meaning and role of masculinities in great detail.

Hegemony is defined by Connell as “the cultural dynamic by which a group claims and sustains a leading position in social life” (2005 [1995], 77). Therefore, hegemonic masculinity is a “configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women” (77). Hegemony of this kind can only be established if there is some “correspondence between cultural ideal

and institutional power, collective if not individual” (77). If all of the most powerful and successful individuals within a society are men, or behave in a masculine fashion, then being masculine or possessing cismasculinity (referred to as “passing” by the trans community, meaning to “pass” as cisgender among contemporary society) must make the individual more powerful than those that do not. As Connell states, it is the “successful claim to authority, more than direct violence, that is the mark of hegemony” (77).

Hegemonic masculinity, by definition, requires subordination of the entire society. Like any system of power, it cannot function if those under it refuse to obey its order. What this creates unfortunately is a system in which even those who exemplify it are constricted, as any oddities, eccentricities, or deviance from the norm can and often do result in punishment of some sort. As Gardiner (2002) points out:

Although dominant or hegemonic forms of masculinity work constantly to maintain an appearance of permanence, stability, and naturalness, the numerous masculinities in every society are contingent, fluid, socially and historically constructed, changeable and constantly changing, variously institutionalised, and recreated through media representations and individual and collective performances. (11)

Connell (2005 [1995]) explains that the problem with normative definitions of masculinity is that “not many men actually meet the normative standards” (79). The hegemonic ideal exists in a paradox: it is simultaneously the masculine ideal and entirely unattainable. Only by constantly proving oneself, or attempting to do so, as very much a part of this ideal can a man be considered a part of it, and this can only be done by stifling, hiding, or even destroying the portions of himself that cause him to deviate, often to damaging and disastrous results. As stated by Robertson (2019), “Being born male does not, it seems, necessarily guarantee societal ascendance in every case” (23). The more dangerous part of hegemonic masculinity is that every single man benefits from it to some degree. Even those who are firmly placed as deviant within the system still benefit, through a perception of confidence gaining attention and/or praise, through gaining higher paying jobs or promotions than their female counterparts, or in any other myriad of ways men benefit in a patriarchal system. This is dangerous because it makes it much more difficult for men to fight against the system, as doing so is often made out to appear as if a man is fighting his very self. The hegemonic ideal is often set up as the ‘true’ self. It is, after all, the ideal situation for a man to be in, the absolute pinnacle of masculinity. For a man to be fighting against it is perceived as self-hatred, and for a woman to fight against it is perceived as man-hating. In this way, people

who try to fight against what hegemonic masculinity stands for are labelled haters of men, and therefore their opinions on the topic must be disregarded. The cognitive dissonance of being a part of the system, benefitting from it, while also being ostracised, attacked, and/or ridiculed for being different is very akin to an abusive relationship.

Masculinity is constantly set up in opposition to femininity. What writers like Connell have attempted to argue is that both masculinity and femininity are traits possessed by all people, in varying degrees, and only social backlash causes people to dislike or distrust feminine impulses and behaviour in favour of masculine ones. According to Gardiner, the Second Wave of Feminism brought about the concept (in some circles) that men “as a group [were] the enemies and oppressors of women” (2002, 3) and that “masculinity [is] both an instrument and a sign of their power” (3). This then set up masculinity and femininity even further at polar ends of a spectrum, and any who strayed outside of their assigned zones were seen as complicit in either the assault on women or the attack on men. Obviously, this is not the case. Men are not asking questions about masculinity because they benefit from the hegemony directly; to ask questions is seen as an attack on not only the system, but upon the self. When women ask these questions, they are reviled for it. However, these are questions that need to be asked, that need to be answered. The work done by Connell, Seidler, Gardiner and many others has provided a base from which new questions can be asked. Discussing and studying masculinities is necessary to understand all forms of gender and social identities. Feminism and feminists have been studying women and the feminine for decades, but studying men and masculinities as an academic topic in a critical way is fairly recent. It can be argued that feminism will struggle to progress further without actively studying men and masculinities as a part of itself.

This dissertation applies detailed theoretical insights about masculinities to three texts by Bryce Courtenay. He is an Australian author who grew up in South Africa. His novels based in South Africa are set between 1939 and roughly mid-1980s; novels primarily dealing with white male protagonists who are a part of the British descendent group, coming into constant conflict with white Afrikaner descendants. These two distinct groups, both white and patriarchal, have conflict significant enough to have affected how boys become men and how masculinities were formed in South Africa during the time period of the novels, which continue to have an afterlife into the present.

Furthermore, Courtenay's work has been ignored by academia, only very briefly showing up in a few scattered papers and theses, and even then only as an example and never as a subject. This "ignoring or panning" (Ayliffe, 2012) of Courtenay's work by critics like Peter Carey has been a source of great irritation to the author, calling the whole process one of "inane literacy snobbery" (2010) in his interview with Jason Whittaker. It was even suggested by Carey that Courtenay's brand of 'popular fiction' has actively contributed to the "dumbing-down of Australia" (Ayliffe, 2012), a suggestion that Courtenay vehemently opposed, arguing that popular fiction is simply more accessible to a wider range of people. Courtenay's novels are definitely written more to be read for enjoyment rather than searching for profundity. That being said, the lack of academic interest in Courtenay seems unusual, as his novels deal with many of the same issues around race, gender and social power as many other writers who have received academic attention, such as Mark Behr and E.M. Forster, albeit arguably not with the same level of complexity.

The fact that Courtenay is more of a popular novelist than a writer of literary fiction necessitates some contextualisation. Steven Petite asserts that literary fiction and popular fiction are separated along the lines that literary fiction does not fit into any particular genre (2014). While popular (or "genre") fiction is generally consumed for entertainment, literary fiction "provides a means to better understand the world and delivers real emotional responses" (2014). He may be correct in his assertion, as the argument that literary fiction is more cerebral while popular fiction is more geared towards the general population or reading for entertainment has merit. Indeed, Courtenay's novels do fit into certain genres, such as *The Power of One* falling into the genre of sport novel. There is definitely overlap in how Courtenay's texts help those who read them (especially South Africans) to understand their world and their society better, as well as offer opportunity for emotional response. Courtenay's work is one example of what M.H. Abrams (1999) describes as fitting into a "Cultural Studies" (53) approach, which recognises that literary fiction is often assumed to be the apex of literature. "Cultural Studies" attempts to subvert this assumption by focussing on work that falls outside of literary fiction, such as "popular fiction, best-selling romances (that is, love stories), journalism, and advertising, together with other arts that have mass appeal such as cartoon comics, film, television 'soap operas,' and rock and rap music" (53). With this in mind, while Courtenay falls clearly under the banner of popular fiction, his ability to provide much of the thought provocation and emotional impact typically searched for in literary fiction certainly makes him worthy of study, especially in a South African context.

While academic critique of Courtenay's work is severely limited, the theme of masculinities in South Africa is shared with various other authors, such as J. M. Coetzee, Mark Behr, K. Sello Duiker, and Damon Galgut, all of whom do have critical material written about their work. Therefore, by examining some of that critical material, it is possible to make comments on Courtenay's novels as well and gain a more rounded understanding of the state of South African masculinities. Particularly relevant is academic work from scholars such as Jesse Arsenault (2010), Matthys Lourens Crous (2005), and Kim Tracy Swinstead (2007), all of whom have submitted dissertations revolving around masculinity in a South African context, and specifically relating to literature based in South Africa. Arsenault and Crous submitted work that engages with a range of texts, including Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* and Damon Galgut's novels, with Swinstead focussing on Behr's novels, *The Smell of Apples* and *Embrace*.

Arsenault's work explores the relationship between masculinity and race in South African novels. He delves into the queer body, white masculinities, the exclusion of certain masculinities, and the interracial struggle for recognition and acceptance. He argues that the type of acceptable masculinities that were created and sustained during the end of apartheid have now been morphed and twisted by the "Rainbow Nation" (3) rhetoric, allowing those who now feel they are within the hegemony to exclude and abuse those who exist outside of it. A prominent example that Arsenault provides is the xenophobic attacks in 2008, stating that the masculinities generated and sustained by the attempt at 'national pride' have amounted to creating new, equally dangerous masculinities that continue to inflict the same level of damage as the previous hegemony inflicted by predominantly white Christian Afrikaner men. Through his examination of the texts, he explores the different examples of masculinity to conclude that South African masculinities have certainly evolved from what they once were since the apartheid era to suit the modern age, but in essence they have not really changed. They are still exclusionary to any who do not fit; the only real difference is that white masculinities are no longer the most socially and politically powerful. What this can be used to critique is Courtenay's representation of white masculinities in his novels. Arsenault provides examples of modern hegemonic masculinities, and through that lens Courtenay's can be used to view the masculinities and compare them. This gives us a timeline of sort, but also provides a blueprint of masculinities in South Africa, as the modern masculinities can be observed as having evolved because of or in spite of the masculinities represented by Courtenay.

Crous's dissertation focusses on presentations of masculinities in post-apartheid novels, including Coetzee's *Disgrace*, Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams*, and Galgut's *The Good Doctor*, among others. Like Arsenault, Crous notes that South Africa remains "patriarchal in essence in spite of the noble intentions set out in the Constitution" (4), primarily because of the continued opposition to the improvement of women's positions in society and a lack of tolerance towards members of the LGBT community. Like Arsenault, Crous notes that white men have lost a lot of their social and political power, but he continues by mentioning that the power gained by African men has created a situation where "African women are faced with new difficulties, in particular assumptions relating to the maleness of African power" (6). In effect, African women are almost entirely excluded from this increase in social and political power assumed by African men in the post-apartheid period, and indeed continue to suffer under patriarchal rule. Through his analysis of the texts, Crous observes a variety of masculinities, including that of elder white males, younger white males, black heterosexual males, and homosexual males. He concludes that masculinity in South Africa seems fundamentally linked to violence and control, and that "existing views on masculinity are not contested and that men feel the most comfortable in their patriarchally entrenched positions of power" (157). What this can be used to examine is Tandia's viewpoint on masculinities, as her observations are taking place at the beginning of the crackdown of the apartheid regime, while Crous's work explores more recent masculinities. This provides context and understanding of how women observe and interact with men and masculinities, especially women of colour and how the subjugation of women under male control has not abated, even as South Africa has gone through its political changes.

Swinstead focuses on Behr's novels only, but this yields the most interesting findings in relation to the topic of this dissertation, as both of Behr's novels focus on white male adolescent boys of Afrikaner descent, which can be examined alongside the protagonists of *The Power of One* and *Whitethorn* more effectively. Swinstead examines the culture that shapes particularly white masculinities, observing that "Apartheid ideology used this sense of masculine identity to create a strong desire for national identity among Afrikaners. Militarism promoted the notion of an 'ideal' masculinity and was used to entrench firmly Christian ideology within South Africa" (1). This observation marks the basis for much of what will be argued in this dissertation: white masculinities are a result of a combination of religious dogma, militarism, and persistent hegemonic masculinity, all of which fed off each other to promote the concept of the 'ideal' man, a standard to which every person was held, but only

white men could achieve. Women, children, and people of colour were obviously and often violently excluded.

The result of examining these texts is that they provide a background of academic discourse surrounding masculinity in South Africa that can then be applied to Courtenay's work. The intention of this dissertation is to examine South African masculinities, particularly the white masculinities, as these are far more powerful and dominant during the period of time that the novels are set in, to understand their complexity and how they are formed, shifted and subverted by the characters that Courtenay portrays, both male and female alike. Also explored are black masculinities portrayed in the novels, to show how they contrasted and how this contrast was dealt with in a society that already despised anything that was not 'white'. Courtenay can provide insight into types of masculinities not explored by these other writers, at least not in any meaningful manner: that of white British males in Afrikaner societies, white boys with little to no family background on which to base their developing masculinities. Forced to make do with what they can find or create for themselves, they nevertheless manage to do so, through interactions with characters of colour, women, and other social outcasts, as well as people within the hegemony of white male Afrikaner power. This combination sets up Tom and Peekay as both within and simultaneously excluded from the hegemony in ways that no other academics have attempted to explore. Likewise, Tandia's upbringing as a mixed-race woman and her use of femininity as a weapon and her views and ideas about the concept of masculinity provide insight into these structures from a complete outsider's perspective, but one that still exists within many of the same spaces (university, brothel and courts).

Within the context of South Africa, the hegemony of 'whiteness' is commonly acknowledged. It is the white middle class that holds the greatest amount of wealth, and with that wealth is included no small degree of social power and privilege. During the time period in which Bryce Courtenay's novels are set, with *Whitethorn* being set between the 1940s and 1960s and both *Power* and *Tandia* being set sometime around the late 1960s to the late 1980s, the white apartheid government is in power in South Africa, and the mind-set of the ruling party has trickled down into the societies the novels portray. In more recent years, there has been a surge in academic attention towards researching African identity, including masculinities. Research into white masculinities in Southern Africa appears to very rarely explore further than the apartheid mentality. It is almost as if it is good enough that the white colonists are reviled. The flaw in this logic is that white society/culture has continued to

evolve, and without a certain level of study the continued racism, sexism and homophobia within those cultures cannot be addressed at the root level. What this dissertation hopes to undertake is the task of examining the apartheid mentalities of various different characters as depicted by Courtenay, and how those characters are used to portray the ideologies and identities of individuals living in South Africa. Courtenay portrays many and varied characters and attitudes, from the outright racist, to the sympathiser, to those who feel powerless to stop the oppression. He also provides other viewpoint, such as how otherwise good people become absorbed into an inherently unjust system, and that their 'goodness' does not erase the evil they sometimes help commit, but that they still have good in them. He argues that it is the system that is in the wrong, and only those who actually believe that the system is right and just are actually irredeemable. A character that Courtenay attempts to redeem is Magistrate Coetzee, an elderly judge who frequents the Bluey Jay brothel in *Tandia*. In a rare candid moment, he laments the state of the country and how hatred, greed and fear have been bred into the very fabric of social interaction, making it near impossible for people of different races and backgrounds to interact successfully. This assertion is reacted to with shock by all present, and serves to equip Tandia herself with a direction for her hatred and fear: the system that cripples even those who are privileged enough to control it.

The mentality of white people living in and benefitting from the apartheid regime is important to examine because, if Courtenay's novels are used as a yardstick, it is never as simple as black versus white. The characters he portrays are important tools to explore a variety of identities, personalities and psychosocial existences within a highly contentious and turbulent time in South Africa's history. It is precisely because they are within and benefitting from an oppressive system that they are important subjects for study. While the rise of colonialism and the history of the colonialists are well documented, it is only recently that people of colour have begun exposing the corruption beneath the false 'glorious' history of white rule. Courtenay has not only provided a spectrum of personalities and identities to examine, but the style of writing provides subtle insight into the mental state of his protagonists. This is interesting for two reasons. First, it holds the reader's hand and leads them along the same mental and emotional journey that the character travels, allowing the reader to experience the shift in viewpoint as something entirely natural. One example is Peekay's realisation that Nanny always had a family that she had left behind to take care of him, including an infant son the same age as himself. The reader gets to experience Peekay's

awakening to the profundity of the lives of the black people he loves, and afterwards he becomes much more aware of and respectful towards black people he meets and interacts with. The second reason is because the reader gets to watch the character grow and mature without even fully realising it. People that develop and grow intellectually will inevitably have their viewpoints challenged and possibly changed. The reader is able to watch this occur first hand through the inner monologues of the characters. An ideal, albeit unfortunate, example is Jannie Geldenhys, the fanatical policeman in *Tandia*. As the story progresses and Tandia and Peekay thwart his plans again and again, the reader gets to experience his gradual descent into homicidal rage, the leaps in judgement he makes as a result, and the twisted fracturing of his psyche. His hatred for the two worsens, but so does his violent treatment of black people. He becomes even more vicious and less controlled, to the point of obsession. The reader observes this happen, witnesses the twists in logic it takes for a damaged man to irreparably break. While many novels do allow the reader a glimpse into the psyche of the antagonist, rarely do novels do so in such a way as to expose motives but not to create any sort of sympathy or understanding. Geldenhys has always been written as a corrupt individual, but Courtenay allows the reader to observe how the policeman's conviction and belief in the system utterly corrupts and destroys him, even when the system is firmly in support of him from the beginning. This is why it is important to study such characters. In many ways, Geldenhys is set up as a sympathetic character. Childhood trauma is followed by constant humiliation at the hands of Peekay in the boxing ring and in the court room. The power that comes with becoming an officer of the law should serve as a salve for that humiliation, but time and again the very black characters he believes himself better than and above in terms of both society and the eyes of God manage to get the better of him, humiliate him or even physically injure him. Other characters are shown to suffer comparable events: Peekay is tortured as a child, Tandia is raped and assaulted, and Tom is sexually assaulted. What can be observed within Courtenay's work is that it is not the circumstances, but the choices within those circumstances that matter. While Peekay, Tandia, and Tom all choose to improve and become better people, letting go of the hurt they experienced in favour of love and acceptance, Geldenhys never manages to do this. He chooses to allow his circumstances to fester his hatred, unable to forgive or let go of his vendettas against Peekay and Tandia, to the point of murderous intent. So he, as a villain, is made irredeemable.

This becomes a recurring theme within the novels. All three protagonists suffer horrific abuse and each reacts differently to what happens. The reader gets to witness some of

the most damaging moments suffered by each character, even though the novels also provide a glimpse into the growth that comes from their suffering. The three protagonists, although they do suffer, take that suffering and use it to drive themselves forward for the sake of others. By contrast there are viewpoints of characters like Geldenhys whose trauma, which involves physical and psychological abuse by his father, seems very minor compared to what Peekay, Tom, or Tandia are forced to go through. While the three protagonists go on to succeed until they face insurmountable odds, Geldenhys continuously fails because, while he believes his aims are for the good of people like himself, the reader can observe that he only fights for selfish reasons. Another example is Kobus “Pissy” Vermaak from *Whitethorn*, who suffers horrific sexual abuse as a boy at The Boys Farm. Later in his life, after coming to accept his own homosexuality, he decides to turn it into something to be proud of, and not only becomes reasonably successfully but also well-adjusted, living openly in a society that, at that time, did not accept homosexuality in any way. It is always the decisions that matter, not the circumstances, a sentiment that echoes Peekay’s mantra “First with the head, then with the heart” (Courtenay, 2006 [1989], 118). Peekay is the character who sees this the most clearly, especially in a scene in which the young boxers he trains with in a prison gym refuse to take a photo with a mixed race trainer. He observes that this moment awakens him to the exact nature of evil created by racism in South Africa, even among people he personally considers good and decent. Individuals make decisions that are impactful, but the truth of their nature is shown through the circumstances of those decisions. A good person will invariably make the same choices regardless of the circumstance, even if the choices could result in hardship under certain conditions. Tom, Peekay, Tandia, Gideon Mandoma and Kobus all suffer in their lives and overcome their hardships to go on to succeed, achieve, and perform their duties. Characters like Geldenhys, Mevrou, and the Judge never manage to overcome their prejudice, their hatred, or their rage, and so they continue to fail until those faults consume them.

Prejudice should be nothing new to the history of South Africa, which has a legacy of oppression, violence, and gross social inequality. Not all of that has changed. The importance of understanding the past is so that the mistakes of that past can be remembered and never repeated. Part of what this dissertation hopes to achieve is to expose some of that past, recreated through the lens of an author who left South Africa as a young man and began writing and publishing novels in his middle age. Courtenay’s novels are useful for study in this regard because they were published so far apart, with *Power* being published in 1989,

Tandia in 1991, and *Whitethorn* in 2005. What this means is that *Power* and *Tandia* can be compared to *Whitethorn* as a way of measuring Courtenay's perception of South African society and also how his ideas and opinions of what was happening has shifted as the years have passed. It should be mentioned that Courtenay's writing is problematic in many places, particularly the racially paternalistic way in which he writes Peekay, making him a stereotypical 'white knight' whose entire story arc revolves around 'saving' people of colour from the oppressive system that he himself benefits from. While much of the violence of his writing towards women and people of colour can be attributed to the setting of the novels, not all of it can be forgiven. It should also not be ignored, and any study of Courtenay and other writers using apartheid South Africa should take into account the often problematic source material and style of the writers.

What is immediately evident is the author's tone. *Power* and *Tandia* are grim; Courtenay reflects the rapidly evolving legal system of apartheid South Africa through Peekay's, *Tandia's*, and Hymie's attempts to get justice for black people within a system that makes it blatantly apparent that black people have almost no rights. Every time they succeed in winning a case, a change in the law is produced that makes it impossible to win such a case in the same way going forward. This is supposed to reflect the reality of South African society between the 1970-1980s, with regard to how black people were treated in society and the legal system. Courtenay's version of South Africa in *Power* and *Tandia* is bleak, and the only spark of hope is Red, Peekay and Hymie's legal office. Even in that regard, every time they succeed in a case, Geldenhuys's attention means that the government very quickly passes new laws that prevent Red from winning more cases the same way. Eventually, Peekay and *Tandia* are forced to flee the country through the mountains in Barberton. *Tandia* escapes into Swaziland pregnant with Peekay's child, and it is heavily implied that this child will be the true *Onoshiboshobi Ingelosi* (The Tadpole Angel), or the mythical saviour of the black people of South Africa. What this means is that, even though Peekay is killed and *Tandia* escapes to exile, their child carries the hope for a free South Africa with them, and it is worth noting that this child would be the offspring of a white man of British descent raised in a primarily Afrikaner society and a mixed-race woman of Indian and Zulu descent, thereby making the resulting child not only a mixed-race child combining all of the races that make up South Africa, but one that Mama Tequila describes as "the child of South Africa. [...] the only real South African" (175). It is a powerful symbol of hope for a free and equal South Africa, where someone representing all of the races of the country would lead society into a

glorious future. Peekay's story still ends with him dying alongside Dum and Dee, and Tandia escaping the country she knows as home to keep herself and her child alive. It is a bittersweet moment, with only the hope that their child can come back and succeed where they failed allowing the reader to feel hopeful for the future of the country.

Whitethorn was published fourteen years later than *Tandia*, and so not only reflects Courtenay's improved story-telling style, but the tone of the story is very different. Where *Power* and *Tandia* are fairly dark and bleak with a silver lining of hope that good might prevail, *Whitethorn* attempts to tell a similar story but on a smaller scale. Peekay and Tandia are concerned with the state of South Africa, which involves injustice on a racial level where every individual is affected. Tom is more concerned with his own life, his loved ones, and how injustice operates within those circles. Courtenay injects a much lighter tone in *Whitethorn*, using subtle humour to explore topics that are just as dark as anything *Power* or *Tandia* exhibit. *Whitethorn* deals with child abuse, paedophilia, homelessness, substance abuse, physical and emotional trauma, all of which are examined in a way that still leaves the reader feeling amused at the antics of Tom and his various allies. Where Peekay is an archetypal hero and Tandia is an archetypal heroine, Tom is a hero in a different way. The reader gets to witness Tom in a way that never happened with either of the other two, or indeed any other character in the novels, in that he is relatable.

Peekay is obsessed with success, often to a fault, but this obsession is driven by an absolutely crippling need to be above reproach. The abuse he suffers as a small boy in boarding school continues to haunt his entire life, ensuring that he trains harder, works harder, and strives for better because he cannot afford to even appear weak for a second. Only Doc and few others get to see him as he truly is; as he states in *Power*:

Winning was something you worked at intellectually, emotion clouds the mind and is its natural enemy. This made for a loneliness which often left me aching to share an emotion but equally afraid that if I did so I would reveal a weakness that could later be used against me. (440)

Peekay is caught inside a mental and emotional trap that predominantly applies to masculinity: he desperately wants to connect on an emotional level, but fears that doing so will make him appear weak, thereby making susceptible to attack. While this part of Peekay's psyche is certainly understandable, the lengths he will go to hide his perceived weakness are above and beyond what most people would consider normal masculine behaviour. In this way, his ambition and ability make him difficult to relate to.

Like Peekay, Tandia has an obsession. Where Peekay obsesses over success and hiding weakness, Tandia is unable to let go of her own anger and hatred. Since she is raped at the beginning of *Tandia*, her negative emotions magnify and drive her forward. Everything she does and achieves comes about because she is being driven towards it by the hatred and anger inside of her. Like with Peekay, these emotions can be understood by most people. However, it is the depth of her emotion and the lengths to which it drives her that make her difficult to relate to.

Tom is different. Even though he suffers arguably the most out of the three, he accepts his suffering as a part of life and makes the most of every situation. His intelligence and resourcefulness time and again bring positive change to his situation. Where Peekay and Tandia are beacons of excellence hiding crippling flaws, Tom's excellence and his perceived flaws are put on display. All of his strengths are brought to his attention as well as the reader's by other characters interacting with him. For example, Tom is unaware of his own intelligence until Miss Phillips begins to pay attention to him. Similarly, later on when Tom is caring for the homeless men in Johannesburg, upon visiting the hospital to have some of them checked for illness, Doctor Mustafa offers Tom a full scholarship to medical school. Tom rejects the offer, having already decided to study law, but this reiterates the point that Tom's intelligence is above the average by a significant margin; however because the reader observes the world through his eyes, Tom's lack of awareness of his own intelligence comes as a surprise. This lack of awareness of what makes a person special is a trait that many can relate to, as someone can be unaware of just how gifted they are until it is pointed out to them by others. The narrative structure of *Whitethorn* is from Tom's perspective. Therefore, what Tom is able to do naturally is not surprising to him, so he and the reader are both surprised when he his gifts are recognised and praised by others. In the same way, the reader shares that moment of happy surprise, that small warm glow of satisfaction at the compliment. This goes one step further when it comes to Tom's awareness of racism and racialisation. For all his gifts and education, Tom is concerned that they will lead him to become exactly like the white people he dislikes: "[My education and training] almost inevitably meant I was destined to find my rightful place among the very privileged in South African life, those who exercised the real power in society" (494). However, he is uncomfortable with this idea:

Power, I had long since learned, cannot be trusted, it will always abuse, it cannot understand the viewpoint of those who have no say or ability to change things, and it is always self-serving. I had never seen an exception to this, a situation where power justified its actions. Power is somehow never guilty in

the present tense. When it is eventually exposed or terminated, the social, financial and emotional atrocities it has created can almost never be repaired. (494)

Tom worries that, if he allows himself to become “seduced by those in power to join the select few” then he will be betraying himself and all of the people who had helped him get here, like Mattress. In this way, the novel makes the reader aware that these thoughts have been in the back of their own minds, and also lurking in the recesses of the novels messages.

Courtenay’s novels, when analysed in progression, clearly show how the author’s style improved over the years between each publication. Not only that, but the tone in which each novel is written also changes, from Peekay and Tandia’s story being almost nihilistic, to Tom’s being one of hope, surprise and the constant search for love and acceptance. Tom’s is a personal journey of self-discovery; Peekay and Tandia are freedom fighters. This is exactly why these novels need to be studied as a part of South African literature. They show a side of South African history and stories that have not been explored in an academic setting. South Africa is socially diverse, and its history is plagued with gaps in the narrative only somewhat filled by the actions of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. While it may be impossible to ever completely uncover the scope of the history of apartheid South Africa, authors like Courtenay provide stories that give vital context to the social climate of the time period and the evolution to the modern day.

The methodology of this dissertation makes use of textual analysis in the style set out by Catherine Belsey (2005) in her chapter, “Textual Analysis as a Research Method”, and mainly through character analysis. Belsey examines how one would go about performing textual analysis, describing it as “indispensable regarding research within the field of cultural criticism” (160). Therefore, it is applicable to Courtenay’s work, as the texts that will be examined are firmly in the focus of cultural criticism, being English novels.

According to Belsey, textual analysis as a research method “involves a close encounter with the work itself, an examination of the details without bringing to them more presuppositions than we can help” (160). In this regard, this dissertation analyses the novels through the lens of carefully selected and judiciously applied theories and concepts supplied by other writers, such as Seidler, Connell and Morrell.

Belsey describes how research of the kind she explores is “expected to make a contribution to knowledge; it uncovers something new” (163). In this regard, this research

will do exactly that, as academic research using Courtenay's texts is scarce at best. Courtenay's work explores many of the concepts that have made authors like Mark Behr and J.M. Coetzee popular among academics: issues of race, gender, sexuality and dealing with South African discourse and issues that predominantly affect South African culture and society. This is how this dissertation will produce exactly what Belsey describes: "Research is supposed to be 'original' in the sense that it is independent: the contribution, whatever it is, originates in that fairly modest sense, with the researcher" (163). The research produced will be original in terms of subject, while "assembling ideas that have not been brought together quite that way before" (163), such as using Seidler's theories of masculinity to explore character motivations and combining these concepts with others, such as Connell's theories of gender, to produce new knowledge on Courtenay's ability to write masculinities into his characters and develop the masculinities in ways that appear unconventional to the society of their time.

In terms of theoretical framework, this dissertation will be using Victor Seidler's *Unreasonable Men* (1994), Robert Morrell's "Of Boys and Men: Masculinity and Gender in Southern African Studies" (1998) and various works by writers such as Raewyn Connell (2000), and Judith Gardiner (2002) to examine masculinities in more detail. Seidler's *Unreasonable Men* is an examination of male dominance and how the structures of society throughout history allowed for it to be, such as the persecution of medical women as "witches" to ensure male dominance in the medical field (Seidler, 71). Through the linking of the 'male' to reason and logic, all those who did not fit those paradigms or went against them became the 'other', and therefore illogical and wrong. This concept will be used in more detail to examine various characters in the novels in order to explore how they fit or deviate from the stereotype. A prominent example of this will come from *The Power of One* in the form of Doc, a German professor of Botany who becomes a mentor, teacher and father-figure to Peekay. As a man of science, Doc embodies the theory of masculinity described by Seidler, driven by rationality and reason to explore and understand the world. Doc also subverts this idea by being highly creative, as a brilliant pianist and composer, and having great respect and love for the arts. His lessons reinforce an ideal inspired in Peekay earlier in the novel that becomes his mantra: "First with the head, then with the heart" (Courtenay, 2006 [1989], 121). Reason and logic must come first, but belief and emotion must follow. This continues to be a theme throughout the novel, with Peekay using his head to rationally and logically think through his situation and relying on his "heart" to pull him through when

things get tough, essentially combining reason and emotion, rejecting the version of masculinity Seidler describes in favour of a hybrid form, retaining the value in strength, resilience and perseverance while also providing space for and value in vulnerability.

Morrell's "Of Boys and Men" (1998) is a study of masculinity in South Africa, and as such, much more focussed than Seidler's more overarching concept. Morrell provides a definition of masculinity as "a collective gender identity [...] socially constructed and fluid. There is not one universal masculinity, but many masculinities" (607). Raewyn Connell and James Messerschmidt (2005) briefly discuss the concept of "hegemonic masculinity" (830) to be "understood as the pattern of practice (i.e., things done, not just a set of role expectations or an identity) that allowed men's dominance over women to continue" (832). Morrell's definition describes it as that which presents "its own version of masculinity, of how men should behave and how putative 'real men' do behave, as the cultural ideal" (608). Nigel Edley and Margaret Wetherell explain that "hegemonic ideologies preserve, legitimate and naturalise the interests of the powerful – marginalising and subordinating the claims of other groups" (1999). Therefore, "hegemonic masculinity" is not only the most dominant societal discourse, but one that actively seeks out and oppresses other groups in order to maintain its dominance. A comparison would be the National Party of the apartheid government and their oppression of Black, Indian and mixed-race people. What makes Morrell's article so useful is that it discusses white masculinities, black masculinities and "African masculinities" (619), something both linked to but distinct from black masculinities. The distinction here is that "African" masculinities focussed on the traditional roles of masculinity, that of the father and patriarch producing descendants by marrying well, owning land and accumulating cattle. "Black" masculinity is more contemporary and therefore more prevalent in the younger generations, those that became involved with *tsotsi* culture, where potential and ability for violence, involvement with gangs and other groups, use of drugs, alcohol and sex were driving forces in the masculinities. Morrell's article was published in 1998 but does explain that the distinction between African and 'Black' masculinities became more and more obvious after the 'reserves' or 'Bantustans' were created by the South African National Party in the early 1920s and cemented with the "Bantu Homelands Citizenship Act of 1970" (SA History, 2018). Traditional patriarchs tended to stay within the 'homelands' to care for the cattle and the family land, while the younger men ventured into the big cities to find work in order to support their families. As a result, the "homelands" contained the more traditional African masculinities, while those that ventured into the cities and moved into 'townships'

tended to develop more contemporary “Black” masculinities. This is important because, while black characters do feature heavily in the novels, they are often left as supporting characters. Only in *Tandia* is there a mixed-race protagonist and black main characters. Morrell’s article therefore provides information and discourse to discuss all masculinities of South Africa, including “black” and “African” masculinities, being able to compare them to white masculinities in order to further understand why character development occurs in certain ways. The separation of “black” and “African” masculinities allows an examination of black-identifying female characters such as the titular Tandia, and how she herself develops and utilises masculine discourse, as well as how it shapes her character. For example, Tandia studying Law, a practice linked to Seidler’s theory of reason in that Law is purely rational and logical, can therefore link law to the societal epitome of masculinity. Both Peekay and Tom end up studying Law in their respective novels, so for Tandia to do so, and also her development as a character being much more masculine in its description, make the three main protagonists excellent subjects to study using both Seidler’s and Morrell’s theories.

“Chapter One: Representations of Marginal Masculinities and the Success of Their Portrayal” will examine certain masculinities within the novels in greater detail, specifically from characters that are not given sufficient attention in other sections of this dissertation. This will include Jannie Geldenhys, the antagonist of *Tandia*, Gideon Mandoma and Matthew “Mattress” Malokoane, Rasputin from *The Power of One*, and Kobus “Pissy” Vermaak and Mike Finger from *Whitethorn*. Each provides a different aspect to masculinities, either expanding on another that has been discussed or providing an example that is completely different from any other discussed in this dissertation. With Geldenhys, the reader is able to see into the mind of a man whose entire identity is twisted into becoming monstrous by the society he tries to protect. Gideon provides insight into the masculinities of the Zulu people. Rasputin is a character who both epitomises and subverts the hegemonic ideal of masculinity. Kobus can be used to examine queer masculinities. Mike Finger can be used to further explore white masculinities in Africa, specifically of a white character who challenges the colonialist practices of other white characters.

Morrell’s “Fathers, Fatherhood and Masculinity in South Africa” (2006) and the edited collection *Baba: Men and Fatherhood in South Africa* (2006) will be used in “Chapter Two: Fathers and Father Figures and Their Influence on Successful Identity Development” to examine father-figures in the novels. Fathers are often the benchmark for male identity formation among young people, whether boys learning how to define themselves as

masculine or girls being forced to learn how masculinity defines them. Therefore, in the context of the novels, it is interesting to explore how the three protagonists deal with the concept of fatherhood and father figures, and how this affects the development of their respective identities, especially as all three have absent fathers. Therefore, they are forced to find other people to learn masculinity from, whether a replacement father-figure, another family member, or an adopted group of people.

“Chapter Three: Masculinities within Physical Spaces and How They Function and Develop” will examine masculinities within physical spaces alongside examples from the novels, including the boxing ring and gym, the mine, and sites of learning which are unique to each protagonist. Karen Woodward’s “Rumbles in the Jungle: Boxing, Racialisation and the Performance of Masculinity” (2004), David Scott’s *The Art and Aesthetics of Boxing* (2008), Minnes’s *Sorting Out Differences: New Masculinity vs Old Masculinity in Boxing* (2018), and Thomas McBee’s *Why Men Fight: An Empirical Investigation of the Extremes of Masculinity* (2016) will be used to examine the sport of boxing and the spaces in which it takes place, as well as the types of masculinities developed within them. As this only applies to Peekay, this section will be used to explore both the boxing space and as Peekay’s unique site of learning. Jeroen Cuvelier’s “Work and Masculinity in Katanga’s Artisanal Mines” (2014), T. Dunbar Moodie and Vivienne Ndatshé’s *Going for Gold: Men, Mines, and Migration*, and Martin Meredith’s *Diamonds, Gold and War* will be used to look at masculinities in the mining environment. This section applies specifically to Tom and Peekay and their time spent in the copper mines of Rhodesia, the country now known as Zimbabwe. The last portion of this chapter will be a discussion on sites of learning, starting with schools. As each of the protagonists do not receive their most important education within schools but in their own unique sites, each will be discussed. As Peekay’s site has been dealt with, this section will deal with Tom and Tandia. Tom’s site is The Boys Farm, the orphanage he grows up in, while Tandia’s site is Bluey Jay’s, the brothel run by Mama Tequila. Each character’s site of learning has been selected to be examined because it is unconventional in terms of the education of a child. Therefore, the lessons they learn and the personal growth they achieve is unusual in any context.

Finally, the “Conclusion” will provide a summation of the work covered, the results of this study, an explanation of how this study will impact the field of masculinity studies and a prediction of where masculinity studies should look next in order to expand its knowledge base.

Chapter One – Representations of Marginal Masculinities and the Success of Their Portrayal

In this chapter will be discussed masculinities as represented in characters that are not examined elsewhere in this dissertation but are nevertheless important as they represent marginal masculinities, or masculinities that fall outside of the hegemony or the norm. These will include: Kobus Vermaak, a gay Afrikaner sexual abuse survivor; Mike Finger, a Kenyan-born British soldier who empathises with the Mau Mau; Rasputin, the giant Georgian who both exemplifies and subverts hegemonic masculinity; Jannie Geldenhys, the primary antagonist of *Tandia*; and Zulu masculinities examined through Gideon Mandoma. Courtenay uses each of these characters to explore aspects of masculinity and identity that are not covered by the protagonists. They are important because they influence the journeys of their respective protagonists and allow them to grow by seeing other identities they do not necessarily identify with themselves. They inform the identities of the protagonists in new and sometimes unexpected ways. Plus, they are important in and of themselves because they represent identities that readers may resonate with, allowing the readers themselves to go on similar identity journeys to the protagonists. Courtenay's success in writing these characters is necessary for discussion because each character represents a marginal group in the real world. Literary representation of these groups is useful in normalising their existence within society, making good representation very important.

The South Africa depicted in Courtenay's novels is one under apartheid. What this means is that the people in power were predominantly white, Christian and male. People of colour, LGBT, or even those who disagreed with the white treatment of black people were relegated to the side-lines. Black people were used as menial labourers, unable to be educated to the same level as white people, and therefore they could almost never reach the same level of society. Even if they did by some circumstance manage to receive the education and positions required to be considered successful by the standards of white people, they were never treated with the respect that would be expected. As time went on the state of the country and the relationship between racial groups became increasingly strained, as more and more laws were introduced to quash the rights and freedom of people of colour and black people in particular.

The result is a society in which white heterosexual Christian people are at the apex and epicentre, with people who did not fit into this group pushed aside and down. White people become the expected and accepted societal norm and therefore any identities

associated with whiteness become hegemonic. Any other type of identity (black, Asian, Indian, coloured, LGBT, etc) became associated with societal 'otherness' and subsequently treated as lesser. Courtenay utilises various characters to examine these other identities, mainly for the benefit and growth of the protagonists. They each individually represent a group of people that exist in the real world, and it is important to examine how successful Courtenay is in representing them in his novels.

Kobus Vermaak - Queer Masculinities

Kobus “Pissy” Vermaak is one of the orphans Tom grows up with at The Boys Farm in *Whitethorn*. Known to be small and sickly looking, Kobus is commonly known by his nickname, Pissy, that he receives at The Boys Farm for constantly smelling of urine. Pissy is initially protected by Mevrouw Van Schalkwyk, the matron, due to his tendency towards epileptic seizures. He uses this propensity to protect himself from physical harm by spreading the story that any sort of physical altercations could trigger a seizure and kill him. This is proven to be false, as they can occur at any time, but Kobus’s ability to lie is brought up repeatedly throughout the novel. At The Boys Farm, he is treated as an outcast because of his willingness to go to Mevrouw with any information that could get others in trouble, but also because of his odour and the fact that he is protected from physical fighting, the quickest route that the boys know of to settle disputes. As they are unable to hit him he is instead ostracised, except by Fonnies du Plessis, an older boy who is apparently distantly related to him. Fonnies protects him and seems close to him, much to the surprise of the other boys, who accept the story that they are related without question. Tom discovers, through an incident in which he himself is sexually assaulted by Fonnies, that the older boy has been repeatedly sexually assaulting Kobus and uses the threat of harming Tinker, the Jack Russel puppy Tom rescues from drowning at the start of the novel, to force Tom to capitulate. Tom is saved by a furious Mattress at the last second, and Fonnies is grievously injured. In order for The Boys Farm to maintain its reputation, Frikkie Botha, the boxing coach and head of discipline, concocts a story about Fonnies falling off of a big rock, and Tom is sworn to secrecy in exchange for getting to keep Tinker, who had remained a secret up to this point, as boys were forbidden from keeping pets.

Unfortunately, this serves as the catalyst for the rest of the story to commence, as through convoluted lies by Kobus and Frikkie, Mattress is eventually painted as Kobus’s abuser, resulting in him being lynched by Mevrouw and her family. This event begins Tom’s journey to find other sources of love after Mattress is taken from him, and to find justice for his first loved one.

Later in the story, Tom reconnects with Kobus as adult men when they are both drafted into the same unit in army basic training. While Tom is relieved to have escaped another six months working the notoriously dangerous and often lethal mining grizzly machine, Kobus finds training extremely difficult. Tom describes Kobus as the “inept and

stupid guy who is the butt of everyone's jokes and the bane of every sergeant" (533). He frequently ends up receiving extra punishment for constantly failing in his training, often causing the others in his group to receive punishment as well. Tom quickly realises that he needs to help Kobus, as the "more Pissy was punished the more exhausted and disheartened he became, and therefore more of a hindrance to the progress of our hut" (534). In order to help the entire group, and Kobus in particular, Tom formulates a plan for each person in their unit to "babysit" him for two days at a time while Tom finds a way to get him out of the army.

Tom realises that he needs Kobus's version of events surrounding Mattress's murder to complete his case against Mevrou, and Kobus refuses to even acknowledge the event. He decides that Kobus clearly doesn't want to be in the army, and begins to look for ways to get him out, hoping that his Afrikaner pride will force the man to give Tom the information he wants out of a feeling of honour or gratitude. At first, Kobus is extremely reluctant to even talk to Tom, citing forgetfulness as the reason he cannot recall anything that happened. Tom attempts to convince Kobus that his childhood epilepsy might be the key, but Kobus is adamant that this particular affliction cannot be the one that is exposed, as he would also lose his job driving a mining train as a result. Tom then discusses the amount Kobus urinates and the amount of water he drinks. He proposes that if there is something wrong with Kobus's kidneys, he could be discharged from the army and be able to keep his mining job. Because Kobus's hypochondriacal ways had almost gotten him banned from the officer's surgery, Tom submits a report on Kobus's behalf, citing his concern that Kobus may have something wrong with his kidneys that requires testing. The tests come back positive for diabetes, allowing Kobus to be discharged and keep his mining job, something for which he is very grateful to Tom for doing.

During this whole period, Kobus reveals to Tom that his dream is to open a club in Johannesburg for Afrikaner homosexuals, revealing that he is homosexual as well. Tom realises the opportunity, as Kobus has revealed his hand: Tom could potentially use this information as blackmail to force Kobus to provide the information Tom wants if he is unwilling to provide it of his own accord. Tom sees Kobus's involvement in Mattress's death as reason enough to not feel guilty at even considering using the diabetic man's dream as leverage to extort information out of him. This proves to be unnecessary, as helping Kobus get out of army training ensures his gratitude and cooperation.

Kobus provides his side of the story in extreme detail, corroborating the story Tom had already collected from Frikkie Botha. In the process, he reveals that his initial abuser was in fact Meneer Prinsloo, the superintendent of The Boys Farm. When Tom expresses horror and sympathy, Kobus is surprised.

Ag, Voetsek, it's easy to feel sorry for yourself in life. [...] You know what it's like, man. You were there. You an orphan. You haven't got any parents, a mother and a father, nobody loves you, you just a piece of shit. Then somebody powerful who can give you things and make life easier comes along. [...] If you a piece of shit anyway, what have you got to lose? (522)

When Tom expresses interest in prosecuting Prinsloo on Kobus's behalf, he refuses. He explains that Prinsloo may have abused and raped him repeatedly, but he also provided gifts, attention and 'love', all of which the small, ostracised boy was desperate for. He saw Prinsloo as the first person who accepted him as he was: "Even then when I was only ten, I knew I was different. Later on I understood that I was a homosexual in my blood, from birth maybe. He said I could call him Oom Piet, and he'd be like a father to me" (552). Prinsloo even follows Kobus to Pietersburg orphanage, at first just to visit him and later, when his wife dies, as the new superintendent of the orphanage. Prinsloo is the man with whom Kobus hopes to open his club, as Prinsloo serves as the respected elderly Afrikaner face of the establishment, to make patrons feel safe and protected as they go about their business. Because of this, neither of them would become involved in any court case, as this could jeopardise their club. Tom becomes aware that Kobus is not nearly as inept and stupid as he once appeared:

It was becoming obvious to me that there were two Pissy Vermaaks: the hapless, sobbing misfit that we'd seen in the barracks and a homosexual who knew his way around his own world and was a shrewd and cynical manipulator. Perhaps not even cynical, simply someone who lacked the normal moral standards most people accept as social behaviour. Knowing his background, this was hardly surprising and I wondered whether I might have assumed a similar philosophy if I hadn't received the breaks I'd been given in life. (554)

Tom's observations about Kobus convey his surprise at his homosexuality and how differently he portrays it than any of the other gay men he has met in his life, having worked alongside a gay man at the music store and met many during his time in Johannesburg with Pirrou, a former lover. Kobus seems far less refined than Tom had come to expect of homosexuals. This mirrors a comment made by Connell (2005 [1995]) that "gay masculinity is all sophistication and modernity" (156). Simply put, Kobus does not meet the expectations

for a gay man that Tom has in his mind, further isolating Kobus from the expectations of society. Once Kobus opens his club, he matures into a man more in line with Tom's understanding of what a homosexual man should be like. This in itself is problematic, as this understanding is based off of societal expectations shaping the "perceptions of gayness" (Connell, 2005 [1995]). In this situation it is Tom (and therefore the reader) attempting to place Kobus into a comfortable zone in order to understand him better. Although it remains problematic, the intention is not to be offensive, but to assist the reader in viewing Kobus through a lens that makes more sense to the layperson.

The final piece of information Kobus reveals serves to be the most important: he tells Tom that Mattress's genitals were removed and kept pickled in brandy in a canned-fruit jar as a trophy by Mevrou. This is a grisly example of men and the masculine being reduced to their genitalia, an issue often observed in the objectification of women. Sergeant Van Niekerk is able to locate this jar with a search warrant, and it serves as an important piece of evidence in the eventual trial. Importantly, Kobus does express guilt at his involvement in Mattress's death, showing Tom and the reader that while he may be manipulative, he isn't necessarily a bad person. This is a sad example of a decent person making horrible choices that result in the harm of somebody innocent, as described in the Introduction. Kobus understands that his actions have consequences, although at this point he is reluctant to face them, and shows surprising empathy with regard to Mattress as a white person expressing guilt towards terrible treatment of black people is a rare occurrence in the novels.

Before the trial, after Tom's travels into Kenya and his return to South Africa, Tom visits Kobus in Johannesburg at his club, The Lonely Hunter. He is much more confident, sporting a fashionable suit and the level of sophistication Tom previously believed he lacked. Kobus reveals to Tom that not only has he accepted his childhood nickname, Pissy, as his actual name for the club scene, but that Prinsloo suffered a stroke and is dying from cancer. Some of the men who appear at the club have come from The Boys Farm and also been victims of the elderly superintendent. Because of this, Kobus is not only looking after Prinsloo as a caregiver, but using the old dying man as an attraction: men who were abused by Prinsloo as boys have spread the word, and so they come to The Lonely Hunter to see their abuser stripped to a nappy, unable to move or react, vulnerable just as they once were to him. When Tom asks whether Kobus considers that Prinsloo can still understand what is going on around him, Kobus remarks that he hopes the old man can still understand, because his pride as an Afrikaner would make the entire ordeal even more torturous.

Kobus later acts as a witness for Tom in the court case, risking his newfound lifestyle and the wellbeing of his beloved club, and is present when Tom finally wins and receives justice for Mattress and his family. He joins Tom and the other friends, family and loved ones outside the courthouse and celebrates Tom's win alongside him, proving that not only has he redeemed himself in Tom's eyes but also in his own.

Kobus provides an example of a queer man within a society in which queerness is very much not accepted. The time frame of this section of the novel is set somewhere in the late 1950s or early 1960s. Therefore, Kobus's entire story is one of tragedy but also sensitivity and warmth. Courtenay could have very easily kept Kobus's story to the historical precedent and had the man become reviled by everyone, including Tom. With his actions in the novel, even modern readers may have seen this as justified. However, the manner in which Courtenay writes Tom's character makes this impossible. Tom's story is about love: where it comes from, the forms it can take, how it can be expressed or received, and why it is so important. Therefore, Tom is able to accept Kobus, even if he does not understand him and has no interest in exploring queer culture.

Kobus is important because of how far he has come by the end of the novel. He shifts from being an antagonist, to a sympathetic character, to someone who is not only complete and proud of himself, but confident in himself too. He has accepted himself, an act which can only be accomplished by knowing his own identity. Connell (2005 [1995]) explains that, to hegemonic society, gay men are interpreted as "[lacking] masculinity" (143). This is linked to the cultural belief that opposites attract, therefore a man being attracted to what is masculine must mean that he is somehow feminine (143). That being said, masculinity is more than just what the societal ideal exemplifies. In this case, masculinity is linked to a man's identity and knowledge of himself, and so it can be stated that Kobus has accepted his own version of masculinity, and therefore become content in his life. More importantly, he has accepted the trauma he went through as a child and grown past it. Tom helps this transition in the reader's perception of Kobus as Tom's view of Kobus changes. Kobus's transition from his childhood anxiety, which seems both pathetic and revolting to the reader as Tom is set up in opposition to it through his courage and integrity; his pathetic demeanour as an adult, unable to perform the basic tasks others such as Tom find so simple; finally, his growth into his own as someone who has achieved his dream and is living proud and free inside a system in which he has been continuously and terribly persecuted. Kobus could so easily have become a one-note character, one Courtenay set aside as fodder for jokes, ridicule and the inevitable death

that often accompanies LGBT characters in popular media. Thankfully, he becomes one of the most successfully represented characters in Courtenay's novels: his ambitions may not seem impressive when compared to those of someone like Tom, or Peekay, or Tandia, but the difference is that he achieves his dreams and finds peace. Tom does get justice for Mattress, but the rest of his life is left open-ended. The reader does not get closure on how his story ends, or even where his story might go from here. Peekay's story ends in his tragic death, Tandia's in her flight from South Africa into Swaziland and the eventual birth of her and Peekay's child. Kobus has achieved what he needed. The reader is left to imagine that he will spend the rest of his life running the club he loves and that he is perfectly content to do so. He achieves an ending of achievement and peace that is rare even among protagonists.

This isn't the first time Courtenay has discussed sexuality in his novels. In *Tandia*, Hymie Solomon is revealed to be asexual, as his complicated relationship with his girlfriend, Harriet, becomes a talking point between himself and Peekay. The fact that Peekay and Harriet are sleeping together is a relief to him because physical love is not something he can give to her.

I can't get it up! I have absolutely no desire whatsoever to fuck. Not a male or a female or even a bloody duck! Not you, whom I love more than anything in my life, not Harriet, whom I adore. Not anyone... [...] How does my world end? Not with a bang but with a wimp. (377-378)

The single time Hymie is able to sleep with Harriet is when he gets extremely drunk. Hymie and Kobus are both important characters, and shown to be far more than just their sexualities. Tandia herself explores her sexuality with Sarah, another of the women in *Bluey Jay* early on in *Tandia* as a way to bring comfort and confidence to herself after her rape. Mama Tequila expresses disapproval of this relationship, which puts an end to it, and Tandia never attempts another relationship (whether physical or emotional) with a woman. But, it is Courtenay's welcome sensitivity in his writing of queerness and queer people that makes these examples interesting to study.

Mike Finger - "White Ally" Masculinities

Captain Mike Finger is one of Tom's superior officers during his army training and later when both men travel to Kenya for Tom to receive his officer's training fighting the Mau Mau. During this process they become close friends, with Tom developing a romantic relationship with Mike's sister, and the two men leaning on each other emotionally after Mike's family is killed. Mike is an interesting character in terms of masculinity because even though he is descended from British people, his allegiance lies with Kenya as a whole. To this end, he is both dedicated to fighting the Mau Mau due to the atrocities committed against both white settlers and members of the Kikuyu tribe, but also extremely critical of the methods employed by the British army to fight the Mau Mau. His upbringing saw him growing up alongside children from the Kikuyu people, even participating in many of their rituals associated with becoming a man. Because of this, Mike understands the mentality of the Kikuyu people, and therefore has an understanding of the Mau Mau. He has insight into their culture and beliefs. This means that he develops a reputation as a brilliant negotiator, as he is able to lean on his reputation within the Kikuyu as a white holy man in order to keep himself safe and convince members of the Mau Mau to give up hostages or prevent attacks. Mike is not the only person who grew up this way and has this knowledge, but others like Chris Peterson, the leader of the British forces in Kenya, do not possess his integrity.

When explaining to Tom why he was removed from Kenya and sent to Rhodesia, Mike begins to rant.

In the work I was doing I was seeing both sides of the war, and frankly I was pretty disappointed in the way our side was conducting themselves. [...] Perhaps it's different in South Africa. I know more than half of the whites there actively hate the British. But in Kenya we have always seen Britain as the home of a benign and fair-minded parent. They are supposed to be an example of how a decent nation should behave towards lesser nations. [...] Now all that's changed, the white Kenyans are the worst offenders, we've formed the Kenyan Regiment, that is the locals, chaps with whom I went to school. Chris Peterson is the commanding officer, once one of my best friends, now he's the main instigator of the white atrocities against the Mau Mau. [...] We, Peterson and myself, we were brought up with the Kikuyu. They were our playmates, we trusted them, they trusted us, we never thought of it as a skin thing. (530-531)

Chris Peterson, using his knowledge of the Kikuyu tribe and their culture, began using that knowledge to promise rewards to members of the Mau Mau willing to betray their tribesmen. The promise involved an oath that negated a previous oath taken by almost all members of

the Kikuyu to their supreme god. This new oath, one crafted by a British anthropologist using Peterson's knowledge of the Kikuyu culture, absolved the Mau Mau fighter of their crimes in exchange for participation in hunting their previous allies. In exchange for their loyalty, they would receive land. Mike explains that a Kikuyu man who has no land is less than human in the eyes of the tribe (564). He may not receive food if he cannot produce for himself and his family, he may not gain a tribal wife, and any children he may produce have no status among their own people. Peterson promising land to the Mau Mau fighters is essentially "giving him the right to be a human being at last" (570).

Mike's anger at Peterson is because of betrayal. Simply put, Peterson is making promises to the Kikuyu he does not intend to keep. Not only does he not have the authority to grant land to anyone, but the land he would be granting is the ancestral land of the Kikuyu that was stolen during World War Two, when many of the Kikuyu men had joined the British troops to fight for the allies. Upon returning home, they discovered that not only had their land been stolen in their absence and redistributed to other tribes and white farmers, but that their service in the British army did not translate into equality. Plus, the oath that had been created to absolve them of their previous oath is meaningless, as it had been developed by white people as a means to control the Mau Mau, using their own culture and beliefs against them. As Mike says to Tom:

I know the argument exists that the end justifies the means, [...] but I'm Kenyan-born and bred, so is Chris Peterson, and after this is all over we are going to have to live in this country with these people. While it may be my duty to kill the terrorists, I will not betray their tribe, their god or their ancient beliefs any more than I would my own. (571)

When Mike expresses these views, he is diagnosed with insanity brought on by malarial fever and sent to Rhodesia. He is critical of the British and their methods, claiming openly that the Mau Mau are justified in their reasons for fighting, if not in their methods. When pressed, he expresses that the reason he continues to fight as he does, even when it causes him to be completely ostracised by the white population, is because "I am not a white Kenyan, I am simply a Kenyan! I can't stand by and see my country torn limb from limb because white is always right. It isn't!" (604).

Mike's identity is an interesting concept, because while he accepts and honours his British heritage, he has also accepted and honours the beliefs of the Kikuyu people, the culture he was raised surrounded by. When others like Peterson disregard their upbringing in

favour of power, Mike personifies the integrity and courage that a British soldier is assumed to have. His sense of duty and fairness, instead of being celebrated, sees him at loggerheads with his own commanders, who instead praise men like Peterson who are willing to betray their childhood friends. It becomes a debate of nature vs nurture: to which does one owe one's loyalty – to the people of one's own ancestry or to the people one personally knows and loves? In this example, Mike has chosen nurture, and he is ostracised and ridiculed for it.

That being said, Mike is shown to be extremely close to his family, expressing to Tom what, for a soldier, is almost uncharacteristic affection to his sister and mother and deep respect for the Kikuyu servants of his family's house. Even his father, with whom he frequently and heatedly argues politics, is someone with whom he has a loving, albeit strained relationship. Mike has taken the love and lessons from his own family and combined them with the respect for and understanding of the Kikuyu people and their culture, and this forms the basis of his identity and his masculinity. His certainty of his own beliefs and identity as both British and Kenyan, and that both of these are equally important, ensure that his current life is complicated but his inner world is peaceful. He is at peace within himself with his decisions, a fact that his sister respects and aspires to emulate. Even if others, including his own family, do not agree; he knows himself and what he stands for, and in this way he has decided upon a masculinity he can live with as his own gender identity.

Rasputin - Hybrid Masculinities

Rasputin is the “giant Georgian who almost never spoke” (Courtenay, 2006 [1989], 587) whom Peekay meets while working at the copper mine. Rasputin acts as Peekay’s protector, saving him from a potential gang rape at the hands of other drunken miners and acting as Peekay’s closest friend for his time at the mine. His fearsome appearance and legendary temper combine to make even the mine managers fear him. They quickly learn to accept that while the big man does not respond well to authority, he performs excellently in his job and looks after his gang of workers while doing it. When Peekay has an accident in the mine and is almost killed, it is Rasputin who digs through the rubble to get him out, and dies from the injuries he sustains shortly after. Peekay buries Rasputin’s shotgun next to him and commissions a metal pyramidal frame to be made so that all the perfect wooden spheres he carved can be displayed on his grave and never moved (618-619). In this way, Rasputin is remembered for his legendary strength by the miners and timber-cutters because of the shotgun, but revered for his act of saving Peekay and his art on his grave. Afterwards, Peekay finds out that Rasputin named him as beneficiary for his life insurance policy and with the “accident compo” (620), Peekay has enough money to comfortably leave the mine and pay for Oxford. In this way, Rasputin gives Peekay his old life back, much as Doc gave Peekay a new one.

Rasputin can be compared to Doc throughout his time in the novel. He is tall, foreign, has a deep love and appreciation for music, and spends his free time working creatively carving wood into perfect spheres. He does not speak English very well but instead of learning to speak it better, he rarely speaks at all. Peekay’s attempts to emulate him in his carving bring him great joy, and can be compared to Doc’s appreciation of Peekay’s attempts to learn the piano. Rasputin is also very emotional, crying often while listening to music and also when Peekay gifts him two cases of brandy. Rasputin performs activities associated with femininity (crying, cooking, gathering flowers) while simultaneously embodying the utmost masculinity (enormous size and strength, drinks enormous amounts of brandy, is often described carrying either a twelve-gauge shotgun or a gigantic axe) in an example of a hybrid masculinity. Peekay clearly compares Rasputin and Doc in terms of their love of plants when he soliloquises: “Rasputin loved wild flowers as Doc had loved aloe” (618). He can be compared to Juicey Fruit Mambo in many ways too: the large size, gentle disposition, and fondness of children, as well as a protective affection towards their respective protagonists (Rasputin and Peekay, Mambo and Tandia). Both Rasputin and Mambo save their respective

protagonists from an attempted rape, both are killed in a moment of bravery (Rasputin saving Peekay, Mambo joining the march against Sharpeville police station), and both are, while being representations of supreme masculinity, actually very gentle individuals who only want to protect those they care about. It is interesting to note that all three of these men are considered foreigners to the South African government: Doc is German, Rasputin is Georgian, and Mambo is Zulu. None of them are considered truly South African under the apartheid law. They are all a part of the 'other'. Therefore, it becomes a question of whether white South Africa is failing to make strong and gentle men, or if these three are simply exceptions to the rules of hegemonic masculinity.

Rasputin is an obvious example of a masculine ideal so over-masculinised to be deemed near unachievable. He is naturally large and exceptionally strong. His unwillingness to learn English causes him to be almost mute, adding a silent, brooding quality to his appearance. He is a timber-cutter, which brings to mind images of Paul Bunyan, the American frontier hero, and he is frequently seen in the company of his axe, his shotgun, and copious amounts of brandy. He is portrayed as the utmost epitome of masculinisation. However, he also has a feminine side that he is entirely unashamed of. He collects wildflowers while he hunts and displays them in a vase in his house, he carves his perfect wooden spheres with exceptional care and becomes emotional when Peekay begins to emulate him, he cries when he listens to classical music, and he frequently cooks for Peekay. What Courtenay could easily have done with this character is made him a closeted homosexual, or ashamed of his more feminine interests, but instead Courtenay writes Rasputin in such a way that these feminine aspects of his personality are instead simply a part of his overall identity, and accepted as such entirely by Peekay. Through Rasputin, Peekay is able to see first-hand that indulging in activities outside of what is associated with societal ideals of masculinity is acceptable. In fact, this goes even further into cementing Peekay's idea that only by being on the pinnacle of your peers can you be accepted in all of your eccentricities. Rasputin is simply so 'manly' that anything he does that is not normally associated with masculinity is simply chalked up to eccentricity, and in that way he is beyond reproach.

Jannie Geldenhys - Toxic Masculinities

Sergeant Jannie Geldenhys is the primary antagonist in *Tandia*. As a child, he boxed against Peekay. As an adult, he works as a police officer, focussing on the Immorality Laws to capture people who interact sexually with those of different races from their own. In the process, he comes across Tandia and develops a strange, obsessive relationship towards her, in which he uses his position as both a white Afrikaner man in South Africa and as a policeman to try to make her life painful. While she usually manages to escape his clutches relatively unharmed, his influence over her life comes across as a shadow that haunts her every waking moment. He is the driving force behind her rage and hatred, which she carries from the day her father dies to the day she finally falls in love with Peekay.

The source of Geldenhys's twisted psyche is revealed to be when, as a young boy, he hid in his father's butcher fridge and was forced to watch his father engage sexually with a black woman. He is then seen by his father and severely punished, but from that day forward he harbours resentment towards the 'impure'. It is a stunning cognitive dissonance: he hates black people and focusses on punishing them when they break the Immorality Acts, but the initiators are very often white men like his own father, who in his mind are above reproach. The suspicion of his mother having Khoisan blood also served to ignite his hatred of racial impurity, as he often observes his father berate his mother for her perceived ancestors on more than one occasion. The combination of these childhood events serves to set the groundwork for all the horrific mental activity to come. His attempted rape of Tandia takes on an even more sinister tone now; his hatred of her is a projection of his hatred towards his father, and himself for falling victim to the same vice of being attracted to black women. In fact, due to his penis being mutilated during an encounter with Tandia and Juicy Fruit Mambo earlier in the novel, his fantasies of revenge take on sexual tones. An example is when he goes into detail about how he is planning Peekay's death, involving forcing him to perform oral sex on a "syphilitic black whore" (637) before murdering both Peekay and the black woman with a custom golden bullet he had ordered from Alabama years prior.

When he is drafted into the Broederbond, a secret society made up of almost exclusively Afrikaner men, their ideals suit Geldenhys perfectly: they are searching for "true patriots, people who put their country first, selfless people who are not afraid to take risks" (475) in order to continue a "War against all those people and factions who would undermine

the Afrikaner nation” (476). They draft Geldenhys into the group to be a part of this task. He is more than happy to accept:

Jannie Geldenhys felt his heart racing. They were telling him everything he wanted to hear. He wasn’t political. Not in the sense of being a Nationalist, although he supposed he was that when it all boiled down. But he was obsessed with the purity of his Afrikaner blood. It was what drove him in the SAT squad; and here it was again. He could sense the power in the room and the effect that that power might have on his career. (476)

Once again, this is important because it reveals what was expressed by Venter, his direct superior in the police force: Geldenhys is selfish and only cares about himself and his own career. He is only truly interested in how this could benefit him or reflect on him.

The Broederbond bring up something within Geldenhys that he is exceptionally proud of: his Afrikaner heritage. He begins to see his hatred of Tandia and Peekay as them versus him as a representative of his race group. As he says to his new boxing coach, “I could feel I was fighting for the Afrikaner people” (480). Peekay’s defeat at Jackson’s hands is seen by Geldenhys as a sign that Peekay is weak. In his mind, whiteness is a gift from God. He believes that South Africa is God’s gift to Afrikaners, and it is their right to defend their God-given homeland from anyone and everyone else. Geldenhys wholeheartedly believes this sentiment, but he takes it one step further, believing himself to be personally gifted by God. Even Geldenhys’s coach seems to see that this logic is childish and impractical, but Geldenhys doesn’t care. He wholeheartedly believes that he is right.

It can be argued that the mental damage began with the confrontation with his father in the freezer and all subsequent events simply exacerbated the emotional damage caused by that first encounter. In this way Geldenhys can be argued to be a victim of childhood abuse and institutional indoctrination. The Introduction discussed the fact that all of the three protagonists suffer under various characters informed by societal pressures. As has been stated, it is the choices made by each character and not the circumstances that come to matter most. Therefore, although Geldenhys has suffered and the results of this abuse cause the monster he becomes, he had many opportunities to change his ways and continued to make his choices in the way that he does. What this results in is a complete lack of sympathy by the reader, as Geldenhys has reached the point of being irredeemable.

At the beginning of *Tandia*, Tandia herself is raped in a graveyard on her father’s grave by an unknown policeman while Geldenhys watches, although at the time she neither

sees him nor hears his name. After being thrown out of her late father's house the following morning, she is collected by the police and brought to the station, where the officer interviewing her is none other than Geldenhys himself, whom she recognises by the sound of his voice. When she mentions being raped, he not only becomes angry but begins to pressure her to discuss her sexual history. He does so by enforcing his own physical size and presence and very blatantly drawing attention to his own maleness:

The white officer allowed Tandia to cry for a few moments. He walked back to the table and lifted himself back onto it. This time he sat directly in front of her. Tandia's eyes were level with the table top, so now when she raised them she looked directly into the white man's crotch. Seated like this, his presence was hugely threatening; his legs swung causally, one on either side of the small chair, seeming to trap her between them. (42)

In this interaction, he has complete power over her, to the point where he forces her, a sixteen-year-old girl, to sign an informal confession confirming that she is a prostitute to humiliate her further and provide himself with some leverage to force her into doing what he wants. Once she does so, she will be released from prison without a record. The reader gets a brief glimpse into the mind of the policeman, whose internal monologue is one of a predator:

Geldenhys tried hard to conceal the triumph in his voice. He had broken her. He felt his erection grow almost to the point of release. Maybe she was only a schoolgirl but she wasn't stupid. What he had done required skill, real brains. He had won. It was better even than boxing. (47)

He sends her to be collected by Mama Tequila to serve as an informant inside of Bluey Jay. Geldenhys is concerned with tracking down and arresting people who break the Immorality Act, and many of Bluey Jay's girls are women of colour, while the patrons are predominantly white. He believes that by placing her there, and ensuring that she knows he owns her through the confession, he can use her to capture anyone he so pleases who frequents the establishment. This is ignoring his own blatant hypocrisy, as the novels starts with Geldenhys watching a fellow white policeman rape Tandia, never mind his own sexual pleasure at the feeling of having 'broken' her.

Mama Tequila, the coloured woman who owns and runs Bluey Jay brothel, the place Tandia is taken by Geldenhys from the police station, is someone who is not easily rattled, but even she admits that Geldenhys makes her uncomfortable. While there are many policeman who visit Bluey Jay, when Geldenhys comes all he does is sit at the bar, drink and watch people. She has tried time and time again to get him to take one of the girls upstairs,

but he consistently refuses. As Mama Tequila says, “There was something wrong with that one” (65).

In an attempt to get to know more about him, Mama Tequila allows Geldenhys to take Tandia to bed, trying to get candid photos of the policeman in a compromising position with a coloured girl. After all, he has just been promoted to the Special Branch, created specifically to enforce the Immorality Act. Having something to blackmail him with is the perfect way to protect Bluey Jay from him. At this stage, he believes that sex is the weapon used by black people to compromise white officials, like judges, in order to undermine the apartheid system. When he attempts to rape Tandia, she fights back, irreparably damaging his penis in the process. Before he can shoot her, Juicy Fruit Mambo breaks in and smashes Geldenhys against a wall, saving Tandia and further injuring the policeman.

Mama Tequila uses her contact with Dr Louis to maintain a level of vigilance on Geldenhys’s condition as he recovers, which is why she is privy to confidential patient information. The damage to his penis is permanent, with Dr Louis stating that he would be surprised if Geldenhys ever managed to get an erection again. This serves two purposes: one is due to a play on words; Geldenhys has been ‘gelded’, a term used to describe when male animals have their testes removed in order to prevent breeding and usually to help create docile beasts of burden. Second, he has been emasculated in the most severe way a man possibly can. Masculinity, in most cultures and societies, places an enormous amount of importance on genitalia. Having any sort of damage inflicted to the genitals is perceived as extremely serious, even though injuries to that area are seldom life threatening. His very manhood has been permanently damaged, leaving Geldenhys physically and mentally scarred. Not only that, but if it did become functional, he would be forced to explain the physical scars to any future sexual partners. When he regains consciousness, Mama Tequila uses the photos she managed to take of Geldenhys with his police pistol shoved up Tandia’s rectum to convince him to go along with the story she concocted: that he had too much to drink and crashed his car near Bluey Jay. The unspoken agreement is that he will leave Bluey Jay and Tandia alone from now on. Ironically, even though his injuries are entirely his own fault because of his attempted assault on Tandia, he blames her, and this exchange only serves to deepen his vendetta against her for the rest of the novel.

When Tandia is arrested again later in the novel, Geldenhys attempts to intimidate her and loses control in the process. He sexually assaults her by forcing her to place his scarred

penis into her mouth. This triggers his memories of his father and the freezer room. When he calls her a whore, Tandia responds by telling him that

Since the first day you came into my life you've tried to make a whore of me, Jannie Geldenhys. But it won't work, you'll never do it. [...] You can't make a whore out of someone who isn't one. But what you just made me do, that won't make you better, because you can't make a man out of someone who isn't one! (827)

Geldenhys attempts to mock Tandia by asking if Peekay is her idea of what a real man is, expressing his disgust at "A white man who does it with [black people]" (827). He is unable to meet her gaze when he says this as he is aware of the irony of expressing disgust in this way when his injuries are directly related to his attempt to rape her. Tandia immediately removes all subtext, refusing to let this moment remain unsaid: "I know nothing of Peekay's sexual proclivities, Colonel Geldenhys, but I now count you among the [black people] fuckers!" (627). This sentence has an almost destructive effect on Geldenhys. He has no response. Tandia describes the shock on his face as he realises the truth of her statement:

It was as though he'd walked unexpectedly into a right thrown from way back behind the shoulder; his face seemed to physically crumble, his jaw went slack and he grabbed onto the edge of the table with both hands as though he was preventing himself from falling. (827)

Geldenhys's hypocrisy is something that comes up again and again throughout the novel, but it is in this scene where it is made blatantly apparent to Geldenhys himself. It shocks him so thoroughly that he lets Tandia go, but when he begins to hunt for her later in the novel, she no longer registers as human in his mind. By this stage, he has convinced himself of Tandia and Peekay's relationship, and for once he is correct. In his mind this is grounds for immediate execution, as his hatred of the two combined with his obsession for punishing those that break the Immorality Act produce an instability that frightens even those who end up close to him.

As a child, Geldenhys boxes against Peekay and loses at every instance due to Peekay's ability to exploit the weaknesses in his boxing style. This becomes a recurring theme for his character throughout Tandia, as Geldenhys frequently underestimates his opponents while refusing to examine his own flaws and weaknesses. The repeated losses against the British boy serves to frustrate Geldenhys, but he finds some level of solace on the rugby field, where he is able to beat Peekay on multiple occasions. Geldenhys even patronisingly states to Peekay, "In the ring is one thing, on the rugby field is another. Rugby

is more important than boxing” (491). This proves to be completely false, as both Peekay and Geldenhys end up becoming professional boxers, but this moment serves to expand the concept of Geldenhys as perpetually immature in his thinking.

Peekay’s time at Oxford yields some observations about Geldenhys’s identity and behaviour. In a discussion with his Law tutor, the two men observe common law and how it applies to society. The crux of the discussion is that it is the law itself that allows oppressors to continue their oppression and sanctions their violence. Geldenhys’s desire to be a police officer directly stems from his continuous feelings of powerlessness throughout his life, from his childhood encounter with his father, to Peekay and Hymie continuously beating and outsmarting him. It makes sense that such a person with pride in their racial identity but constantly belittled by family and society, and even those he considers rivals/enemies, would turn to law enforcement as a career. Law enforcement allows individuals to have power over the very lives of others, placing them virtually above reproach even if they themselves perform far worse acts in the name of duty. In this way, Geldenhys and Peekay are set up even further in opposition: Geldenhys as a policeman, a person involved in law enforcement; and Peekay as a lawyer, tasked with learning and using the law to provide justice and protection to society. Geldenhys uses the law as a weapon to beat down those who would oppose him; Peekay uses the law to protect and free those who are being attacked by the very system set up to protect them.

Geldenhys is resented and distrusted even by his own fellow police officers. Sergeant Venter, for example, the man in charge of the Special Branch, dislikes Geldenhys for a very particular reason:

Police work is essentially about being a member of a team and Geldenhys was by nature a secretive man who seldom asked the advice of his peers or, for that matter, showed more than cursory respect for his senior officers. It wasn’t anything for which he could be reprimanded; it was just that the blond, blue-eyed policeman was too ambitious for his own good. SAT, the so-called Immorality Squad Geldenhys ran, was deeply resented by the other divisions who accused him of headline-hunting and grand-standing. [...] Venter couldn’t put his finger on it. On paper Geldenhys was an exemplary police officer, but there was something about his manner which made his fellow officers dislike him and suspect his motives. Venter could see controversy ahead and controversy was something he’d spent most of his working life trying to avoid. (469)

Geldenhys seeks to disrupt the status quo, but not to help others, only himself and his own perceived allies (of which he has few, and none that last very long). He has the ability to

unsettle others, as seen in many interactions with other characters. He himself, in one of his internal monologues, boasts about his techniques he uses to unnerve prisoners and get them to talk. However, he seems more than happy to use his techniques on allies, and this serves to cause people around him to distance themselves from him. The only reason Geldenhys is able to keep his career, even though Venter seems to know very well about his injuries and how he really got them, is because Venter is a member of the Broederbond. Geldenhys is only able to join the Broederbond because Venter decides to let the young officer continue to climb the ranks rather than expose him.

After his repeated defeats at the hand of Peekay and Tandia, Geldenhys's deteriorating psyche result in an even more obsessive hatred of the two. This is no more apparent than in Chapter Thirty-Eight of *Tandia*:

He could taste Peekay like blood in his mouth. Geldenhys dreamed of reducing both Peekay and Tandia down to shit, for he knew both were guilty of the most terrible crimes against his Afrikaner nation for which they must both die. He also believed in his heart that they were guilty of miscegenation, the most heinous crime of them all, that struck at the very roots of the survival of the white tribe in Africa. With Peekay there was a physical thing as well, the man on man. (772-772)

What seems to him like constant humiliation has evolved with his damaged psyche into something far more sinister. His arrest of Tandia, in which she shocks the policeman by accusing him of being an offender of the Immorality Act moments after he sexually assaults her, is an attempt to force Peekay into the boxing ring against him. He believes that Peekay's desire to be a boxing champion has continued after he achieved his welterweight champion of the world title, which is not the case. A part of this desire to fight Peekay is the assumption that Peekay has not kept up with his training. Geldenhys assumes that, without his training, Peekay will be an easy fight and he will be able to finally get his revenge by humiliating Peekay in the ring. However, all he succeeds in doing is finally awakening the hate inside Peekay that had lain dormant since he met the Judge at the mines. Peekay knows that a fight is not the best way to beat Geldenhys.

Geldenhys wants a fight, Tandy. Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to beat the shit out of him in the ring, if only to try a little to make up for the brutality and humiliation his kind has imposed on others, on you! But it won't do anything of the sort. When I step into the ring I accept that his way is right, that violence is the only revenge. But we have to stop believing in the right of might, we must get him on our own terms. Just once, in this wretched country's history, I promise you, justice will be seen to be done! (833)

By choosing to use the law instead of the boxing ring, Peekay is taking away any power Geldenhys had left over their conflict. This sums up the relationship between Geldenhys and the other two. At every turn, he tries to attack them and the result is his being defeated and having less power and/or control over either Peekay or Tandia or both. As was established earlier, individuals who enter into law enforcement are given the power of life or death over others. Having any sort of power or control taken away, especially to Geldenhys who is used to having control, is the worst thing someone can do to him.

When Gideon is arrested and thrown into prison, he is interrogated by Geldenhys, who attempts to force Gideon to become an informant for the policeman on the activities of the ANC. However, Gideon sees through Geldenhys quickly, and realises that this is somehow an attempt to goad Peekay into getting back into the ring and facing the policeman. In order to do that, though, he has to face Gideon first, and one of Geldenhys's officers happens to damage Gideon's hand in the process of the arrest, ensuring that there would be no match between them. Gideon then receives a front row seat to Geldenhys's meltdown, and enjoys the spectacle of the usually unflappable white officer losing control (504-506). This scene is observed from the perspective of another character as Geldenhys's loses control, in this case from Gideon's perspective. The officer even accuses Gideon of purposefully getting his hand injured just to spite him. The reader can see how his mind is processing what is happening and understand what is going on, having witnessed his thought process earlier in the novel from the perspective of Geldenhys himself. In this scene, the observer is watching Geldenhys and the focus is on the physical, external effects of his inner turmoil.

Geldenhys's training regimen reveals more about his disregard for black lives. He spars against two larger heavyweight boxers, and then uses a young black boxer as a punching bag. The black boxer is there to "sharpen the policeman's aggression" (566) by boxing all out against Geldenhys, but allowing Geldenhys to beat him as hard as possible. Geldenhys only considers himself ready to take on Gideon and Peekay when he is able to fight Tom Majombi, the black boxer, to the point where the man is bleeding from his ears (566). Geldenhys sees black people as less than human, and has no issue with physically harming Majombi to the point of serious permanent damage. Later, when Peekay manages to get the case of the death of Majombi to court against Geldenhys, the scene once again focusses on the introspective as his brain attempts to rationalise what is happening to him and why:

In his sick head, Geldenhys told himself that Tom Majombi had been a plant. How else would Peekay have known about him? He had gone directly to Baragwanath the day Majombi had been admitted. It was too bloody neat. It was a conspiracy, a conspiracy to make sure that he never got a chance to fight Peekay. Majombi was a deliberate plant, he'd been feeding Mandoma information prior to the fight. The reason he'd lost was because Tom Majombi had told Gideon about his weaknesses. The rooinek and the Jew had framed him. Jesus! He and Klaasens had played right into Peekay's hands! By stupidly allowing the Zulu fighter to die in an isolated police cell, there was now no possibility of proving that such a conspiracy had existed. Geldenhys felt sick at the stupidity he had shown. (611)

This shows that he has no remorse for the person who died just to assist his training, only twisted selfishness. He believes that he is the true victim and cannot even comprehend why a white person would care about the life of a black stranger. It is at this stage that he actually seems to break. The novel goes into detail at his visceral reaction to his own imagined series of events, during which he is physically sick. He is consumed by his own hatred and only desires revenge for the perceived wrongdoings and assaults by Peekay and his friends.

Geldenhys is put in charge of the police station in Sharpeville as a demotion to get him out of the spotlight. During a protest by the inhabitants of Sharpeville against the pass laws imposed by the apartheid government, Geldenhys happens to be outside when he recognises Juicy Fruit Mambo in the crowd. The large Zulu man triggers Geldenhys's memories of his attack on Tandia and subsequent injuries and shame associated with them, and so he shoots Mambo. This results in the rest of the police officers opening fire on the crowd and causes what becomes known as the Sharpeville Massacre, an event that occurred in the history of apartheid South Africa in which police opened fire on peaceful protestors in Sharpeville. Afterwards, Geldenhys uses his position as investigator to be present when Peekay comes looking for Mambo's body on Tandia's behalf. When Geldenhys attempts to discredit Tandia to Peekay by using her signed confession of prostitution form when she was sixteen, Peekay asks him a series of questions that traps him, as any answer he gives will make him look like a pervert (691), once more humiliating him. Geldenhys forces Peekay to look through the Sharpeville corpses without assistance, and almost succeeds in his grotesque planned assassination of Peekay using the golden bullet, but is unable to go through with it:

The cold grew more intense. Things were becoming mixed up in his head, blurred. He was in the cold room behind his father's butcher's shop. It must be Tuesday, the carcasses were stacked up against the end wall. It was only right, his father must be punished, what he was doing was terribly wrong, he was committing a mortal sin, he was doing it with a black woman and so he must

die. It was the only way to save South Africa, to do his duty as an Afrikaner and as a white man! But he was too cold, his finger was frozen on the trigger, slowly he lowered the gun and tried to still his shivering body. (676-687)

Geldenhys has actually begun to lose sense of reality in this scene, combining both Peekay and his own father into one being and attempting to punish this being for the sins of both. However, the cold of the morgue serves to trigger the same panicked emotions he felt as a child being caught in his father's butchery freezer, and so he is unable to go through with his plan.

Peekay is determined to ruin Geldenhys now as a symbol of everything the apartheid government allows its agents to become:

I want the world to see what we see, that Jannie Geldenhys isn't an isolated madman, but a part of the logical offspring of a country where one section of the population has gone mad! We may not like Geldenhys, but in any other country he would be either in prison or under severe psychiatric treatment in an institution. In our country he is a God-fearing citizen, who reads the lesson in church in Sunday and who is about to be promoted to colonel by a grateful government. He is a media personality, a famous policeman who keeps our children safe from the pathological fears of their insane parents. Geldenhys is there because we appointed him; it is our collective insanity which allows him, and the thousands like him, to be who they are! (752)

At the novel's conclusion, Geldenhys has lost contact with reality to such a degree that even those who admire him notice and are concerned. Sergeant Koekemoer, a young officer who wants to learn from Geldenhys, is one of the few officers who still have some level of respect and admiration for him. Koekemoer notes that Geldenhys is forgetting details about Peekay's and Tandia's lives, something he has never done before. His attention to detail up to this point has been one of his more formidable attributes, so the fact that he seems to be losing that which makes him exceptional in favour of outright obsession is a sign of his mental deterioration that is noticeable even to those still willing to look past his flaws.

Ultimately, it is Geldenhys's obsession that kills him. His deterioration is documented throughout *Tandia* and serves as a look into the mind of someone scarred by abuse and broken by his own expectations. He serves as an example of the kind of evil and toxic masculinity that can be created by an oppressive system like the apartheid regime in order to enforce its rule.

Gideon Mandoma – Zulu Masculinities

The culture and beliefs of the Zulu people appear in all three of the novels covered in this dissertation. Keeping with the themes this dissertation is examining, observing the masculinities exhibited by Zulu characters in the novels is important because it allows a comparison between masculinities and identities exhibited by others characters, including the protagonists and the Zulu masculinities. The historical subjugation of black people in South Africa ensures that Zulu masculinities would firmly outside of the hegemony of white South African masculinities and therefore would fall under what Connell refers to as “subordinated masculinities” (2005). Using Lindani Hadebe’s “Zulu Masculinity: Culture, Faith and the Constitution in the South African Context” (2010) can provide context to explore the character of Gideon, whose masculinity can be examined in more detail. Juicy Fruit Mambo, Mattress and their masculinities are explored in more detail in Chapter Two through the lens of being father figures, which is why they will not be included under this section. It is important to note that these characters are portrayed through the lens of Courtenay himself; therefore they are subject to scrutiny as being written by a white man, which can result in more than a few problematic instances. In addition, it must be noted that Zulu culture is very often inherently patriarchal and problematic, as can be shown through a few of Gideon’s interactions with Tandia, and this has not necessarily changed with the modern era. That being said, Courtenay has clearly researched Zulu culture extensively and seems to write his black characters with a great degree of respect, both towards the individual characters and to their culture as a whole. This section will analyse Gideon given the available information, but may very well stand to correction.

Gideon Mandoma is a black boxer who is organised to challenge Peekay in *The Power of One*. He is one of Peekay’s strongest opponents, as it is discovered that Gideon is the biological son of Nanny, the black woman who used to care for Peekay as an infant. This fact spurs Gideon on in the fight, giving him what Peekay describes as a “reason greater than my own to win” (Courtenay, 523), as according to the Zulu culture, this would be a spiritual sign and not mere coincidence. After their fight, in which Peekay emerges victorious, Gideon becomes one of Peekay’s closest friends and allies, bonded through their love for Nanny: “We have taken milk from the same mother’s breast, we are brothers” (531). He serves as a link between Peekay and the spirituality associated with Zulu culture.

Peekay's journey begins with meeting Inkosi-Inkosikazi, the most powerful medicine man in Southern Africa, who cures him of his bed-wetting. While his interactions with black people after this event is limited, meeting Gideon brings back into focus the spirituality and culture of the Zulu people in a way that links Peekay to it even more than before. Nanny has always been the epitome of love to Peekay, more so than even his own mother. He associates that maternal love with Nanny, and therefore with the Zulu people. While he interacts with black people from other groups throughout the stories of *Power* and *Tandia*, for example within the confines of Barberton prison and upon crossing the border into Swaziland, it is the Zulu people that hold a special place in his heart. Gideon arrives in the story set up as a rival; the lost son of the most cherished loved one in Peekay's life, now appearing as a challenger to his eventual achievement of welterweight champion of the world. This is exactly why this challenge is successful: while Peekay is fighting for his own victory, Gideon is fighting for his people. As he says to Peekay before they begin the match: "They say you are a chief, but you must prove you have the spirit of *Onoshobishobi Ingelosi*. I know I am a chief and have the spirit of Cetshwayo and before that of Mpande, Dingane and even of Shaka the king of all kings" (522). This is not only a match between fighters, a match between races, or even a match between brothers; this is a match to determine who is the rightful chief of the Zulu nation. The legend that has followed Peekay of the *Onoshobishobi Ingelosi* or Tadpole Angel regards him as the reincarnation of Lumukanda, a hero said to one day save the African people from the oppression of the white race. Every time Gideon and Peekay face each other in the ring, it is not just a boxing match but a test of chiefs. Peekay boxes to prove himself the better boxer and to keep his dream of becoming a champion alive and therefore continuously reinforcing the legend. Gideon's inclusion in the novels also serves to highlight the importance of boxing in black communities, as boxing was one of the few sports that were not forcibly segregated under apartheid law. While black boxers were still seen as second-class citizens by the white population, they were still able to participate in tournaments and matches between black and white boxers, while uncommon, were not unheard of. Nelson Mandela himself is known to have been a boxer in his youth. Gideon boxes to prove himself a warrior and a chief and maybe take the mantle of *Onoshobishobi Ingelosi* from Peekay by besting him in battle. Mr Nguni, Gideon's manager, describes their first match as "between the two spirits and the stronger would win" (524). Peekay continues to win at every occasion, until he finally has the world title. He then fights against Gideon and loses, thereby bestowing the title of World Champion on his brother.

In a later scene, the chiefs of each Southern African nation and the *sangomas* gather to discuss the match, as both Peekay and Gideon were knocked unconscious at the end of the fight. While Gideon is given the official win because he was still standing when Peekay went down, the *sangomas* declare that Gideon falling down afterwards was the spirit of the Angel protecting its true host (625). From that moment on, Somojo, the Swazi *sangoma* and new leader of the spiritual people after the death of Inkosi-Inkosikazi, declares Peekay the reincarnation of Lumukanda, citing the falling of the stars “from the heavens when the *Onishobishobi Ingelosi* brought the tribes together for the singing of the great song of Africa” (629) as proof of Peekay being the “child of the star” (629), one of Lumukanda’s titles.

Gideon is important not only because of his he acts as a conduit between Peekay and the Zulu people, but because he shows a perspective of a talented and intelligent black person in apartheid South Africa and how such people were treated during that time period. He is highly educated, achieving a law degree and working as a clerk in Peekay and Hymie’s law business. He is described as physically attractive, intelligent, and strong, and a chief of the Zulu people, all of which makes him important within the culture of black South Africans. Outside of that culture, he is perceived by the majority of white society as just another black man destined to work as a labourer. Through Peekay and Tandia as well as his own determination, Gideon receives the best education available to a black person in South Africa at the time, proving himself as exceptionally capable. He goes on to join the ranks of the African National Congress or ANC, preferring to provide talks using his skills as an orator rather than become involved in violence. This willingness to talk rather than fight and his obvious intelligence and charisma are all reasons that Geldenhys suspects Gideon of being set up to become the first black president of South Africa (647). It is interesting to note the many similarities between Gideon and Nelson Mandela: both were once boxers, both became lawyers, both entered politics and joined the ANC and (once Mandela had been incarcerated on Robben Island) both advocated for nonviolent methods to fight the apartheid government. While Gideon is certain of himself and his values, he maintains an enormous amount of respect for his culture and his people, often to the point of making other Zulu people, like Mr Nguni, concerned for his wellbeing and state of mind. He respects the spirituality and culture of his people, and so continues to act as Peekay’s familial and spiritual anchor. It is through Gideon that many of Peekay’s spiritual revelations occur: the sharing of Gideon’s ‘talisman’ of lion’s teeth, the encounter with the black mamba revealing it to be Peekay’s spirit, and the continuing legend of *Onishobishobi Ingelosi*. Gideon shares in the legendary Zulu pride,

publically shaming Geldenhys after literally knocking him out of the boxing ring on live television in order to avenge Tandia. He also breaks Peekay out of his slump in his rematch with Jackson in the same manner he would with a Zulu man: he attacks Peekay's pride. Almost miraculously this tactic works and Peekay is able to win the match, but it is interesting that he is only able to do so when Gideon steps in and treats him like a Zulu that he is able to get his head into the match, when everything his other allies had attempted had failed. Zulu culture acts as an anchor for Peekay, mentally and emotionally, and he is able to draw strength from it through Gideon's intervention.

It is disappointing that Gideon is not a more fleshed out character in his own right, instead serving as an object of plot progression for Peekay, Tandia and Geldenhys. It makes sense that Courtenay would struggle to write from the perspective of a black character because Courtenay himself is a white man and could never fully grasp the lived experiences of a person of colour. Courtenay very rarely writes from Gideon's perspective, usually allowing the reader to experience the events occurring through the eyes of Peekay, Tandia, Geldenhys, or even Mr. Nguni. One of the few instances in which he writes from Gideon's perspective is when he has been arrested and is being interrogated by Geldenhys. In that situation, the reader is provided with Gideon's perspective to observe Geldenhys losing control, but the scene does not contain very much introspection on Gideon's part. He is instead used as a vessel for us to watch Geldenhys's meltdown. He is a stand-in for the reader in this situation. Peekay advances because of Gideon's presence and influence. Tandia advances by attaching herself to Gideon for political gain. Geldenhys advances by constantly being set up against Gideon, either politically or physically. Gideon himself is left a mystery for the most part. What is known of him involves his association with Zulu culture and beliefs and his desire to free black people from the tyranny of apartheid, but these are all provided from the perspectives of other characters except in rare circumstances. As has been shown, understanding a character's growth in these novels is provided by both the internal thoughts of the character and the perceptions of said character by others. With Gideon, only the perceptions of others is provided for the majority of the story involving him, so it is difficult to determine if the masculinity of the character ever evolves, or if he is maintained as the archetypal Zulu warrior chief he is introduced as in *Power*.

Chapter One Conclusion

As stated in the introductory paragraph to this chapter, examining these marginal masculinities is important both because of their effect on the more central characters but also because each of these marginal masculinities represents identities that readers may resonate with. Therefore, discussing them in an academic setting and with similar levels of engagement provides a platform from which others may observe these identities and go some way into normalising the idea that masculinity is not homogenous. While it is not unexpected that Courtenay occasionally struggles to write from the perspective of characters other than white and male, what is interesting is the care and respect of his portrayals of characters from marginal groups. He has clearly researched Zulu culture and interviewed LGBT people in order to write such characters with sensitivity due to the level of detail he is able to depict, both of the respective cultures and the inner workings of those identities. His time spent in South Africa has provided insight into various African cultures including colonial British, Afrikaner, Zulu, and even cultures outside of South Africa, like the culture of the Kikuyu people of Kenya. He does occasionally stumble, but for the most part he is able to successfully write marginal groups and accurately represent the masculinities of characters from those groups. Courtenay's work goes some ways to portraying vulnerable masculinities that either oppose, subvert or only partially align with more socially powerful masculinities and this portrayal is important in normalising alternative forms of identity that might not be entirely socially accepted, even by today's societal standards.

Chapter Two: Fathers and Father Figures and Their Influence on Successful Identity Development

This chapter will examine the role of the father or father-figure in Courtenay's novels, using the experiences of the protagonists as the focal points. As Peekay, Tandia, and Tom are all separated from their biological fathers, they are forced to find alternative figures to look to for fatherly influence. Masculinity and masculine identity are learned traits, and the first model human beings copy for behaviour, especially when it comes to gender roles, is parents. For boys, copying the behaviour and values of their fathers (or other male role models) is how they develop their own sense of identity and their masculinities, and for girls the father is the primary example of how men should behave towards women. Because Tom, Peekay, and Tandia do not have immediate father-figures, they are important to study with regard to masculine identity formation because any identity they form will be generated without said primary father-figure, and entirely through the influence of alternative father-figures. In this regard, this chapter will examine each of the protagonists separately by focussing on their respective father-figures and how each of these men influenced the lives and development of their respective protagonist.

Robert Morrell has written extensively on the topic of fathers and fatherhood in Africa, including editing a collection of work on fatherhood in South Africa titled *Baba: Men and Fatherhood in South Africa* (2006). He asks the question, "If we assume that a child does not need a biological father, does he (or she) need an adult man who fulfils the fatherhood role?" (15). He then goes on to say that "ideally, children should have adult men around them, to care for them, love them and to provide role models" (15). However, this is not always the case. Morrell suggests that, while media and society laud the nuclear family model as the ideal, the African model for a family is far more productive.

African conceptions of parenting stress the needs to the child and the importance of adults meeting children's, especially young children's, needs. The saying that "every child is my child" articulates the idea that a child needs to be supported, loved and guided by adults, that s/he is a member of a community (and not just an isolated individual), and that adults have a collective responsibility for the upbringing of a child. (15)

Likewise, Anita Garey, Sangeetha Madhavan and Nicholas Townsend (2006) comment that they reject "fathering as an individual responsibility" and contend that "fathering should be seen as a collective project in keeping with traditional [African] patterns of family formation" (176). Children are then best raised by a collective, at least in the African tradition. However,

this does not erase the patriarchal nature of many African cultures. As explained by Chris Ouma (2011), fatherhood represents “origins, authority and legitimacy” (88), and, like Tom and Peekay, not having a biological father in their lives is effectively cutting them off from all of these potentially important connections. Tandia does get to know her biological father, but he dies before she can form any sort of meaningful relationship with him. Like Tom and Peekay, she is cut off from her biological father not only physically and emotionally but also because she is mixed race and therefore unable to be accepted as a part of his legitimate family. Like Tom and Peekay, she is isolated from her ancestry and heritage.

Ouma goes on to argue that in post-colonial societies the father-and-son dynamic has been forced to shift due to changing identities.

In a situation in which the symbolic authority that came with the figure of the father is in decline, a new sense of responsibility comes with childhood. The son, the a priori masculine heir of familial genealogy, is burdened on the one hand with expectations of maturity but faces penurious material conditions on the other, a contradiction that creates a quicker cultural exposure and growth outside his father’s influence. (80)

In this regard, Peekay and Tom, who both began their lives having closer relationships to black African people, have had a greater degree of this traditionally African cultural influence applied to them. The death of Patel results in Tandia being placed into Bluey Jay, where she is raised by a multi-racial group of people. The respective biological fathers of the three protagonists are not present in their lives, and so they are raised by a collective of people who love them. They have to make their own way and discover their own identities, because they do not have any single person to base their own identities on. They find role models throughout their lives and learn lessons that allow them to base their identities and masculinities off of those people. Morrell states the traits of a good father, citing “taking responsibility for paternity, supporting a child and being a good role model” (21). Broderick (1977) argues that even fathers separated from their families still influence the development and lives of the children (271), and that children who have no father-figure to look up are at a significant disadvantage in life. Because of this, what Broderick describes as “reconstituted families” not only tend to be more “effective socializing agents than one parent families [but] they tend to be more effective than natural parent families in which the father is an autocrat” (272). Each of the three protagonists clearly portrays many of the claims made by these writers, as will be explored below.

Peekay's Various Father Figures

For Peekay, the topic of his actual father is never one that is brought up in the novels. It is briefly mentioned that he was a soldier, and the assumption is that he died while fighting. Even though Peekay has many conversations with his mother and his grandfather, the topic of his actual biological father is never explicitly covered. The role of father or role model for Peekay is instead filled by various male characters throughout *Power* and *Tandia*, from Hoppie Groenewald, to Doc, to the enigmatic Inkosi-Inkosikazi, and of course Granpa. Each has an impact on Peekay's life and his concept of himself and his role in the world; each man teaches him one or more important lessons that help build on his previous notion of his own masculinity. This section will observe some of these men, what they taught Peekay and why these lessons were essential to his development as a character.

Peekay's earliest father figure is his grandfather, Granpa, a gruff man who seems to struggle to show affection or even emote successfully, choosing instead to spend his days with his black Orpington chickens and later with his extensive rose garden. He fears connecting to others, especially his family, but comes to be proud and supportive of Peekay in his own way. However, he is never truly a figure of any major impact in Peekay's life. He offers some words of wisdom and comfort, but for the most part he stays apart from everyone. He and Peekay are similar in their demeanour. They are both quiet and focussed on their respective interests. Unfortunately Granpa is not there for Peekay in any meaningful way and neither does he affect Peekay's growth as a character. The only reason he recurs is because he is Peekay's biological grandfather, and lives in the same house as Peekay's mother. He does display a growing level of affection towards Peekay, especially once he begins to box and win his increasingly difficult matches, and this affection causes Granpa to become subtly more involved. He pays attention to Peekay's accomplishments and supplies roses for the women in Peekay's life, and tobacco for the prison. He occasionally offers a gentle: "There's a good lad" (Courtenay, 2006[1989], 571) and a pat on the shoulder, but that seems to be the extent of his physical affection. This is later revealed to be because of the elderly man's losses: his son, his wife, his prized Orpingtons. It is important to note that Peekay himself feels a great degree of affection towards his Granpa, citing his desire to see and speak with him along with Dum and Dee, the Shangaan twins who helped look after him as a child. Dum and Dee are extremely important to Peekay, being a link to Nanny, the beloved black woman who cared for Peekay when his own mother could not due to mental illness. They are the last remnant of a happier time in his life, and so by mentioning both the

twins and Granpa in the same thought, Peekay has associated them to each other. Granpa is as much a part of that happier lost period of Peekay's life as Dum and Dee. His importance, while seemingly being a minor character, is one of memory and subtext.

Inkosi-Inkosikazi is a medicine man of exceptional renown among the black characters within both *Power* and *Tandia*. He holds a position as the eldest and most powerful of the *sangomas* in Southern Africa, so much so that all people from all African groups (Zulu, Xhosa, Shona, eSwati) all revere him equally. He is called upon early in *Power* by Nanny to cure a six-year-old Peekay's bed-wetting issue. Inkosi-Inkosikazi's role in the novels is one of teaching Peekay respect for the culture and customs of the black people around him. Through his abilities, Inkosi-Inkosikazi takes Peekay through a journey into a place that Peekay comes to know as the Night Country. In the Night Country Peekay descends three waterfalls and hops over ten stones across the water, Peekay reaches dry land and is cured. This place becomes one of peace for Peekay, and he continues to visit it to rest and contemplate, even learning to do so while being tormented by bullies at school and later when he is preparing for his boxing matches.

Through Inkosi-Inkosikazi, Peekay is gifted Grandpa Chook, the cantankerous rooster who becomes Peekay's first companion, in much the same role as Tinker becomes Tom's in *Whitethorn*. Grandpa Chook becomes an amalgamation of Granpa and Inkosi-Inkosikazi, through Granpa's link to chickens and Inkosi's decrepit appearance being emulated by the chicken. The nature of the rooster also appears to combine traits from the two men, being terrifyingly intelligent in the eyes of the small boy and also tough and stubborn. While it would be foolish as to go so far as to place the label of role model on a fowl, having the bird be a symbol of the combined influence of the two elderly men in Peekay's life ensures that the lessons he learns from each are reflected and reinforced in the others.

The spirit of Inkosi-Inkosikazi returns briefly when Peekay is confronted by the black mamba outside the cave housing Doc's body. This is discussed in greater detail in "Chapter Three: Masculinities within Physical Spaces and How They Function and Develop", but for now it is sufficient to mention that the encounter makes Peekay very aware that both Doc and Inkosi-Inkosikazi are fathers to him. In fact, he declares himself a "mind-child" (Courtenay, 1992, 540) of both Doc's clinical scientific mind and the ancient spirituality of the elderly *sangoma*, thereby declaring each equally important in the development of his identity and sense of self. In *Tandia*, Inkosi-Inkosikazi dies of old age and is replaced as the most

powerful medicine man by Somojo, an ancient Swazi. Somojo comes to represent much of the same for Peekay as Inkosi-Inkosikazi did, helping Peekay solve his depression over his loss against Jackson and taking Tandia in after Peekay is killed at the end of *Tandia*. Both elderly medicine men are interwoven throughout Peekay's story, cropping up as advice-givers, challenge-setters, and spiritual protectors; both of Peekay and of the black characters in the novels.

Peekay meets his first male friend on the train from school to Barberton. He is placed into the care of the conductor, Hoppie Groenewald, who is also a boxer. Meeting Hoppie is the first time in Peekay's life when he feels like someone (a white someone) is on his side, and as a result he hero-worships Hoppie for much of his childhood and fondly remembers him well into adulthood. Hoppie introduces Peekay to boxing after observing the small boy's fearful reactions towards him at their first meeting. Hoppie teaches Peekay the basics of boxing mentality, and later demonstrates them in a match against "Jackhammer" Smit, a boxer from the mining district. Due to Hoppie being physically small compared to the much larger and more intimidating Smit, under normal circumstances the smaller boxer would be expected to lose. While the often toxically masculine environment that the sport of boxing can create and enforce isn't explored by Courtenay, it is worth mentioning that this dissertation will focus on how the space of the boxing ring and gym can be used as spaces to promote a positive type of masculinity or a space where men especially feel they can go and deal with their problems, where such a space might not otherwise exist for them. Hoppie teaches Peekay the mantra that he would follow throughout his life: "First with the head, then with the heart" (Courtenay, 2006 [1989], 118). Chapter 3 speaks of the boxing ring and the gym and goes into detail about Peekay and Hoppie's relationship. Perhaps it isn't accurate to label Hoppie as a father-figure, but up to this point in Peekay's story, this is the closest relationship to father-son that Peekay has experienced, and it continues to resonate throughout his life, especially when it comes to his boxing.

Professor Von Vollensteen (or Doc as he is known throughout *Power* and *Tandia*) is introduced upon Peekay arriving in Barberton. He appears to Peekay after the boy climbs the hill behind his mother's house to escape her after an argument. From their first meeting, Doc treats Peekay differently from how Peekay had come to expect being treated. Coming across a small boy crying on a hill, he plays a small game with Peekay where Peekay must correctly explain why Doc can carry a massive cactus around on his back. When he gets it wrong, Doc makes him balance on one leg and repeat a phrase which ends in a nonsense word,

“Absoloodle” (176). This makes Peekay laugh, which quickly lifts his mood. Doc subverts what is expected of masculinity with this action. Instead of telling the boy he is expected to cheer up, or behaving in any way that is expected of men, he makes Peekay laugh instead. This echoes Hoppie’s treatment of Peekay earlier in the novel, as when Peekay became distressed while in Hoppie’s presence, the boxer also took the time to reassure the small boy and comfort him, rather than assert the reaction normally associated with hegemonic masculinity, of telling boys to “man up” or “suck it up”. Doc is linked to Granpa due to their botanical interests. When Peekay asks if Doc knows Granpa, he replies, “I have not yet had this pleasure but it will be okay, we are both men of the thorns, with the cactus, with him the rose. The English and the German are not so far apart” (184). Once again, Doc is linked to other important men in Peekay’s life.

Doc sees the potential in the boy and petitions his mother to allow Doc to teach him piano in exchange for Peekay’s assistance in gathering cacti. When Peekay’s mother expresses hesitation, citing the seeming opposition of science and religion as a reason, Doc attempt to placate her by explaining his perspective. He goes into a long speech about how God created the cactus plant and gave it “all the blessing he tried, but mostly failed, to give man” (189). All of these descriptions can apply to Peekay, both now and as he grows up. Above all, it is the qualities Doc describes here that he attempts to instil in Peekay, such as resilience and adaptability. In any case, Peekay’s mother allows Doc to tutor Peekay and teach him music, as she sees this as a sort of “social equaliser almost as good as money” (190-191), as musical ability, especially being able to play the piano, is seen as a major symbol of status among the citizens of Barberton. This is important because Seidler’s theories are being subverted. It is not science, logic, or reason that are used to climb the social ladder in Barberton, but music or artistry. In fact, one of the very first things Doc says to Peekay is, “Without expression the human being is just a lump of meat” (175). With art, music, or some other way to express themselves, human beings are scarcely different to animals. This defies Seidler’s theory of masculine reason, as Seidler would claim that logic and law are what elevates humanity above other animals. However, Doc contradicts that. He is a man of science himself, yet he continues to claim that it is art and creativity that separates humanity from other animals.

Doc subverts the expectation of an academic man, as his official qualification is in music, yet his passion is science, specifically cacti. If Seidler’s theories would be followed, Doc being a man of science would be sensible, as science and reason are paramount to the

masculine ego. All of Doc's qualifications are in music, directly associated with art and emotion, the antithesis to Seidler's logic and reason. However, it should be noted that out of the creative arts, music is by far the most mathematical and structured, and so Doc's interests of music and science complement each other. In this way, both Doc and Inkosi-Inkosikazi are enigmas. Perhaps this is why they are such excellent role models for Peekay. Doc's ability to see the perspective of others and understand and appreciate them, combined with his natural curiosity about everything, and his willingness to give both music (emotion) and cacti (science) an equal amount of passion and focus combine to make him a role model who offers Peekay all of these traits and more to base himself on. Doc remains his greatest role model and father figure.

Finally, music plays an important role in Peekay's life, as it links him to multiple role models. Hoppie, after playing his mouth organ briefly for Peekay, says the following:

A mouth organ is a man's best friend, Peekay. You can slip it into your pocket and when you're sad it will make you happy. When you're happy it can make you want to dance. If you have a mouth organ in your pocket, you'll never starve for company or a good meal. You should try it, it's a certain cure for loneliness. (101)

Hoppie plays his mouth organ, Doc plays the piano, and Rasputin plays his classical records; in addition Inkosi-Inkosikazi is celebrated by the black women on Granpa's farm through singing songs of praise. Each of the role models has some musical aspect that enhances their characters. Hoppie's mouth organ is an amateur instrument, but he can play it, unlike Rasputin who only listens. This shows that the complexity of the musical ability is also significant. Rasputin protects Peekay and provides company at the mines but cannot play any sort of music himself; he can only listen and appreciate it in others. Peekay doesn't learn very much from him, except that which he already knew: that masculinity is multi-faceted and everyone has their own version. Hoppie's mouth organ is a simple instrument and therefore Hoppie is a simple character, but he teaches Peekay the basics of boxing, which then go on to inform Peekay's identity. Peekay can both appreciate music like Rasputin and has the potential to successfully play an instrument. When it comes to Doc, his piano ability is unmatched. In the same way, Peekay learns the most from him throughout his life. Like the discipline required to master the piano, Peekay spends a lot of his young life learning from Doc, and like his failure to ever master the piano, he never achieves a level of clarity and intelligence that Doc possesses. Inkosi-Inkosikazi's arrival to the farm is heralded by songs of praise by the black women, but he casually scatters them to go about their day. Music for him

is about pomp and circumstance, something he receives everywhere he goes due to his status. In this case, his casual treatment of this level of praise goes to show to the young Peekay that black people can hold levels of power he previously did not know were possible, even within an extremely racist and oppressive society. A simple gesture by the elderly *sangoma* makes a strong impression on Peekay, one that provides a level of awe and respect towards the old man that carries over into Peekay's eventual love and camaraderie with black people later in both *Power* and *Tandia*. Music comes to represent both Peekay's improving abilities and understanding, and his relationship with each of his role models.

Tom's Journey to Find Love

Mattress is Tom's first friend and an enduring role model throughout Tom's story. The Zulu man cares for the animals on The Boys Farm, but is known as the Pig Boy because it is seen as beneath a white person to care for animals like pigs, due to their association with dirt and excrement (2005, 12). He fulfils many of the tropes associated with the father in literature: physical size and strength, calm and quiet confidence, and he protects both Tom and Tinker. Mattress does have his own family whom he sends money to each month, and this provides a moment of self-awareness for Tom when he discovers this, as he mentally admonishes himself.

I was amazed to think Mattress had a wife and that I didn't even know about her, but there you go, white people didn't spend much time asking black people about their lives, so Mattress was just a pig boy and didn't exist beyond his immediate occupation. I had fallen into the same white-people-total-disinterest-in-black-people trap, and even at six-years old I was ashamed. (15)

This is a realisation that Peekay also has, albeit far later in *Power*. The closeness of Tom and Peekay to black characters early in their lives is not an uncommon one. Many white South Africans were cared for by black domestic workers/child minders and accepted it as a part of their upbringing. What makes Tom and Peekay unusual is that (for the most part) they avoid the mindset many white South Africans fall into, of assuming that the role of the black person is to care for or serve them. Tom sees this very early due to his status as a social outcast among the Afrikaner orphans and extended people of the town, allowing him to empathise with Mattress and the other black characters more than Peekay managed to in his early years. The death of Mattress serves to motivate Tom throughout his life, culminating in him returning to Duiwelkrans in order to put the matron of The Boys Farm, Mevrou, on trial for Mattress's murder, using evidence he has collected from Kobus Vermaak, Frikkie Botha, and Sergeant Van Niekerk. While Mattress is only a beginning for Tom, he serves as Tom's first loved one, friend, and ally, as he had "given me comfort and the gift of Tinker's life as well as love and friendship when I lacked all three" (478). However, the distinction here between Tom and Peekay and other white South Africans is the assumption of duty. Tom and Peekay genuinely love the black people in their lives and are cared for in return out of a sense of that love. And while it is entirely possible that a similar sense of love and acceptance existed in many of the relationships between black and white South Africans during the time period of the novels, it is far more likely that the level of care exhibited by black South Africans was forced through fear and subjugation, more than genuine affection.

Meneer Prinsloo serves as the Superintendent in charge of The Boys Farm and is therefore legally responsible for all of the orphans, including Tom. To the reader it is apparent that he falls under the label of what Broderick terms an “autocrat” (1977, 272) because Tom develops successfully in spite of Prinsloo’s involvement in his life. He is more of a cautionary tale for Tom, representing everything he can avoid becoming: loud, ignorant, bullying, unnecessarily proud. Prinsloo is an ideal of a hegemonic male in his society: a figure of authority, proud, aggressive and competitive, and (most importantly) highly religious, white, and Afrikaans. He is occasionally set up as a figure of ridicule, as his incompetence, general lack of intelligence, and constantly contradicting himself are made blatantly apparent. A prominent example is how he treats the news of Tom receiving a scholarship compared to how he treats the news of Gawie Grobler also receiving a scholarship. While Tom’s letter of congratulations is picked over and ridiculed by the Superintendent, Gawie is praised and held up as an example of Afrikaner excellence (Courtenay, 2005, 264-265). Prinsloo is later revealed to be the real abuser of Kobus Vermaak, and Kobus’s testimony against Prinsloo is part of the evidence Tom uses in the case against Mevrou. The irony of Prinsloo’s fate is that, due to cancer and a stroke, he is left entirely at the mercy of the very boy he abused as a child, Kobus Vermaak, who is the only individual still willing to take him in and care for him. Kobus now subjects the elderly man to constant humiliation, making him wear an adult diaper and sit in a room inside Kobus’s club in order for other men who were abused by him as children to come and get some measure of closure. Although Prinsloo is the legal guardian of all the boys who live in The Boys Farm, he is the furthest thing from a father-figure that Tom experiences in his life.

Frikkie Botha is the boxing coach and master of discipline for the older boys at The Boys Farm. He shares a lot of traits with Prinsloo, being white, Afrikaans, religious, and a cruel disciplinarian. A common punishment for the older boys is to be forced into the boxing ring against Botha, who was once a champion boxer himself. The Boys Farm is not a place where fairness is exercised. While Tom normally would not have to interact with Botha until he got much older, he is brought to Botha’s attention when Fannie Du Preez is injured by Mattress after the older boy attempted to sexually assault Tom. Botha is the person whom Mattress takes Tom and Tinker to after the incident. As a reward for keeping quiet about what actually happened, Tom is allowed to keep Tinker, a method that absolutely ensures his silence. Unfortunately, this also serves to silence Tom when Mattress is later accused of molesting Kobus, as he realises that to defend Mattress he would have to reveal the truth of

his sexual assault and would likely not be believed anyway. This would result in both Mattress and Tinker being taken away from him, and so he is forced to make a near impossible decision for many adults let alone for a child of six years old, and decides to say nothing and lose Mattress only, rather than lose them both (Courtenay, 2007, 66).

Botha takes it upon himself to fight Mattress in the boxing ring, allowing the lie of Mattress being the one to have sexually assaulted Kobus to become reality in order to prevent embarrassment at having created the original fabrication to protect the boys. The general belief is that Mattress will lose, as he has never boxed before. As the match begins, that seems to be the case, as Mattress struggles to defend himself or strike back. However, Botha insults the Zulu man, calling him a coward, the one thing Mattress will not accept. Mattress reacts in anger, knocking Botha out and breaking his jaw, winning the fight. He is later lynched by Mevrou and her brothers, which could easily been avoided had Botha allowed the truth to come out. In this way, Botha is partly responsible for Mattress's death.

Botha disappears from the immediate story at this stage because he attempts to assist Mevrou's brothers in destroying a bridge carrying supplies and news to British troops. He is caught in the explosion and severely disfigured. Much later, when Tom begins boarding school in Johannesburg, they meet up again; Tom needs somewhere to stay over the school holidays as he cannot face going back to the orphanage or Duiwelkrans after Tinker dies, and Botha is a homeless man who knows the best places to survive and sleep. Tom joins the troop of homeless men, and eventually begins to care for them, as he understands them:

These were men who hailed from the bottom of the social barrel, even when they'd once lived sober lives. In the landscape of a large city they were referred to in the popular vernacular as Poor Whites. Where I came from in the deep north there was nothing unusual about them, they were farm hands, timber cutters, railway workers, road gangers or worked in the saw mills, mostly gainfully employed and always drunk on a Saturday night. They beat their wives and children as a matter of course and then went to church on Sunday. I knew them intimately and understood how to act in their company. After all, The Boys Farm was a factory that set out to produce men for precisely such rural activity. (Courtenay, 2007, 390)

Tom ensures that Botha and the other homeless men get adequate medical attention, and uses his skills and intelligence to help them find new sources of income to make their lives more bearable, like military pensions. Botha begs on the street using his own Jack Russell terrier, Tinky, and his disfigurement to get people's attention and money. Tom cares for him with more diligence than the others because he needs Botha's explanation of the series of events

surrounding Mattress's death so that he can use it as evidence when he goes back to Duiwelkrans and takes on Mevrouw. After Smelly Jelly, Peekay's boss and the owner of the Christian book store, dies, he leaves Tom a flat in his will and Tom is forced to use Botha as his legal guardian to prove that he is who he claims to be. After this, the two become closer, as Tom uses the flat to care for Botha more carefully. Botha's health is declining rapidly, and so Tom has to work fast to help the crippled man remember everything he needs to get justice for Mattress. This is not to say that Botha is only a means to an end. Tom's education thus far has made him an extremely empathic character, one who truly goes out of his way to help make everyone around him happy. In the last few years of his life, Botha is made as comfortable as possible. In this regard, Tom does come to treat the elderly man as a father figure, starting with The Boys Farm and their enduring relationship through Tinker and Tinky, to Botha having to be appointed as Tom's legal guardian so that he can acquire the rights to Smelly Jelly's flat, to Tom caring for Botha until his death. While other relationships with other male characters are functionally healthier and more equal, this one is the most caring in the novel. Tom does not have to care for Botha. In fact, Botha actively participated in Mattress's death. Tom's treatment of Botha mirrors Vermaak's treatment of Prinsloo, except that while Vermaak is caring for Prinsloo in order to get revenge, Tom is caring for Botha both to get what he knows as evidence and out of a genuine sense of empathy and respect. As stated before, Tom understands Botha, both his previous life as the boxing coach of The Boys Farm, and his current life as a homeless cripple. This understanding stems from a complicated but close relationship. This care of the homeless men in general and Botha in particular reveals much about Tom's idea of his own masculinity. He takes it upon himself to look after these men, copying a masculine trait of protecting those weaker than himself while also incorporating a certain feminine quality of caring for the individuals within his social circle. He does have an end goal in mind, of getting the full story of Mattress's death from Botha in order to use it to fight in the court room at the end of the novel. This section of the story showcases how Tom's masculinity is informed by both his compassion and his intelligence.

Doctor Van Heerden, Sergeant Van Niekerk and Headmaster Van Niekerk are three men each of whom plays a part in getting Tom out of The Boys Farm, and eventually Tom is legally adopted by the Doctor so that he need never return to the Farm. All three men care for Tom in their own way: the Headmaster scholastically, the Sergeant through the eyes of the law and common human decency, and the Doctor through concern for a bright child being

abused and belittled by the people legally required to care for him. In addition, the Doctor and Sergeant assist Tom as witnesses in the final court case against Mevrou, as the Doctor examined Mattress's body when it was brought into the morgue and the Sergeant handled the case file. All three play fatherly roles to Tom, with Sergeant being the first adult apart from Mattress that Tom believes he can trust, and all three helping him in a multitude of small ways to lift him up and make him aware of his own brilliance when he accepts that what The Boys Farm has made him is reality. Tom does not see it at first, and it is only made clear through small actions: the Headmaster replacing all of Tom's books when they are burnt, Sergeant buying Tom a mixed grill and milkshakes from the Impala grill, and the Doctor using his standing in the community to publically lambast the staff of The Boys Farm and other members of the community for their treatment of Tom. Collectively, these men (as well as the various women) become Tom's family, even if he continues to struggle to feel as if he is a part of it. As such, they do take on the roles of father figures, even in minor ways.

The family that is formed to care for Tom calls to mind exactly what Garey, Madhavan and Townsend (2006) discuss with regard to communal parenting in African cultures. Likewise, Broderick's observations about "reconstituted families" (272) can be directly applied to Tom's situation. He begins his life being raised in admittedly harsh and undesirable communal conditions, and is adopted into yet another communal family, one that genuinely cares for him this time. More so, the family of choice he is embraced into is one that he helps gather together. It is directly as a result of Tom's involvement that many of the inhabitants of Duiwelkrans that end up as a part of his family get to meet and create their relationships, resulting in said family. For example, Sergeant Van Niekerk meeting and developing a relationship with Marie Booyens is a direct result of the Sergeant taking Tom to the Impala Café in order to interview him about Mattress's death. Another example is Doctor Van Heerden getting to know Mevrou Booyens because of Tom's hatchet mishap, and eventually marrying her. All of these relationships are generated because of Tom, and while they continue without Tom being a focal point, he is fondly remembered by the members as the general cause of their familial group. Tom's nature demands of him that he make his own way in life, often fairly stubbornly. As such, he does not take advantage of this family he has gathered, preferring to make his own way by getting jobs and living with Frikkie Botha and the homeless men. However, they remain in contact, and Sergeant and Marie's first child, a girl, is named Saxby after Tom's British surname, as he is present to help Marie give birth to her. As stated by Morrell, there are certain roles a father must fulfil,

including being a good role model, and in this regard, the Doctor, Sergeant and Headmaster all complete this requirement, among others. Therefore it is a fair assessment to include them as father-figures for Tom throughout his life.

Finally, regarding Tom and his concept of family in the ending of *Whitethorn*: after winning his court case and Mevrouw being sentenced to prison, Tom walks out of the court house into a throng of his own loved ones. Instead of pausing to celebrate with them, he walks through the group to meet Mattress's wife and son, who have travelled from Zululand to witness justice being done. This is a culmination of the themes of the novel, specifically the theme of family and loyalty. Tom's journey may have presented him with a family of his own, one that gathers and develops love and joy around him, but he never forgets Mattress, the first person he loved and trusted. This scene is there to present that fact. He never forgets, and manages to get to the stage where he can see justice done for his friend, and his often-absurd stubbornness at being independent means that he does it himself, with his family providing support but not assisting in this journey to see Mattress's killers brought to justice. What this scene proves is that his actions aren't entirely selfish. In fact, the novel allows the reader to fall into the very trap Tom describes at the beginning of the story: forgetting that Mattress had a life outside of the immediate narrative. Tom does do this for himself, to assuage some of the guilt for his part in Mattress's death, but he also undertakes this task for Mattress's family, as proven by him inviting them to witness the court case, and the novel only mentioning it at the very end. This is very deliberate; they are not an afterthought. They are specifically invited and sit quietly and observe as Tom uses the system that has oppressed their people for centuries to get justice for their father and husband. They absolutely matter to both Tom and to the story as a whole. This is proven by the last words of the novel: "Love had come full circle" (Courtenay, 2007, 671). Mattress's death fractured Tom's already miserable life, but from that one event came all of the love and joy that results in Tom being able to come back and avenge his friend. And in that moment of justice and vengeance, Tom's patchwork family finally meets the family that lost Mattress in the first place, and it all comes full circle.

Tandia's Desire for a Father's Love and Approval

Tandia is the only one of the three protagonists to have known her biological father, Natkin Patel, a prominent boxing referee. Her relationship with Patel is complicated, as she is an illegitimate child resulting from Patel sleeping with his maid. After her mother's death, Tandia is made to replace her as maid for Patel's legitimate family. Tandia describes her relationship with Patel early on in *Tandia*:

Patel was Tandia's only loved one. If you could call him that. He hadn't even touched her since she was six years old. She knew that as a baby he'd loved her, she knew that for sure. Now, before he was dead that is, she didn't think so. Maybe he just felt guilty. Although guilty was perhaps the wrong word. More like ashamed. Ashamed that a person like him had sunk so low as to do it with a [black] woman. She loved him anyway. (Courtney, 1992[1991])

Throughout the novel, Patel is a constant point of reference in Tandia's mind, mostly one of wondering whether he would be proud of her or love her once she achieved her goals. There is a moment when she visits Patel's grave the final time when she attempts to close the gates of the cemetery, but they are held open by dead vegetation. She observes this and remarks: "Patel's influence wasn't over yet" (Courtenay, 1992[1991], 154). This scene has Tandia observe the metaphor of the gates being held open and how she will never truly escape Patel's influence. He is her father, no matter what she becomes or how much she grows. It also implies that she will always be striving to reach his approval, which he can never give her because he is dead but will always remind her that she cannot obtain it. What follows is a complicated relationship, as his place as her biological father always weighs on Tandia's mind and influences what she does and how she thinks, something that does not occur with Peekay and Tom, who never knew their fathers.

Tandia's healthiest relationship is with Juicy Fruit Mambo, the physically imposing Zulu man who acts as Mama Tequila's chauffeur and the bouncer of Bluey Jay. Juicy Fruit Mambo was captured and tortured by the security police as a young man, leaving him impotent. He was dumped at Bluey Jay's in an effort to help the police avoid punishment, as a man discovered at a brothel in his state could easily be discredited in a court of law. His impotence ensures that he is the perfect bouncer for Bluey Jay's, as he cannot sleep with any of the girls himself. He instead spends his days adopting children to live in his small houses on the grounds of Bluey Jay. His fearsome exterior belies a soft and gentle heart, as he proves by his relationship with children. When confronted by him, many children seem to understand that there is no "real danger which [...] they sensed [...] coming from Juicy Fruit

Mambo's fierce-looking scowl" (186). Juicy Fruit Mambo seems to have the best relationship with small boys, with Tandia calling it his "small-boy magic [...]" which was generally heavily slanted towards unabashed and blatant bribery" (200). After Tandia is dumped at the train station after her arrest to be collected by Mama Tequila and it is discovered that she has been raped, Mambo quietly observes her struggle in her fevered sleep. It is one of the few scenes in the novels which takes the perspective of a character other than one of the protagonists, and this scene is from inside his mind.

Juicy Fruit Mambo had remained behind with Tandia. He didn't know what had gotten into him. Almost from the moment he had set eyes on her he had felt differently about the young girl who lay tossing and turning in Hester's bed. It wasn't love. He felt a kind of kinetic energy in her presence as though he was connected to her by some form of invisible cord. He could feel the burning of her fever on his own flesh and sense the little girl's despair as though it was his own. Juicy Fruit didn't bother to examine these feelings. In such things his African culture, depending on your viewpoint, was either too primitive or too sophisticated. He simply decided that it was henceforth his job to care for Tandia, that the rest of his life would be taken up with this task. (Courtenay, 1992[1991], 76)

This decision is one that is kept throughout the novel. He becomes Tandia's closest ally and confidante, driving her to and from school and later university. He protects her when Geldenhys attempts to sexually assault her, and even helps organise for one of Tandia's white male classmates to have an "accident" when he pushes Tandia too far. Tandia describes their relationship as a "special friendship" (90), one in which she feels "entirely safe with him around her, a new feeling for her, and one which she found simply wonderful" (90). She even considers that this relationship she has with Mambo is one "she had always believed it might become with Patel" (90) and this wish has significance. Mambo becomes a surrogate father for her, of a kind that Patel never got to become. He even proves useful to her in her capacity as a lawyer, as when he used to fetch her from school and university she happily recounts her day and what she learned. This makes Mambo the "only chauffeur in South Africa who could recite the complete legal torts as a Catholic might recite the catechism" (660). This recitation also has the added bonus of making Tandia better at explaining complex legal proceedings to people with little education, a skill she is able to use later when working for Red.

After that Mambo is also taken from her. Courtenay depicts the Sharpeville massacre as the result of Geldenhys recognising Mambo in a crowd of black protesters and the trauma of his injuries causes him to fire, setting off the other police officers. As Mambo's dies, his soul is taken in by Somojo, the leader of the Sangomas, and imbued into a walking stick. This

scene is mostly described from Mambo's perspective. This once again shows the reader how much he cares for her, and highlights specific traits he admires about her and is proud of, including her fearlessness, her ability to explain the law succinctly to laypeople, and her insatiable intelligence. He had organised beforehand with a group of boys he used to know, now *tsotsis* [street thugs] to protect Tandia if he was not present.

Magistrate Coetzee is a constant visitor to Bluey Jay and helps Tandia get into an all-white law programme. He is almost assassinated on his farm after retiring but is saved by Tandia and Johnny Tambourine, one of the *tsotsis* Mambo organised to protect Tandia. After his eventual death, he leaves an old farmhouse on his property to Tandia, as she falls in love with it after exploring the farm when visiting him and stumbling across it. This is significant because Tandia feels a deep, mysterious emotional link to the old house, something she has never felt before. She realises that the old house has finally made her aware of something within herself that has been silently hurting her throughout her life: her racial identity and how she feels like there is nowhere she belongs as a result of it. The remnants of the house "spoke of her deep need to belong to somewhere and something which she'd never dared to admit to herself" (744), that her view of herself as black and never mixed race instilled an inferiority complex within herself. She saw her blackness as an "actual and emotional classification which substituted as an identity" (744). In the moment while observing the house, she comes to a realisation about herself.

But in truth she was a middle child, neither one thing or another, the bastard orphan of the old Africa and the legitimate child of the South Africa yet to come. She couldn't be classified as a new house, but was instead an old one changed to accommodate the new family of South Africa. She was this old house mended and with a new roof. (744)

The house reminds her of herself: somewhat damaged, even broken and beaten down, but still strong at the foundations and standing, just requiring a little love and time to restore.

Tandia's exceptionalism, whether in her looks or intelligence, is something she struggles to see in any way except as a weapon. Her racial background is something she perceives as a detriment. Magistrate Coetzee sees through this. Perhaps it is because of the Magistrate's affection towards women of colour that he spends time with in Bluey Jay, or even his general discontent towards the government and its attitude towards race relations. In any case, Coetzee sees Tandia in the exact same way as she describes herself in the above quoted section, as a child of the new South Africa (176). Coetzee is pivotal in Tandia's

education of the society in which she exists because of the conversation between himself and the various people tasked with convincing Professor Ryder, a Law Professor, to allow Tandia to be included in an all-white Law course. During this conversation a mildly inebriated Coetzee goes on an impassioned speech about the state of the country, and more specifically the position of the Afrikaner people within it (170-177). He declares a long list of nationalities and how they have either come to hate each other or been encouraged to hate each other, all so the “white administration, people like me, we can control and direct the hate” (170). Tandia’s reaction to this discussion is one of sudden realisation. She now understands her own hatred better:

Tandia was exhilarated by the conversation. She had never heard anything like it. Never heard the position of the white man and, in particular, the Boer put so perfectly. For the first time in her life she could see where she fitted. [...] She could now feel the hate she knew she carried inside her heart grow sharper. It had a point. A direction. Old Coetzee had explained to her what a powerful weapon it could become. (173)

Because of Coetzee’s involvement in Tandia’s education, he feels somewhat responsible for her, and this is where the fatherly role comes into play. While it is understood that he is not actually responsible for her in any way, after he hears Mama Tequila declare herself and other people like her, coloured people, as the “only real South [Africans]” (176) as they are the result of the “hate and the fear and the greed” (176), he comes to understand and agree with her. As a frequent exploiter of women of colour for his own gratification adding to what can be argued is racial guilt, it is feasible that he feels it is in his power to help Tandia, a “true child of South Africa” (176), become what the country needs going forward: a weapon made up of all of the parts that make up the whole, one that combines all of the best aspects of beauty and intelligence, and a woman from within the demographic he so frequently takes advantage of. She can be the weapon to fight the oppression of a white government determined to keep all of the people of South Africa separated, and therefore unable to appreciate exactly who Tandia is, what she represents and just how crucial people like her will be going forward in order to fix the many wrongs that people of colour have been subjected to in the past and continue to be subjected to. Tandia comes to appreciate and even admire Coetzee, and closer to his death, when he is subjected to house arrest on his farm, they become somewhat closer, developing an almost familial relationship. Tandia’s past ensures that even if she realised what sort of relationship was developing, she would still be unable to fully relinquish herself to it. It becomes a relationship of mutual respect, with Coetzee admiring Tandia and the future he hopes she can bring to the country and Tandia

remembering how much he was able to help her to get onto this path of being a lawyer as a coloured woman under apartheid in South Africa, and what it means that he, as a member of the hegemonic group of white Afrikaner men, was able to actively defy the societal expectations placed upon him in order to attempt to see justice done in South Africa.

As role models are the focal point of this chapter, it is relevant especially to Tandia to discuss her main role model, and for her that would be Mama Tequila, the owner of the Blue Jay brothel. The relationship between the two women is never one of affection. Mama Tequila is too jaded to feel comfortable getting close to Tandia emotionally, although she does feel responsible for her. More of this relationship is explored in Chapter Three. Suffice to say that Mama Tequila is definitely a role model for Tandia in many ways. They are both mixed-race or “coloured” as Mama Tequila terms it, they are women and they have been used and abused by men of multiple races. Mama Tequila not only survived, she has learnt how to use her looks, her skills, and her femininity as a weapon to ensure she continues to survive. She aims to pass these lessons along to Tandia in the hope that the younger woman survives long enough to achieve her goals. Mama Tequila is important to Tandia’s development because she is the only character until Peekay to accept her for what she is and demand more from her until she is forced to grow to accommodate those demands. Patel treated her as an oddity and later as a maid, Mambo adores her but understands that she does not truly see him as a parental figure and so keeps the appropriate distance, Coetzee never sees himself as a father to her at all but holds a sense of fatherly affection towards her. Only Mama Tequila truly takes on the parenting responsibilities for Tandia.

Chapter Two Conclusion

With fathers and father-figures being so vital in the formation of identities, the development of the three protagonists into successful adults proves Broderick's (1977) hypothesis that a positive non-biological father-figure is more successful for identity development in children than an abusive biological father. For all of their flaws and weaknesses, by their novels' conclusions, they have become whole adults with complex inner lives and (for the most part) have challenged themselves and succeeded in becoming more stable as a result. The three protagonists can be compared to a character like Jannie Geldenhys, whose abusive father lived at least into his adolescence, who fails to develop successfully and move past his flaws and weaknesses. The three protagonists each find individuals on whom they are able to learn from and develop either masculine identities or expectations of masculinity from. What this proves is that biological fathers, while idealised in terms of childhood development, can be successfully substituted and still allow the child to develop in a healthy manner. In fact, within the confines of Courtenay's novels, each of the three protagonists learns from their respective father figures how to interact with their own gender identities and masculinities and how to approach the masculinities encountered within the confines of their societies. While each protagonist also finds more than one father-figure to relate to throughout their stories, what this results in is further and more varied lessons on the world and society, which ultimately makes them stronger and more well-rounded characters. What this research also proves is that fathers and father-figures need not necessarily be concrete, even in reality. What is meant by this is that, even individuals who happen to have and know their biological fathers can still benefit from the influence of another man who takes on a similar role to a father, learning appropriate lessons about the world and themselves in the process.

Chapter Three: Masculinities within Physical Spaces and How They Function and Develop

This chapter will focus on physical spaces within the novel inside which the characters find that they develop their sense of self identity. The setting for Courtenay's novels is apartheid South Africa, where the spaces within the narrative are predominantly white, male, Christian and/or Afrikaner and therefore exclusionary of any whom did not fit under these specific headings. As almost any describable space could be an example, the three that will be focussed on in the context of the novels are the boxing ring and gym, the mines, and the school or site of learning, as these serve as sites of most of the personal growth each of the three protagonists encounter in their respective journeys.

Physical spaces are important when it comes to shaping masculinities, both within the context of the novels and reality. Certain spaces invite certain groups and exclude others, therefore the ethos of those spaces is formed directly from a shared characteristic. There are examples of this everywhere, from sports teams to night clubs, political movements to social ones, friend groups to social networks pages and fan sites. Human beings crave the feeling of belonging, and homogenous spaces fulfil that. Because of this desire for homogenous spaces, when spaces are created they tend to encourage a specific ethos that then becomes shared by many members of that space, and new members quickly learn that to be accepted in their new environment, they need to conform to what is expected of a member. Admittedly in recent years entirely homogenous spaces are increasingly hard to come by, but the concept of such institutions remain relatively intact. Within physical locations, certain systems will become mandatory, or else those within those locations risk being socially excluded due to their difference. What this chapter will focus on is some of these physical locations within the novels and specifically how these locations affect the masculinities formed within and perpetuated by the locations themselves. These masculinities can then be compared and/or contrasted to the masculinities of the relevant characters as portrayed by Courtenay to comment on their effect on the characters themselves and their sense of identity informed by the presence of said masculinities.

The first space, the boxing ring and gym, are both sites of the most extreme masculinity; violent, visceral and often toxic but also calculated, strategic and emotional. Boxing is an integral part of both *The Power of One* and *Tandia*, as most of the life lessons Peekay learns are as a result of his boxing experiences. This section will primarily focus on Peekay and his experiences.

The second space is the mine. Mines are historically male spaces; owned, operated and worked by men, with research having been dedicated to studying mining cultures and the men who work there (Moodie and Ndatshe, 1994; Cuvelier, 2014; Meredith, 2007). Both Tom and Peekay work in copper mines during *Whitethorn* and *Power* respectively, so this section will deal with their experiences and growth.

The third space is the space of learning. Normally in the lives of children, the school environment would be the main focus of such a section. However, in these novels, the most crucial education Peekay, Tom, and Tandia receive respectively does not occur in a school setting. Primarily, the focus will be on Tom's early life in the orphanage in *Whitethorn*, and Tandia's experience of living in Bluey Jay, the brothel in *Tandia*. As Peekay is the primary focus within the section on the boxing ring and gym, that section will also cover his space of learning. This dissertation will observe how Tom and Tandia develop their concept of masculinity through the lessons they learn in their respective environments.

The Boxing Ring and the Boxing Gym: The Space of Male Bonding and Emotional Freedom

The boxing ring and the boxing gym are two sites featured extensively in both *Power* and *Tandia*. Both Tandia and Peekay experience the boxing environment; Peekay through participating and Tandia through observing. It is useful to use narrative spaces in order to better explore spaces in the real world.

The boxing ring in the real world is a physical site of extreme masculinity. Its purpose is to contain severe physical violence usually between two men. David Scott in his book, *The Art and Aesthetics of Boxing* (2008) briefly describes the space of the boxing ring as “one of the most alluring and perturbing spaces in modern civilization” (37) because of the effect it has on both those who have experience in the sport and the casual observer:

[On] its raised platforms, with its dazzling white or (more recently) blue canvas and enclosing ropes, the ring provides a focus for the gaze and a framework for the excitement to come that is probably unmatched in any other sport or entertainment. (37-38)

For the boxer, the ring is a “theatre of potential pain, exhaustion, and danger, while at the same time it offers the possibility of victory and correspondingly (and in varying degrees) fame and fortune” (38).

Scott goes on to explain that to the audience, the boxing ring is also a theatre of sorts. Rather than being a visceral space as it is for the boxer, it is rather one that is more recognisable as theatrical to the average person. By observing Scott’s further comments, it is possible to notice more similarities, such as the pageantry aspect of both boxing and the theatre. He describes boxing as:

a contest in which either combatant may have invested in him monetary, ethnic, national, cultural, or other symbolic values, yet in which at the same time allegiances may change as a function of the match’s progression. The reigning champion may give way to the underdog or the outsider usurp a championship crown. (38)

Much like modern reality television, various elements of a boxing match are difficult to predict. All of the money, all of the training, can be undone by bad luck or happenstance. This is part of the allure of boxing, both for participants and for spectators.

Another aspect of the ring that makes it a site of fascination is its shape. Scott describes how the shape of the boxing ring enacts a paradox of space:

[It] is both a place of order and of potentially chaotic action. Its geometric shape, ropes, canvas surface, and raised position make it out as a highly visible and regulated space, but the action that will take place in it will describe parabolas of movement, shifting of stance, chaotic flurries of action, and a denouement that may be as devastating as it is unforeseeable. Scott, 38

This dual purpose of the ring, that of being “controlling on one hand, releasing in the other [...] creates the special tension and excitement that is inseparable from the boxing experience” (38). Control, discipline, and force are all necessary to complete this space and participate effectively in the sport enacted within it. It is an emotional space, in a way that appears almost ironic. A place that emphasises the worst type of hegemonic masculinity (that of violence and aggression with the intent of causing another person harm) is also a site of introspection and emotional release.

An account of this very situation from a more recent source is Thomas McBee’s (2016) article, “Why Men Fight: An Empirical Investigation of the Extremes of Masculinity”. This provides an account of his time training to compete in a charity boxing match. McBee’s situation is particularly poignant because he is a transgender man who chooses not to disclose his past to his fellow boxers and trainers. His reason to become a boxer stems from “a mosaic of horrors, snapshots of unresolved rage and loneliness that boxing, I hoped, could deliver me from” (McBee, 2016). He is using boxing as an adult to rediscover some aspect of masculinity he feels he lacks and to chase away the feelings of powerlessness and loneliness he continues to experience.

McBee begins to appreciate the camaraderie, the almost familial bonding aspect that boxing has on its participants. Being transgender is something that makes him reluctant to come out to the other boxers and the trainers. However, he finds that this space of the boxing gym, his being a transgender person does not seem such a heavy secret:

In this boxing gym, in this world of men willing to be hit again and again in the face for hours and then hug, men speak openly and often about not being able to sleep the night before a fight, about their brother’s arrest or when they were fat in high school. Everybody has a story. Like mine, it’s rarely visible from the outside. (McBee, 2016)

Partly this reasoning involves masculinity: he feels as if he will be seen as somehow less of a man. This proves to be baseless. His trainer finds him on Instagram where McBee has “trans” in his bio. The trainer decides that there must be some reason he has chosen not to disclose

this to the other men and so only goes so far as to like a few of McBee's posts concerning transgender issues or LGBT issues to quietly show his support of him and his life.

McBee's experiences of the inclusivity of the boxing gym provide some useful insights into the masculine environment and its effect on its inhabitants. This is an extremely masculine space; traditionally women are banned from most boxing gyms to prevent the men from becoming distracted (Woodward, 2004, 4). Today there are many inclusive boxing gyms as gender discrimination is now considered less acceptable, but the traditional image of sports tends to persevere. However, McBee's experience appears to be one of one such male-only gym. He observes how the environment is one of duality: on one hand, extreme violence, "willing to be hit again and again in the face for hours" (2016), and of surprising emotional and mental honesty, "men speak openly and often about not being able to sleep the night before a fight, about their brother's arrest or when they were fat in high school" (2016). This is what draws him in.

McBee decides to speak to a professor of sociology about this phenomenon and receives the answer that "the shadow of violence is precisely what allows for a kind of fraternal love" (McBee, 2016). Scott (2008) provides insight: "the boxing ring constitutes a psychological as well as a physical space in which mental tensions can be reflected on or resolved through the use of the ropes, corner posts, or other strategic points" (40). The space itself allows for the breaking down of walls, forces introspection, and provides a space where the conflict and issues uncovered can be explored safely. Scott goes on to examine the work of novelist Joyce Carol Oates, looking at her theories for why the boxing ring functions as it does:

[For] Oates the boxing ring is a space of encounter with the self in which the boxer meets a dream (or nightmare) distortion of himself in which his weaknesses become the strengths of the other. In this way, the ring, in its geometrical symmetry with its matched opponents, becomes a mirror-like structure in which [...] the boxer is trapped in a confrontation of self and other that can only be resolved by extreme violence. The shattering of the glass, the dispelling of the shadow-self, comes as the knockout blow, temporarily restoring the split consciousness to one as opposed to two centres, as one figure's phallic verticality triumphs over the horizontality of the other. (Scott, 2008, 41-42)

As pointed out by Minnes (2018) in his article "Sorting Out Differences: New Masculinity vs Old Masculinity in Boxing", boxing may be a sport that is "afforded a hegemonic masculinity which seeks to subordinate other masculinities" (Minnes, 2018), and taking part in the sport

and winning provides the necessary increase in standing, but the loser is not made to seem less masculine as a result of that loss. Rather, as Minnes goes on to say, “Stepping up to the challenge shows strength of character regardless of outcome” (2018). This acceptance of loss as a part of the masculine process of the sport is important, especially in a sport like boxing with its extreme physical violence. Such extreme violence necessarily goes hand in hand with extreme emotions. If the loser of the match was then further humiliated by having his masculinity threatened, the sanctity of the space would be destroyed. Part of the mystique is the ability to allow a loser the dignity to get back up and celebrate his opponent’s win, something that very rarely occurs in sport, even non-contact sport. It is because of this wholehearted acceptance of loss as part of the process and not an aspect to be ashamed of that those reactions are possible. According to Oates, the boxer has not lost against another boxer but against himself; he was not able to defeat his own weaknesses and insecurities this time. Perhaps next time he will.

Applying this ideological framework to Courtenay’s novels, specifically to Peekay’s journey in *Power* and *Tandia*, there are many comparisons that function very successfully. Firstly, Peekay becomes enamoured of boxing when he meets Hoppie Groenewald on the train to Barberton as a young boy. Peekay, having just escaped an environment of horrendous bullying, is now provided with someone who inspires him with tales of boxing being able to allow the small to defeat the big:

Boxing is the greatest sport in the world [...] even greater than rugby [...]. The art of self-defense is the greatest art of all and boxing is the greatest art of self-defense. Take me, a natural welterweight, there isn’t any man I have to be afraid of, not even a big animal like a front-row forward. I’m fast and I can hit hard and in a street fight a little bloke like me can take on any gorilla. (Courtenay, 2006[1989], 80)

While this explanation does ignore the unfortunate ability of the sport of boxing to attract toxic forms of masculinity, at this stage in the novel Hoppie is trying to give Peekay something to focus on apart from his own misery and fear and a goal to strive towards, not burden the boy with stories of all the ways boxing is problematic. Hoppie puts Peekay in boxing gloves that are far too big for him, and tells him that he needs to fear no man if he uses them well (81). While it is problematic that this ideology also emphasises a ‘might is right’ mentality, it becomes clear throughout the novel and due to Peekay’s mantra that, to Peekay, boxing isn’t necessarily about the fighting, but about the discipline, the contest, and the victory against the odds. Peekay remarks that “The gloves felt like old friends, big yes,

and very clumsy but not strangers” (81). He even falls asleep wearing them, creating one of the most beautifully poignant moments in the novels:

The last thing I remembered before falling asleep again was the deep, comforting feeling of my hands in the boxing gloves. “The equalisers”, Hoppie had called them. Peekay had found his equalisers. (84)

This refers to both the boxing gloves on his hands and to Hoppie, Peekay’s new friend. Up to this stage in the story, Peekay has never had any real friends outside of Dum, Dee, and Nanny, and even then he often felt alone due to their being black and therefore having their status as servants keeping him separate from them. Now, he has a real (white) friend in the form of Hoppie. His friends are his equalisers in the novels; proof that he isn’t hated by the world as the boys at school had tried to make him believe. In fact, they are his weapons to use against the world, a theme that continues to be used throughout both *Power* and *Tandia*. This scene is beautiful in that it features Peekay’s realisation that he isn’t completely alone, and the peace that it brings to the small boy is as empowering for him as it is heart-breaking for the reader.

From Hoppie some of the attitude of boxers towards masculinity described by McBee can be observed. When Peekay goes from laughing at Hoppie’s antics to sobbing, Hoppie doesn’t tell him to toughen up or berate the small boy; he pulls Peekay onto his lap and holds him and validates Peekay’s tears: “Sometimes you fight better when you’ve had a good cry. Now tell old Hoppie what’s the matter” (82). This displays a level of kindness and empathy that Peekay had not experienced from a white person, let alone a man. Even in terms of modern ideas of masculinity, a man who works as a train conductor and boxes professionally would not normally be associated with this level of empathy. Hoppie recognises that Peekay has already had to fight in ways most men never have to, especially when he witnesses Peekay’s shame at having his circumcised penis exposed (as this exposes him as British), something which up until now has been a source of constant bullying, ridicule, and violence. With Hoppie being an Afrikaner, Peekay expects the same reaction and steels himself for the loss of his new and only friend. However, Hoppie observes Peekay’s shame and, once again, instead of shaming him or berating or belittling him, Hoppie builds him up by bringing up a past boxing match against a British boxer in which Hoppie lost as proof that being British does not make you weak or less worthy of respect. Peekay brings up his fear, which Hoppie also validates: “It’s good to be a little frightened. It’s good to respect your opponent. It keeps you sharp. In the fight game, the head rules the heart. But in the end the heart is the boss”

(88). In each and every instance, Hoppie recognises Peekay's fear, shame and doubt and assuages them, teaching him that fear is not a negative emotion, shame is unwarranted and doubts can be beaten. This behaviour is much the same as described by McBee in his experiences of the masculinity of the boxing gym. The boxers use this space to unravel the things that hurt them, scare them, and make them doubt and keep them awake at night, and give them both a space and a forum in which to work through these issues. True, Peekay is unable at this stage to put these into practice, insofar as the actual physicality of the sport is concerned. However, because of Hoppie he is able to begin the process of belonging, of feeling that same feeling of camaraderie and learning to work through his fears and doubts before he even steps foot in the ring.

There are many more examples of lessons Peekay learns through boxing, but with strict regard to the space of the boxing ring and the boxing gym, there are five locations to discuss. First, the gyms Peekay trains in span three continents, being Barberton prison gym in South Africa, the Prince of Wales school gym, Solly Goldman's gym in Johannesburg, Dutch Holland's gym in England and in the impromptu training ground in the Rocky Mountains of the USA. Each has a very different environment, both because of the inhabitants and because of Peekay's age and maturity when he enters them.

First, Barberton prison gym is where Peekay starts his training. Lieutenant Smit initially considers him too young and far too small to begin training, but agrees to allow him to strengthen his body until he is old enough to begin proper training. Peekay is extremely impatient, but Doc tells him to be patient as boxing appears to be similar to music in that "you must first do the exercises, always first the exercises. If you do the exercises goot then you have the foundations" (257). Peekay learns to appreciate the basics as a way to make himself strong to the limit of what he is capable of at that time. He is desperate for Smit's praise, as it is hard to come by and therefore heartening and valuable to the small boy when it does occur. Once Geel Piet, one of the inmates of the prison and a seasoned boxing coach in his own right, becomes involved in Peekay's training, he is taken under the small coloured prisoner's wing. The Geel Piet teaches Peekay the basics of boxing, including the most essential piece of information: "If a man can't hit you, he can't hurt you" (267).

Concurrently, Peekay learns just how much power his boxing ability gives him. He discovers that the Afrikaner children that he trains with provide him a sort of honorary 'boere status', marking him as recognised as simultaneously a "rooinek" (an Englishman), and a

“Boer” (an Afrikaner). Peekay explains that the prison children, all Afrikaner boys, find it acceptable to be beaten by him in fights, both inside the prison and in school, because “I was a sort of honorary Boer who spoke the *taal* and was also one of them” (274). Snotnose, the first Boer boy Peekay ever boxes against, even acknowledges Peekay as a “Boer Rooinek” (271), setting Peekay apart from the other British boys, more similar to the Afrikaner boys. Peekay is again in a position in which he is simultaneously within and excluded from the groups with the most social power. This theme of simultaneous inclusion and exclusion recurs throughout the story (and the other novels), but this is one of the earliest examples, and it stems directly from his boxing experiences and the camaraderie instilled from the boxing gym environment in the boxing children, which includes Peekay, despite his fundamental differences. It is Peekay’s boxing ability that allows him to become an undisputed leader of a large group of children, an experience that is alien to him after his experiences of victimhood earlier in life. With physicality being a hallmark of hegemonic masculinity, from these sections it is clear that Peekay is utilising this trait to his advantage. All of this occurs because of the core environment of the boxing gym at Barberton prison. A moment of import to Peekay’s character development occurs here too in terms of awareness of racial inequality. After various victories by the Barberton boxers, Smit decides they need to have proper photos taken. When Smit asks Geel Piet to join the photo, most of the other boxers step out and refuse to be a part of it. This strikes Peekay deeply: “The photograph captured the exact moment when I understood with conviction that racism is a primary force of evil designed to destroy good men” (328). Even though the majority of the boxers are considered good people by Peekay, he can see how racism twists their minds and makes them behave in a manner that he would consider wrong or evil. Therefore, it is racism that is evil as it corrupts anything it touches, including good men. This is a huge realisation for an eleven-year-old boy to make, but it is here in Barberton that he reaches this realisation and starts his journey towards being someone who helps black people fight the apartheid system.

Many of Peekay’s Barberton experiences are more of the same. They are his first experiences with the boxing space in many respects and form a basis for what will come later in other environments, both boxing and otherwise.

The second gym is the Prince of Wales school gym. This site is not so much one of personal growth, as Peekay is easily the most experienced boxer and the best at his school as soon as he arrives, and more one of Peekay learning to be a leader, both because of the continued exponential growth of the legend of the Tadpole Angel and Peekay almost single-

handedly reviving the school's defunct boxing programme. This is also where Peekay comes to realise his own techniques for self-protection:

In truth, my reluctance to share my feelings was born out of my fear as a small child when I had been the only Rooinek in the foreign land of Afrikanerdom. I had survived by passing as unnoticed as possible, by anticipating the next move against me, by being prepared when the shit hit the fan to take it in my stride, pretending not to be hurt or humiliated. I had learned early that silence is better than sycophancy, that silence breeds guilt in other people. That it is fun to persecute a pig because it squeals, no fun at all to beat an animal which does not cry out. I had long since built the walls around my ego which only the most persistent person would ever manage to climb. (427-428)

It is through Peekay's relationship with Hymie that he is able to achieve this level of introspection. Peekay is not in an environment where he is able to develop a relationship with other boxers who provide him a space to safely deal with these problems. He now has a reputation as a hero, the beginnings of a legend. Now, more than ever, he cannot afford to show weakness, and even though he is surrounded by friends, he is alone once again. He does not even have the Afrikaner boys of Barberton. In terms of McBee's experiences of the boxing gym as a site of comradeship and emotional co-dependence, Peekay does not have that here. It can even be argued he didn't have that at Barberton, being a British boy among Afrikaners and only being accepted because he was one of them as a boxer, even though he was still designated as a "rooinek" by the others. He has become isolated by his own masculinity, unable to break through the hegemony he is basing his identity on and against. This is both compounded and somehow alleviated by the black audience at his boxing matches. Their enthusiasm and belief in him provide him with the strength to keep fighting, even as the pressure to keep winning crushes his psyche behind the mask he has built.

Peekay begins to feel as if his current situation is holding him back. Rather than deal with his inner turmoil, with Hymie's help he tracks down Solly Goldman, a legendary boxing coach, and manages to begin training at his gym to improve his abilities. Solly's gym is a new experience for Peekay as it is run "colour blind, the way gyms are run the world over" (504). The boxing ring is one of the only places in South Africa where a white man and black man are truly equal as "to boxing men black isn't black in the ring" (505), lending another facet to the earlier description of boxing gloves being "equalisers".

Under Solly Goldman, Peekay not only improves as a boxer, but he also is able to fight against black opponents, and this is how he meets Gideon Mandoma, the son of Peekay's childhood nanny. Through Gideon, Peekay finally has someone with whom he can

create that boxer's bond. Even though he and Gideon are kept separate by Gideon's manager, Mr. Nguni, when they do get to meet, Gideon serves to help Peekay heal, especially in *Tandia*. Peekay's match with Gideon has another effect: throughout Peekay's time at Barberton he has experienced what is described as recognition that black people have an ability to know events as they occur, even thousands of kilometres away. After Peekay's fight with Gideon and subsequent declaration of brotherhood, Peekay has a vision of Doc's death and knows for certain that it has come to pass. Peekay gains Gideon and loses Doc. Doc has, up until now, been Peekay's main source of emotional support, the only person to whom Peekay feels he can bare his soul. There is a sense of dramatic irony with him being gone in the same moment that Peekay finds his way to Gideon Mandoma, who can finally give Peekay the camaraderie of the boxing ring. The lack of this camaraderie has slowly been eating into Peekay's soul and will take many years and many more experiences to fully heal. That Peekay is able to connect to an ability of the African people that is just as mythologised as the legend of the Tadpole Angel, but only after Gideon comes into his life and by beating Gideon, he proves himself the true *Inshobishobi Ingelosi*. In this way, the abilities of the boxing ring and gym to unite and heal are expanded, crossing over into issues of race and impacting African mythology itself.

From Solly's gym, Peekay moves to England, to the gym of Dutch Holland. Here Peekay meets many boxers, and the gym environment finally gives him the same sort of experience that McBee describes, in particular through the character of Togger Brown, a young Irish boxer who happens to have a mixed-race stripper sister. They bond through Peekay treating his sister like an actual human being and not an exotic oddity to be ogled, like the other British men do. At their first meeting, Peekay opens up to Togger about his fears, completing exposing the fragility of his own masculinity to the Irish boxer. Togger's openness, honesty, and reliability make him trustworthy to Peekay. As it becomes evident in the text through McBee's observations, it is the gym environment itself that promotes this level of male bonding. It is significant that Peekay struggles to open up to Hymie, by now his best friend of many years, but is comfortable opening up to Togger on their first day of meeting. It is the link that comes from a shared experience of being a boxer, fighting in the ring and training in the gym that allows Peekay to feel comfortable enough to open up as he does to Togger. Through Togger we also get to witness Peekay behave like a stereotypical young man; the discussions between Togger and Peekay inevitably turn to women, and both men sexualise the women they discuss in a manner which seems foreign to what the reader

has come to expect from Peekay. Peekay also participates in a bar fight, helping Togger protect the bouncer at the club his sister works at from drunk attackers. As a result of the fight, Peekay breaks his nose for the first time and Carmen, Togger's sister, offers to take him home so that he can lose his virginity.

The other experiences of Dutch's gym and the fights Peekay participates in serve to further bolster Peekay's image as a fighter; a fighter that refuses to lose. The apparent dichotomy between Peekay as a law student at Oxford versus being a professional boxer is one that perplexes E.W., Peekay's Law tutor, as he sees boxing as "a sport which was known to damage the brain", which he "found both repulsive and primitive" (Courtenay, 1992, 300), in much the same way as Doc was once confused by Peekay's passion for the sport. Peekay has learned to block out any inner voices that would doubt him or detract from his successes, choosing to only focus on the voices in his own mind that tell him to go forward and win. While he had learned to use these voices before, it is through Dutch Holland's gym and the sparring matches and time spent with Togger that cements this ability in Peekay's psyche as a way to deal with his fears and doubts.

The final gym that Peekay experiences is one he creates himself in the Rocky Mountains of the USA when Peekay travels there to participate in the World Championship fight against Jake "Spoonbill" Jackson. It is an impromptu gym, made up of camping equipment, Peekay, Togger, Peppy Smith, a black American boxer who has a similar fighting style to Jackson, Mrs Smith, Peppy's mother who serves as the cook for the men, and Daddy Kockle, a black boxing manager who has witnessed several of Jackson's fights. Peekay uses this gym environment for several things. First and foremost is learning how best to fight against Jackson, through sparring with Peppy and talking to Daddy Kockle, and having Daddy Kockle observe the sparring and offer advice and pointers. Second, the training allows Peekay to acclimatise before the fight, as the higher altitude gets Peekay used to fighting with less oxygen, a technique used by athletes even today. Third, the mountains give Peekay opportunities to be alone, hiking away from his group both as part of his training and to enter the Night Country, the mystical place inside his own mind first introduced to him as a small boy by Inkosi-Inkosikazi. The combination of the mountains reminding him of the time spent with Doc exploring the mountains of Barberton, and the solitude allowing him space to enter the Night Country and discuss his problems with Inkosi-Inkosikazi, now represented by his own subconscious, allows Peekay to mentally and emotionally prepare for the fight, even as Peppy, Togger and Daddy Kockle help him physically prepare. These glimpses into his

mental and emotional preparation are emphasised because Peekay is reaching a climax to his story: the World Welterweight Championship, the match he has been preparing for his entire life, since he first met Hoppie Groenewald on that train to Barberton. It is a culmination of his life's work, requiring more strenuous mental and emotional preparation than ever before. It makes sense why Togger was brought over from England to help him train and not someone else, like Gideon. As much as Peekay considers Gideon a brother and ally, Gideon's blackness prevents him from being able to relate to Peekay's inner turmoil, simply because Gideon's life circumstances have been so very different from Peekay's own. In this way, Peekay has never been able to get the same level of understanding from Gideon that he has had from Togger, and so he brings Togger both to help the Irish boxer train, and because Togger grounds him in the way he needs to be ready for his fight. Even Hymie is not able to do the same for him. In addition, Gideon's commitments to the ANC and the difficulty of leaving South Africa due to the rampant apartheid laws means that it is far easier to bring along Togger than it would be to convince Gideon to come with.

The last example is Peekay's rematch with Jackson in South Africa and his subsequent title defence against Gideon. Both are extremely emotionally charged matches; Peekay loses his original match against Jackson by a single point, and after winning his rematch, loses his title to Gideon even as they knock each other out. However, while his original loss is devastating, his subsequent loss to Gideon is not. Peekay already achieved his goal of becoming the welterweight champion of the world. While he did intend to retire as the champion, he did not mind losing it to Gideon because if anyone was going to take over the mantle of World Champion from him, only Gideon would have been a suitable successor.

After losing to Jackson, Peekay's spirit is crushed. As he states in *Tandia*:

While Peekay held himself together in public, his camouflage intact, his defeat by Jake 'Spoonbill' Jackson was devastating for him. It ran so deep that he couldn't talk about it even to Hymie. The unthinkable had happened; he'd climbed the mountain, measured his spirit, allotting each step he took to the right amount of energy, never allowing himself to enjoy a win or even to savour a sense of triumph over an opponent. [...] Now he found that he'd been unsighted, that beyond the top stretched another peak; and he was completely spent. For Peekay, welterweight champion of the world wasn't a title, it was the meaning of his life, the very principle on which he'd based his entire personality. [...] From the age of six, when he'd felt the huge boxing gloves slip over his small hands, he had committed himself to the single principle that the individual can move mountains; that small can beat big; that hope and determination and singular purpose were the three powerful allies against all

the odds. And now he felt betrayed. He needed something else to win and he didn't know what it was. (484-485)

Peekay struggles through a severe depression. He isolates himself from his friends and his support system. He even reaches out to his hyper-religious mother, but once again finds her religious fervour too much to cope with. Not even meeting with Lieutenant Smit, his first boxing coach, serves to bring him out of his stupor.

Peekay eventually decides to go and visit Doc in his crystal cave, and while there he enters the Night Country once again. He enters a meditative state and while in this state he is attacked by a black mamba. At first he feels a surge of rage and hate towards the creature, but he is too weak from his journey to kill it before it manages to bite him, unless he is willing to throw himself from the cliff with it. In his panic, both Doc and Inkosi-Inkosikazi come to him and offer advice; both point out that the snake has used its venom on the cast around his hand, and if he is brave and willing to place its head on the ground and release it, it will most likely leave him be and head deeper into the cave after the roosting bats. After doing as they say and watching the snake disappear, Peekay realises something: "that both [Doc and Inkosi-Inkosikazi] had played a part in what had happened, that contained in him was an ambivalence: part Doc with his precise, reasoning European mind, and part the ancient black man of Africa with his powerful wizardry. He was the mind-child of both" (Courtenay, 1992, 540). Apart from being yet another example of the casual racism exhibited by the white characters of the time period, this realisation gives Peekay his answer to how he must go back and beat Jackson for the title: he has to confront his fear and the hatred that results from it. Unfortunately he cannot do so rationally, "with the head as he had taught himself to do, as Oxford had taught him to do, but with his heart" (Courtenay, 1992, 540). However, to do so he needs to first be able to recognise that feeling. He realises that he understands that fear creates hatred, and being able to defeat both in himself is "the power of one" (Courtenay, 1992, 540) that he needs to beat Jackson in the rematch.

With this information, as well as accepting that he is both white European and the result of an African heritage, Peekay is able to defeat Jackson and achieve his goal of becoming welterweight champion of the world.

The match against Jackson is one that focusses and unites all of the people watching, both the black supporters of the Tadpole Angel legend and the white supporters of the prized

white boxer. Courtenay provides a description of this unification at the close of the performance of Doc's "Concerto of the Great Southland":

For one moment, all of South Africa stood together united in the storm of love, both black and white drenched until no colour or creed or worthwhile difference existed. All, for a few moments, felt the possibility, the possibility of one land and one purpose and the perfect harmony of one people. (Courtenay, 1992, 574)

While the ability of sport to unify others is well documented, as stated earlier by David Scott the boxing ring also has the ability to draw the focus of the audience. So, while Peekay's South African status attracts the support of the white audience and his legendary status as *Inshobishobi Ineglosi* attracts the black audience, it is the structure of the boxing ring itself and the violent nature of the sport that holds their attention and forces their participation; however racially divided their society is, in this one moment they are united in a way that transcends skin colour. What is important in this scene is the internal battle Peekay is forced to go through in the ring and how this experience forces him to grow as a person. Once the fight begins, he is attacked by the voices of his mother and other people who doubt him and his ability, all of which block his mind from the fight and cause him to be severely hurt by Jackson. In particular, his mother's imagined words revert him to a state of fear from when he was a child, fighting to survive against the Judge and his Stormtroopers, his childhood bullies. It is only through Gideon's intervention that Peekay is able to enter the state when he confronted the black mamba and snap him out of his nightmare. Peekay is able to win the match, even after being hit constantly for multiple rounds with very little defence. Once again, it is one of Peekay's boxing allies who is able to help him break through his doubts, to pry Peekay loose of his own thoughts. While Togger has always been able to calm Peekay and bolster him emotionally, Gideon's no-nonsense attitude and anger are able to get through Peekay's mental and psychological block and break him free of it. It is significant that both men, the Irish Togger and Zulu Gideon, can reach Peekay in ways not Hymie or even Doc were able to, and it is because of their history as boxers, both in the ring as opponents and in the gym as training partners, that allows them the level of trust and access to Peekay that others simply can never have. That level of trust, that relationship of emotional and psychological support that Peekay desperately needs, is one he gets through these two characters. This is part of the reason why Peekay is happy to lose to Gideon later in the novel: Peekay is able to recognise that he has achieved his own goal and that his reasons for fighting are not sufficient when compared to Gideon's anymore.

Having explored the boxing ring and the boxing gym as sites of extreme violence and aggression, it is clear that they are also sites of emotional and psychological release. The two qualities seem as if they could not be combined in the same space, and yet they are, to great effect, to the point where some men seek out boxing as a way to both release the pent up aggression and to bond with other men on an emotional level in a way that hegemonic masculinity outside of the gym or ring often prevents them from doing. Courtenay's depiction of this through Peekay's journey is as poignant as it is complicated, and though there will always be exceptions, for the most part Peekay's story matches up with the accounts of Woodward, McBee, and Scott in the function and execution of the effect of the boxing ring and the boxing gym on its boxers and their masculinities.

The Copper Mines: Hyper Masculine Exploitation

In *The Power of One* and *Whitethorn*, the characters Tom and Peekay both spend some time working in copper mines in Northern Rhodesia (modern day Zimbabwe). Both characters decide to join the mines for the exact same reasons: to make enough money to afford to attend university in England and to rediscover themselves.

The desire to take a gap-year in order to mine is seen by all who know Peekay as breaking the “continuity of [his] life” (*Power*, 580), which has the potential to threaten or even sever the relationships forged with friends, family and acquaintances. Peekay’s link to his family and his friends is the core to the manner in which his own masculinity has been formed; as much, if not more so, than through his activities, ambition, and studies. Choosing to postpone these in favour of a far more masculinised activity (mining) is so out of character, it threatens to alienate those who care about him.

For example, Danie, the contact who helped Peekay establish the mining job and brother of Gert, explains that it is because his brother described Peekay as “a real man and [who] will one day be a world champion [boxer]” (585), that he agreed to help Peekay get settled at the mine. It is Peekay’s links to his friends that allow him to continue forward, and it is his prowess as a boxer that gains him respect, even from a hardened veteran of the mining industry. The irony of the situation is that Peekay has gone to the mines to escape the expectations that others have of his life but he is forced to rely on the connections of those very same people to help him escape. Another example is his role as the “Tadpole Angel” (581) and the legend surrounding both it and his reputation as a boxer; once again, the only reason he even received the job is because of this very reputation.

It also provides him with a masculinised ideal: that the tough mining conditions would allow him to “build up [his] body to the size of a welterweight” (581). Being in a different hypermasculine environment than the boxing ring allows Peekay to experience a different masculinity; one that was less about being fast and agile and more about being strong and stubborn. From this we can establish that he is attempting to distance himself from who he was before in an extremely masculine way, one that is out of line with how his character has been perceived by other characters up to this point. Only the reader has observed his inner turmoil, and that this journey is as a result of him punishing himself for his perceived failures; his fear and anxiety, constantly feeling as if he is hiding who he really is behind a mask of confidence, a concept completely foreign to the person he wants to be.

Like Peekay, Tom enters the mines as a way to “decide who the hell Tom Fitzsaxby really [is]” (493). The mines are a “purely physical environment” (493) entirely devoid of the higher class sophistication of “Pirrou’s people” (493), or the Johannesburg upper-class. The mines allow Tom to discover his own masculinity outside of the influences of what is acceptable and correct within his current social group, that of the socialites of Johannesburg. Ironically, all he is doing is trading one type of masculinity, that of the social gentleman Pirrou groomed him to be, for a rougher, more physical (and therefore in his eyes and those of his friends, a more ‘primal’ or primitive) type. It is significant to note that even within Tom’s internal monologue, he describes his decision to become a miner as follows: “To voluntarily sign up as a miner working underground using high explosives wasn’t exactly a sign of maturity” (494-495). This moment of insight serves to prove that Tom is fully aware that this dramatic shift of lifestyle is made in order to expand his concept of his own masculinity.

The job that both Peekay and Tom are drafted to perform is as a “grizzly man” (581) or someone who works with explosives, blowing up blockages of rock to allow it to flow down the shaft and continue production. Grizzly work is described as being extremely dangerous and can only be performed by men under twenty-one years of age, as any one older doesn’t have the reaction time necessary to survive (584). As Danie gleefully remarks, “Only young guys are fast enough or [...] mad enough to do it!” (584). Grizzly work is not simply a matter of initiating a young white mine worker or testing him; these conditions are considered illegal by the “miner’s union on the Rand” (584) in South Africa, but in Northern Rhodesia “they don’t care [...]. As long as they get the muck out they happy” (584). Peekay and Tom find themselves in an environment where their value is judged on the amount they can produce, regardless of their own safety or that of the men working under them, to the point where their job is made almost impossible to perform safely.

While working in the mines, they are both placed in charge of blasting squads and leading groups of black miners to destroy blockages of rubble before they slow production too heavily. The tremendous stress of the job causes them both to react differently: Peekay rises to the challenge, working himself harder and harder, to the point where he gains notoriety for being considered lucky by the black miners. This results in an accident in which he is almost killed. Tom, however, shows relief for his call-up papers to the army being delivered, rescuing him from a further three months of difficult and dangerous mine work;

work which Peekay readily and gladly (and stupidly, as his fatigue results in a serious accident) accepts.

Moodie and Ndatshe's book, *Going for Gold: Men, Mines and Migration* (1994) explores mining in a South African setting, while expanding occasionally with case examples from other southern African countries. It details the different types of masculinities developed and exhibited by mine workers, such as the split or "bifurcated identity" (12) acquired through the separate masculinities performed at home and the masculinities performed while at the mine. There is evidence of this in both novels, through Peekay's and Tom's desire to discover more about their masculinities in the mines; their 'home' identities and their mining identities are separated by various degrees. Further, in *Whitethorn*, Tom remarks that "you never asked a man anything about his past and you accepted what he was prepared to volunteer about himself" (Courtenay, 2007, 497). The person a miner is outside of the mine and the one he appears to be inside the mine are very clearly differentiated. Outside of the mine, men are expected to be fathers, husbands, and providers for their families and communities. Inside of the mine, however, the power drastically shifts in favour of those who have been working there longer and the white administration and security. The masculinities exhibited and expected of men outside the mine cannot function on the inside in the same ways. There is a hierarchy in both, but on the outside this hierarchy is based on a combination of factors including age, rank, and wealth. On the inside, only the time spent in the mine determines your place in the hierarchy.

In Moodie and Ndatshe's book, the issue of communication is examined, with miners being forced to learn "fanakalo" (13), a "pidgin language" (13) amalgamation of their home languages and coloniser languages in order to communicate with other miners and white supervisors. In both novels, Peekay and Tom describe their experiences of observing the black mine workers being forced to learn "Kiswahili, the *lingua franca* of the mines" (*Whitethorn*, 496), because, as Peekay describes, "A work gang often contained black miners from half a dozen different tribes, each with a separate language [...]. [They] were taught this mine language so that they could take instruction from their white bosses and, in many cases, talk to each other" (*Power*, 582). Not only is their home language stripped from the miners but it is then bastardised in order to create something that is used to further subjugate them.

Cuvelier's article, "Work and Masculinity in Katanga's Artisanal Mines" (2014) explores many of the same issues as Moodie and Ndatshe, but more specifically how mining

identities are formed. Miners will develop their own style of masculinity, but usually it is one that will be shared among all of the men working in the mine (7). In both novels this can be seen from the outset as a result of the basic training that the trainees experience from the schools they attend. The trainees are worked hard by the instructors, but it is the manner of the training that is described by both Peekay and Tom that is interesting in this regard. Both characters describe their training as involving the following:

The procedure in the School of Mines was to do every job that existed underground. That is, every job that an African did and every one that a white miner performed. Not only do it, but harder and faster and longer. (Courtenay, 2007 [2005], 504)

Peekay and Tom are expected to perform every task that is required in the mine, regardless of which racial group actually ends up performing this task. This allows the masculinity of the mine to become pervasive within the new group of trainees, displaying the masculinity expected of both the black and white miners within the mine during their instructional phase of training. They gain first-hand knowledge and experience of all the tasks and of the behaviour and attitude deemed acceptable by the administration in order to be a miner. This echoes Cuvelier's assertion that masculinity is developed and then shared throughout the social hierarchy of the mine.

Cuvelier's article differs from Moodie and Ndatshe's in that while *Going for Gold* is about masculinities formed in the mine, Cuvelier's article explores the type of individuals attracted to the mines, as sites of proving oneself 'a true man' through skill, courage and determination, as well as ability to generate money and support a family. Black mine workers are "harvested from the bush like wild tamma melons" (Courtenay, 2006 [1989], 583) from their rural homes to work in the mines to support their families due to widespread drought and subsequent famine, as well as locust plagues that had "destroyed their crops and the grazing for their cattle" (583). Their fear of the newness of everything, of the train or "the snake that runs on iron" (Courtenay, 2007 [2005], 496), or their terror at experiencing their own reflection in a mirror for the first time, is seen as humorous by the "initiated black miners as well as to many of the whites" (2006 [1989], 583). The experience gives the more experienced men the right, within the mine hierarchy, to be amused by the fearful reactions of the newcomers to situations they have grown accustomed to and were once no doubt just as frightened of. These men are specifically targeted by the mining companies deliberately to benefit from the precarity and suffering of both the men themselves and their families. In this

regard, the novels set up the dichotomy between the white protagonists and the black miners. Peekay and Tom are going to the mines by choice; the black miners have no choice if their families are to survive the drought and subsequent famine. Their desperation is blatantly exploited by the mining administration, an issue which neither novel attempts to address in any significant manner. The miners are far worse off than either of the protagonists, and both young men are understood to be allies of the African people, with Peekay holding great renown throughout South Africa and Tom's entire story being focussed around justice and the striving towards it, regardless of race, religion, or even sexual orientation. This makes their apparent apathy towards the situation of the black workers somewhat jarring. This reveals the flaw in Cuvelier's assertion of a 'mine masculinity', because invariably the white mine workers only experience the smallest effect on their masculinity. An example is Peekay's quickly-attained status as being a sort of lucky charm due to his absence of mistakes in his work, a reputation that causes his small group of workers to be drawn towards him as his presence transforms their group into a "juju, or mystically protected gang" (Courtenay, 2006 [1989], 604). Peekay does not complete his objectives in order to ensure his worker's safety; he does so for his own financial gain. Their beliefs and superstitions are not his concern, nor does he make them so; a stark contrast to his respect for the beliefs and superstitions of the Zulu people back home.

Neither Moodie and Ndatshe's book nor Cuvelier's article explicitly explores whiteness in a mining environment in any meaningful way, except to place white individuals as members of leadership positions. Therefore, it is less effective to place Courtenay's novels in context of these texts. However, Courtenay's novels do delve into the training and living conditions of the white miners, and while we never get to observe the training of the black miners in comparison, we do get to witness the cruelty and unfairness of the training Tom and Peekay experience, particularly Tom. Both characters are affected by their experiences in the mines in that they are forced to confront aspects of themselves that affect personal growth. Peekay is shown that he isn't invincible, and manages to achieve vengeance for the torment of his childhood against the leader of his childhood bullies, finally laying to rest the fear and anxiety that forced him to keep up the mask of confidence he has maintained since childhood. Tom is less affected, as he leaves the mines much earlier than Peekay. However, his training and licensing experience goes further to provide evidence of his leadership ability to inspire others, even under extreme pressure. The novels do mention aspects that crop up in Moodie and Ndatshe's, and Cuvelier's texts, such as the drinking culture and the bond

developed between those who regularly come into contact with each other, but these are minor asides to the main plot. The most blatant discrepancy between the academic texts and Courtenay's novels is the subject of each: the academic texts tend to deal almost exclusively with the experiences of the black miners, while Courtenay's focus is almost always on his protagonists, who are white. However, there is enough overlap for us to be able to extrapolate what is not explicitly stated by each.

Courtenay's treatment of the black miners in these sections is problematic. In *Whitethorn* they are barely mentioned, while in *Power* they are relegated to less than side characters. Only one is actually mentioned by name, Elijah, and even then that is the name given to him by Peekay, not his actual name. The others are simply bodies under Peekay's control. Peekay has been set up throughout *Power* and *Tandia* as someone who loves and appreciates black people, seeing their value and humanity where other white characters rarely do. Now, simply because he cannot speak their language, they become to him how they appear to every other white character in the novel: bodies to be used as he sees fit. He does not even bother to learn their real names, and he gives no explanation as to why except for the language barrier. One further explanation is that this whole arc has resulted from Peekay deciding to be selfish and so that selfishness extends to the workers under him. When it doesn't suit him, he can simply fall back on the white mentality. His use of this mentality here is benign; he doesn't use it to persecute or endanger his workers, or belittle or mock them. They simply are not treated how Peekay would treat black people back home, as actual people worthy of respect.

What can be examined in this instance is Peekay's own bifurcated identity. Outside of the mine, he is characterised by a desire to protect black people from the systems of racism as a person and apartheid as a lawyer. Inside the mine, he is able to recognise the precariousness of the lives of the black workers, but does seemingly very little to alleviate their suffering. It isn't such a simple comparison, but it may as well be for all intents and purposes. Peekay creates a different type of masculinity in the mine, one that does not include care for fellow human beings outside of white people, such as Rasputin.

In the mines, masculinities are taken to a social extreme, through its enclosed setting promoting a hegemonic masculine hierarchy. The space has the ability to create and maintain a hegemonic masculinity and even destroy outlier masculinities in order to promote one cohesive type of masculinity. As masculinity is a trait so fundamental to human social

interaction especially among men, having their own sense of masculine identity broken down and reformed into something to be shared among all the inhabitants of the mine can be a damaging process and one that leave mental and emotional scars, while the mining work often leaves physical ones. Through Tom and Peekay's experiences, the mine setting and its masculinity-forming abilities are displayed to the reader and all of its destructive and problematic aspects laid bare to scrutiny.

Physical Sites of Learning

In Courtenay's novels each protagonist has their story told from a time period of relative youth. When their stories begin, Peekay and Tom are both five-to-seven year old boys, while Tandia's story begins at sixteen. Education and learning are important aspects of their lives, as it assists in forming personal identity and prepares children for their futures. Indeed, the first physical site of education the reader would likely experience the protagonists in is a school space. However, it is important to note that, for each character, arguably the most crucial aspects to their respective educations occur outside of a school space.

Each school space proves essential in helping form the protagonist's concepts of gender roles, whether Peekay's early boarding years, Tom's struggles at school that follow him to the orphanage and back again, or Tandia's experiences at a school designated for Indian girls. For as long as schools have existed, part of their purpose has been to protect and enforce societally accepted gender roles and actively provide a space in which deviant gender identities can be attacked (Seidler, 2006). This indoctrination into the accepted system is blatant especially in Peekay's and Tom's stories. Peekay in particular manages to survive his early experiences at boarding school by refusing to cry, regardless of what violence or abuse he suffers, a decision which creates a grudging sense of respect among the other older boys and even reduces his main bully to tears at one point out of sheer frustration. He takes the lessons of violent masculinity from his environment and takes them to an extreme in order to survive the abuse directed at him. Tom and Peekay both receive far greater attention to their earlier schooling years. This is because Courtenay's decision to tell their stories from a very young age means that their intelligence naturally makes them stand out in school environments, while Tandia's intelligence is provided as a given due to her more advanced age and level of education when her story begins.

As this dissertation focusses on masculinities, the three Courtenay novels are ideal to observe how physical sites influence the masculinities of those subjected to them, as the three protagonists are all relatively young when they exist within those spaces and their experiences are told in some detail. Tandia's experiences of school mainly revolve around her lack of home support forcing her to discover what menstruation is, what it means, and how to deal with them from the other girls instead of a parent, as her father did not bother to teach her and her mother died years before. Her role as a servant to her father's legitimate family ensures that she has no real home support structure to turn to, and so she must scrounge for

information about what her own body is doing from other schoolgirls. Her encounters with the school environment serve to cement her status as an outcast, an outsider who is trying desperately to fit in and failing due to her literal physical self: her hair which labels her African; her green eyes, so unusual even among Indian people; her beauty. She only begins to feel comfortable in her own skin once she leaves school. Peekay and Tom have different stories.

By examining Tom's journey at school, it is clear that Tom's early life involves The Boys Farm, an orphanage which seems to only care for boys. Tom is the only British child, and so it treated abominably by the other boys and the staff alike, even being referred to as "Voetsek", including by the matron ("Voetsek" is Afrikaans slang, essentially a demand for the subject of the cry to go away. It is generally considered an excessively rude way to tell someone to leave, and even in the context of the novels is seen as something said to stray dogs to chase them off). School for Tom is scarcely better, as he is one of the eldest in his year group. This fact ensures that his intelligence is not being challenged, a situation that begins to frustrate him. Luckily, a young substitute teacher by the name of Miss Phillips inspires Tom to read and work harder, and through her tutelage and the attention of the headmaster, Tom is eventually able to gain a scholarship to Bishops College and escape.

His initial experiences are ones of being forced to conform to the standard of his other Afrikaner peers. He is forced to wait to learn English, the language of his ancestors that he cannot speak due to being an orphan away from any English-speaking people. Even when he is allowed to learn the language, English is frowned upon by the wider community due to its links to the atrocities committed by the British in the Anglo-Boer War. The society in which he lives is predominantly white, Afrikaans, Christian, and patriarchal, and as he cannot meet the requirements fully, he is ostracised.

The details about Tom's time at Bishops are in short supply. Tom himself explains why:

Now I suppose you're expecting a whole heap of stuff about going to a posh school. But I've decided against that because everyone has already read a book about going to boarding school, like the one I've already referred to, *Tom Brown's Schooldays*. (Courtenay, 2007, [2005], 320)

Whitethorn tends to borrow much of its story from *The Power of One*, especially with similarities between Tom and Peekay. Peekay's experiences in *Power* are highly in-depth, so

perhaps Courtenay decided that writing out the whole experience from the perspective of another white British boy would be derivative as the narrative already existed in *Power*. Tom's and Peekay's experiences are supposedly similar enough that by reading *Power*, the reader can get a fairly complete idea of how Tom's time at Bishop's went. Where Tom's narrative differs from Peekay's is his relative self-awareness. Peekay lives in a sort of haze, hiding behind a façade that he only vaguely realizes he has built to hide his own perceived shortcomings. Tom clearly identifies his weaknesses (his lack of parents, his lack of a home and his lack of money) and takes steps to cover them up and protect himself. Where Peekay boxes to prove himself and to focus his energy towards the goal of being the best, Tom uses boxing as one of the tools to fight back against other boys for the first time in his life. Tom discovers that his intellect combined with his toughness erases any stigma against him for his age, size, or background. It helps that in Bishop's he is primarily surrounded by British or Jewish boys, so while Tom's upbringing is primarily in an Afrikaner society, his British heritage is no longer held against him.

The importance of schools and universities and the like and their ability to affect gender roles are covered by many writers (Seidler, Connell, and Morrell to name a few). However, in Courtenay's novels, these sites tend to not be the ones in which the characters receive their greatest education. Indeed, because each is of a very high intelligence even among their peers, it is outside of the school setting in which their education into masculinity and gender roles is at its most complex and thorough. As Peekay's education in the boxing ring and gym has already been covered in some detail in this very chapter, this section will focus on Tom and Tandia.

For a large portion of the story, school is seen by Tom as an escape, but an extremely hollow one; he knows he cannot fully escape The Boys Farm through school, and eventually must go back to the environment in which he suffers so much daily abuse. For Tom, it is The Boys Farm that is reality; the outside world is present, but not a place he can stay for very long. This is explained through Tom's reactions whenever an adult outside of The Boys Farm attempts to help him. He knows that any interference from the outside will inevitably result in him being punished on the inside (Courtenay, 2007, 275-278). Because of this mentality, Tom's concept of masculinity is skewed towards that which he is always surrounded by: white, Afrikaans, Christian, and patriarchal. He is constantly bombarded with this version of masculinity; through the other boys, the staff or the discipline. A common form of discipline for the older boys is to be forced to box against Frikkie Botha, who was once a district

champion boxer and now trains the boys to box. Tom learns that he is too small and too weak to defend himself against this system, and so he comes to accept that this is reality, and the outside world is a fantasy that will never be for him. Tom explains this sentiment in response to escaping punishment: “But, there you go, the rule was that you took everything you could get away with because [getting away with it] didn’t happen often” (31).

The type of men that The Boys Farm generates are broken down by Miss Phillips, the first person to believe in Tom and see his potential, to the Reverend Robertson, the Headmaster of Bishop’s College, the school Tom eventually attends after winning a scholarship: “A successful graduate from The Boys Farm might, at best, be expected to become a lorry driver, railway worker or timber cutter. Many of them end up in trouble with the law” (Courtenay, 2007, 259). The Boys Farm creates hard men; men that embody the hegemonic ideal of masculinity. For Tom to have been raised inside such a system and still become a highly capable, intelligent, and emotionally stable person as the novel progresses, is just short of miraculous. It is possible that the only reason Tom is able to leave The Boys Farm as well-adjusted as he did is as a result of the combined influence of Mattress and Tinker, the dog Tom finds as a puppy and secretly raises as his own. While Mattress is only present briefly at the beginning of the novel and Tinker until the end of Book One, both teach Tom important lessons on how to love others and be loved in return. Tom is able to apply these lessons to other situations throughout his life, and Tom’s view on love and the masculinity he portrays as his own are two qualities that tend to reflect each other throughout the novel. For example, through Mattress’s death Tom is able to understand that love inevitably means loss will follow: “All I knew was that I had lost the first person in my life I had ever loved, and that the love Mattress had given me had simply disappeared into thin air as if it didn’t matter to anyone” (111). This lesson is repeated at various points throughout the novel, including with Marie Booyens and Miss Phillips marrying other men (Tom having the childish belief that either one or the other would eventually become his wife when he was older), having to leave Tinker to attend boarding school, and Tinker dying shortly after. However, Tom continues to search for love and accept it wherever he is able to find it, even though he knows it may mean he will suffer in the end. This quality of doggedly hunting and accepting love reflects Tom’s masculinity because of the suffering he went through at The Boys Farm. Tom himself describes the situation on The Boys Farm: “As I said before, there wasn’t much love going on in that place. Plenty of sjambok, but no love” (137). The other boys did not have their own Mattress or Tinker in their lives; therefore what separates Tom

from them in his development, apart from his intelligence, is that he is able to find love even in an utterly loveless environment. After achieving that, he is able to find love anywhere he goes, and actively searches for it. This search is best exemplified by the chapter titles of *Whitethorn*, every one of which refers to love in some capacity. For example, Chapter One is titled “Love in a Wet Sack” (3), referring to Tom finding Tinker in a sack floating down the stream and how, with Mattress’s help, he is able to keep her. Tom’s story is a search for love, whether it is romantic or platonic, familial or camaraderie. It is the toxic masculinity he is subjected to on The Boys Farm and the education (however abusive) that he learns from his experience that causes him to develop into the person he becomes as an adult: an intelligent lawyer, intent on seeing justice done for Mattress. He is able to subvert the expectations of this type of environment due to his education at school and university and the love of those who care for him. His education may have set him up for his future, but arguably the lessons he learns in the initial chapters of the novel continue to echo through every event in his life and informs who he becomes and the masculinity he develops as his own.

Tandia’s intelligence is stated explicitly from early in the novel and mentioned multiple times throughout the eponymous novel. While this intelligence is certainly expanded through school and university, neither physical location nor the events that occur there are explored in any real detail by the novel. The place that provides Tandia with the greatest education has to be Bluey Jay’s, the brothel into which she is placed by the predatory policeman, Jannie Geldenhys, after being raped and arrested. She is taken in by the owner of the brothel, Mama Tequila, the large Coloured woman who has been a sex worker for over forty years of her life. Mama Tequila is a formidable character: a mixed-race woman with no real education to speak of, working her way up to the point where she not only owns her own business and the land on which it stands, but this business is the most upper-class brothel that can be encountered in southern Africa. Mama Tequila takes in Tandia at the request of Geldenhys to avoid issues with the police, but as Tandia quickly comes to realise, Mama Tequila always has an endgame in mind. Tandia begins to learn from Mama Tequila; from how to run a bar and get patrons to drink more and pay for more expensive liquor, to how to trick a man using her beauty as a weapon. Mama Tequila’s mixed-race status and circumstances largely mirror Tandia’s: Mama Tequila is clearly highly intelligent and cunning, but was never given the opportunity under apartheid laws to learn in a school environment. It is due to the similarities between the two women that Mama Tequila comes

to draw Tandia under her wing, even paying for Tandia to finish matric and helping her to be accepted into studying law.

Tandia's rape and subsequent arrest come after her father dies. While visiting his grave in the early hours of the morning she is attacked from behind by two men. Upon being arrested the next evening for accidentally setting her old house on fire as she was forcibly evicted by her father's legitimate wife, she attempts to report her rape, only to recognise the policeman interviewing her as one of the two men in the graveyard, Jannie Geldenhys. Up until Tandia is brought to Bluey Jay, her life has only contained pain when it comes to men. Her father slept with his domestic worker, her mother, who then had her. Upon her mother's death, Tandia replaced her as the domestic worker for her father's real family. Her father dies before giving her the sort of love or acceptance she desperately wanted, and then she is raped, arrested and sent to live in a brothel by one of her rapists. Men have become akin to monsters in her life; near-unstoppable forces under which her life is controlled and her body traded and violated. Mama Tequila changes that perception. By teaching Tandia how men think, how to manipulate them with a combination of sex and alcohol, as well as how to appeal to white men using her skin colour, Mama Tequila gives Tandia the tools to begin fighting back. It is these lessons combined with a close fatherly bond between Tandia and Mama Tequila's chauffeur, Juicey Fruit Mambo, that allow Tandia to recover from all that has happened to her. She no longer feels powerless. She has insight into the male mind, how to stroke an ego, tame a mood and keep him coming back for more. She learns to understand masculinity, or at least the hegemonic or shared masculinity that many men may adopt.

The lessons she learns are exaggerated activities as set out by Cline and Spender in their book, *Reflecting Men at Twice Their Natural Size* (1987). In the book, the two authors explore the societal implications of women being drawn into an underlying social contract structured exclusively around ensuring that men and their egos are always tended to. A lot of what Cline and Spencer discuss involves activities that women perform to make their lives easier or simply more bearable, such as smiling even at unwanted advances, faking orgasms, and caring for the home, among others. Incidentally, the very reflection of men that Cline and Spencer invoke as divisive in their book is that which Tandia learns to use to her advantage at Bluey Jay.

Cline and Spender explain the phenomenon of men controlling women's bodies as one in which a woman is perceived as more desirable if she is "helpless", for example

tottering about in high heels or unable to be financially independent, and “someone to be repulsed and reviled when she showed signs of intelligence, independence and ‘success’” (1987, 51). The male gaze is typically considered more important than that of the woman herself or women as a collective:

Men want us to be what they imagine, or fantasise, we are. They want us to be what they need. Something made-up. [...] Something toned down. Something plastic, perfect, commercial and idealised. A sex object they can define, desire and control. (66)

All of this is exactly the façade Tandia is taught to produce by Mama Tequila (along with the other girls who live and work in Bluey Jay). Tandia learns that her beauty makes men distracted and her youth, when played up as inexperience, makes men careless. While Dr Louis, the doctor who comes to the brothel regularly to check on the sexual health of the women who work there, manages to make Mama Tequila promise not to use Tandia as a sex worker until she finishes matric in exchange for his services for free, Mama Tequila still expects Tandia to learn the tricks of the sex work trade alongside the other girls. As the narrator explains, “Mama Tequila saw no point in not exposing her to the finer details of the game. Tandia was a coloured girl, though a very clever one, and the more she knew about life, the better she might be at surviving it” (Courtenay, 1992 [1991], 100). Tandia pays her way by helping run the finances of Bluey Jay and manages the bar, using her youth and beauty to convince men to drink more and pay for more expensive alcohol. She plays up to the fantasy expected of her, as a young, beautiful mixed-race woman who couldn’t possibly be cheating wealthy men into paying far more than they should on booze and women, preying on their masculine desire to feel important and desirable. Tandia herself comments on what Mama Tequila expects of her girls when she states: “To work for Mama Tequila a girl had to be able to please a man, not simply with her body, but with her entire presence” (Courtenay, 1992, 98). While the other women who work for Mama Tequila embody this whole-heartedly (there is a reason the brothel caters to rich white men and is allowed to continue existing just outside of Durban without being closed down by the apartheid government; the women are extremely good at what they do), Tandia is protected to a degree by the promise Mama Tequila made to Dr Louis. However, Mama Tequila still expects Tandia to be just as strong as, if not even stronger than any of the other girls as a result of Tandia’s desire to become a lawyer:

If you going to be a whore, you going to be a whore with a future. If you going to be a lawyer they going to try to kill you. And they not going to rest until

they get you on the slab, the mortuary, a dead [black person] lawyer! You got to make yourself so when they stick the knife in your heart the blade break. When they get another one, it breaks also! And another and another. Then maybe you can have a future too! (1992 [1991], 106)

Mama Tequila knows what the real world is like, especially the difficulties facing a mixed-race woman, and even though Tandia has been through so much trauma in her young life, Mama knows that worse is probably coming. So she teaches Tandia the tricks of the sex work trade, and teaches her to be tough enough to survive in a world where men and masculinity are going to make her life difficult.

Cline and Spencer's claims accurately summarise Tandia's life at Bluey Jay: she learns to hide behind the perception of herself, specifically how men perceive her. She learns to "adapt to her environment so that she could not only survive it, but use it to her benefit" (Courtenay, 1992, 149). While Cline and Spencer certainly explore how women deliberately manipulate the system of male approval for personal gain, it isn't a matter of desire. Women are typically forced to do so, as when the book was published many women were still in a situation of financial dependence on the men in their lives, and therefore keeping the man happy and content was the easiest way to obtain the finances necessary for whatever it was she needed. In Tandia's case, she has learned how to manipulate in order to obtain to excess; trick men into spending far more than they might have liked, and keep them coming back. She also learns these things to protect herself: "She could hide behind other people's perceptions of her while remaining true to her personality which grew from her loneliness, her fears and, increasingly, from an aching need to be loved" (149). By contrast, Peekay learns to camouflage himself to survive at first and later uses his exceptionalism to protect himself. Tandia accepts her exceptionalism and is taught by Mama Tequila to use it to her own advantage from the beginning. She understands that she is "ready at last to grow up" (149) in Bluey Jay, putting away her childish perceptions of the world and accepting Mama Tequila's jaded view, as she understands that this is far more likely to keep her alive. However, like the cemetery gates she cannot fully close the last time she visits her father's grave, she cannot fully escape her past, especially her desperate desire to be loved and accepted. While she is accepted at Bluey Jay to an extent, she is still an outcast, being a mixed-race woman, and being both beautiful and intelligent far beyond that of the other women. Mama Tequila, while certainly a role model for Tandia as she matures, is not someone who gets mired down in thoughts of love. Perhaps the term 'affectionate' could be applied to their relationship, but certainly not loving. Tandia is not a daughter to Mama, she

is a product, a fact that Mama makes abundantly clear in their various interactions. However, as pointed out by Cline and Spencer, perhaps this isn't so far from a typical mother-daughter relationship:

Even when [they] can see that [their] daughter is being hurt, [they] can rationalise that it is what men like, it is what men want and so it is what men will get. No matter what price the daughter must pay or the indignity she must suffer, it is worth the prize. (1987, 32)

We certainly get some indication of this when Mama betrays Tandia and allows Geldenhys to almost rape her in Bluey Jay just on the off chance that she can get some incriminating pictures of the event to blackmail the police officer with. Never is it made more explicitly clear that Tandia is simply a tool for Mama to use to her advantage than in this scene. Things do not go according to plan, as Tandia is injured by Geldenhys and he has his penis almost severed and is smashed against a wall by a furious Juicy Fruit Mambo, but Mama succeeds. She gets her incriminating photos, and manages to avoid any backlash from Tandia by ensuring that Geldenhys never comes anywhere near her again, as a part of the blackmail she levers against him. Tandia learns from this experience; she knows now that while there is a lot to admire and learn from Mama Tequila, she certainly cannot trust her. There is absolutely no love in their relationship.

The closest relationship Tandia has to a loving one is with Juicy Fruit Mambo, but he has a habit of finding and caring for lost, wayward or traumatised children. Tandia is another of those to him, and while he loves them all, Tandia craves a certain level of exclusivity she experienced as Patel's only girl child before her mother died and she was forced to become a domestic worker for his legitimate family. Juicy Fruit Mambo's role as a father figure is covered in "Chapter Two: Fathers and Father Figures and Their Influence on Successful Identity Development".

Tandia's life at Bluey Jay eventually ends when she completes her law degree and begins working for Peekay and Hymie's law practice, having met them through boxing (she dates Gideon over a few years). However, she retains the lessons she learned at the brothel, how to manipulate and flatter men, how to play with perceptions and expectations, to distrust everything except how men are betrayed by their own sexual ability, and therefore how to survive in a society that actively hates her and wants her dead. True, she comes to rely on Peekay to escape persecution and death at the hands of Geldenhys, but it is what she learns at

Bluey Jay that prepares her for what she faces until she is completely and utterly unprepared. Only then does she come to rely fully on a man.

It is universally understood that education is important in the growth and development of children. However, a flaw in the concept of education is that the most important education must occur in a school setting. In each of Courtenay's novels, the most significant education that the respective protagonists receive, especially with regard to masculinity and its impact on their social lives, occurs outside of a school setting. While school and the education and environment have been discussed as sites of gender role enforcement by many writers (Seidler, Connell), in terms of the formation of the self they tend to be sorely lacking, as proven by the examples of Peekay, Tom and Tandia.

Chapter 3 Conclusion

Physical spaces generate identity discourse through the control and application of social hierarchy. In this chapter, the boxing ring and boxing gym have been examined as sites of extreme and often toxic masculinity, but also some of the few spaces men feel safe and comfortable enough to open up emotionally to each other. The mines have been examined as sites of extreme exploitation of mainly the most vulnerable in society which, in the case of these novels, is primarily black men. While the mines are advertised to be hyper masculine environments in many of the same ways that the boxing arena and the army are supposed to be, the exploitative nature of the mines ensures that almost every man who leaves does so broken, either physically, mentally, or emotionally. The last physical space to be discussed is the space or site of learning, in the case of this dissertation being a site unique to each protagonist in which they receive their most instructive lessons in identity formation. As Peekay has already been dealt with in terms of the boxing arena, this section focusses on Tom and Tandia with their experiences in an orphanage and a brothel respectively. Tom is able to overcome the abuse he faces at The Boys Farm and finds love and acceptance in a family he gathers for himself. Tandia learns how to use the masculinity of others to her advantage, but eventually has the cynicism taught to her by Mama Tequila broken down by Peekay's honesty and love. In truth, there are many physical spaces in which lessons in identity and masculinity are delivered, and these are but a fraction of the possibilities. However, these are some of the most relevant in terms of identity development for the protagonists in these novels, and serve as guideposts to the eventual conclusions of each character's story. As to why these spaces are important, it is because, as has been explicitly stated, physical locations naturally encourage the formation of a shared identity. The spaces discussed have been examined through the lens of being locations that focus on the formation and perpetuation of certain types of masculinity, and how the characters in the novels interact with these locations and the masculinities within them inform an example of how these structures function within the real world. In the case of Tom and Peekay, these examples are important because they are directly involved in the identity-making and perpetuating ability of these physical locations, while through Tandia the reader is able to observe these sites of masculinity from the perspective of an outsider, but one who is still obliged (or forced) to interact with them.

Conclusion

The goal of this dissertation has been to explore masculinities in a South African context using analyses of characters within Bryce Courtenay's South African-set novels, namely *The Power of One*, *Tandia* and *Whitethorn*. This has been achieved through textual analysis of the novels, using work by writers such as Viktor Seidler, Raewyn Connell and Robert Morrell among others to gain insight into masculinities in general. These concepts have then been applied to the context provided by the novels to examine the masculinities produced in greater detail.

“Chapter One: Representations of Marginal Masculinities and the Success of their Portrayal” examines masculinities of characters who are marginalised within the novels, due to race, sexual orientation, or for a myriad of other reasons. As these did not receive a suitable level of attention in other Chapters within this dissertation, and because each of them offers something unique to the novels in terms of analysis, it is necessary to set aside a Chapter specifically to discuss them critically and in detail. Various marginal characters are examined in this chapter to determine what they contribute to the story and if they are successful as representations of their identity, both as characters within the novels and as examples of identities in reality.

“Chapter Two: Fathers and Father Figures and Their Influence on Successful Identity Development” examines fatherhood and the role of father figures in the novels. This is accomplished by observing the relationships with role models each of the three protagonists encounter in their stories, and the outcome of the development of their respective identities as a result. With all three protagonists not having available biological fathers, their need to find replacement father-figures and the developmental effect that fathers have on identity, especially among boys, is highlighted through the growth of the characters.

“Chapter Three: Masculinities within Physical Spaces and How They Function and Develop” examines how masculinities are formed and function in physical spaces, using examples from the novels. Firstly, Peekay's relationship with the boxing ring and boxing gym is examined to show how Peekay's masculinity has been informed by the physical space involved in the sport of boxing. Second, the copper mines in Rhodesia are examined, as both Peekay and Tom spend time working in the mines. They are both affected by what they experience, and their experiences inform their identities and sense of masculinity going forward. The third and final physical space is the space of education. Normally associated

with schools, this dissertation argues that in the case of these novels, each protagonist receives the most meaningful identity development from an individual space unique to themselves. Peekay and the boxing ring and gym have already been explored, so this section focuses on Tandia and her time in Bluey Jay, and Tom with his childhood in The Boys Farm.

This dissertation seeks to show that what has been learned can be used to further academic understanding of masculinities, both in a South African context and in others. As has been explained, the period of time in which all of the novels are set is roughly between the early 1940s to the late 1980s. These dates differ between each novel, but the overall timeline is between those two dates. During this period the almost exclusively white governments were in power in South Africa, and while the British and Afrikaner governments vied for power the living conditions and social mobility of black people were severely restricted. It is at the beginning of this extreme social restriction that Tom's story is set, and near the end that Peekay's and Tandia's stories are told. Therefore, this period of time can be used to show us the progression of not only the social structure of South Africa but of individual identities, at least from Courtenay's perspective.

In the society Tom inhabits, the socially powerful masculinities he encounters are either extreme Afrikaner examples from his childhood, or the stubborn stoicism associated with the colonial British. It is his relationship with Mattress and the trauma surrounding his death that informs more of Tom's identity than his circumstances and prompts his search for love in all of its forms. His masculinity evolves as he surrounds himself with new groups of people, from emulating Mattress's Zulu pride, to the survivalist identity required to survive The Boys Farm, to the Afrikaner pride brought forth by the arrival of World War Two and Nazi Germany, to the chameleonic identity required to gather allies and information in order to avenge Mattress's death. His masculinity develops in ways that only the reader is entirely aware of, and this is portrayed in very similar terms to Peekay's development: the internal monologue, and the manner in which he resolves problems. Tom is always quicker to use kindness to get what he wants or needs from others, but he isn't above considering more destructive methods, as shown by his consideration to use Kobus's homosexuality and dream of owning a gay club for Afrikaner men as leverage to get the information he needs from the gay man. While he isn't above using the weaknesses of others to get what he wants, he never has to resort to these methods as his kindness and charm usually allows him to get his own way. After all, his main goal in his adult life is to eventually return to Duiwelkrans and get justice for Mattress. Everything he does is leading up to that goal and it is for the sake of

Mattress and his family, as well as for his own peace of mind, that he does these things. Therefore, while his masculinity is based on primarily Afrikaner values and the kindness and respect for others that he was taught by Mattress, his masculinity evolves throughout *Whitethorn* to incorporate the lessons in social grace taught to him by Pirrou, the leadership skills he develops at the mines and in the army, the renewed respect for black people he learns from Mike Finger, and the determination to do what is right even when other good people will not or cannot understand. Tom's story is important to examine because he represents a lot of what Peekay will represent in *Power* and *Tandia*, but in different ways. As has been mentioned in the introduction, Tom's focus is a personal one; he is specifically searching for justice for Mattress. Peekay by contrast seeks to right the injustices of South African society. Compared to Peekay's ambitions, Tom does not have to aim nearly as high to get what he wants. Tom's masculinity is predicated on his search for love, and his identity is based on what he finds, where he finds it, and how he interacts with it. This may seem like the antithesis of conventional masculinity, but Tom has learned through individuals like Kobus and Mike that what is understood as convention or socially accepted is not necessarily what is right. With this in mind, it is natural that he would develop his own identity, his own masculinity, as one that breaks from convention: his love of Mattress even decades after his death, his acceptance of ideas and lifestyles alien to his own, and his continued search for love in all its forms. However, he also keeps the parts that make sense to him: the stoic stubbornness and fair-play of the British, the courage and toughness of the Afrikaner, and the pride of the Zulus, all of which are traits associated with hegemonic masculinity. He is able to combine all of these to make an identity for himself that he finds the most comfortable and has no problem defending even from those he loves. In this way, Tom becomes a successful example of a protagonist and the masculinity he develops is an example of one that contains elements of conventional masculinity while also embracing the aspects that do not necessarily conform. In this way, Tom's masculinity, while unique to his circumstances in terms of development, provide insight into how masculinities function in reality. While society has the expectation of men to behave in a certain manner and conform to certain standards to even be considered male, these are the standards of hegemonic masculinity. Masculinities in reality are multi-faceted and because of the narrative style of Courtenay's novels, the reader is able to grasp the intricacies of Tom's masculinity in a way that resonates with the reader's own experiences of having aspects of themselves that do conform to the hegemonic ideal and having aspects of themselves that do not. While our own experiences inform us that gender identity is not a cut-and-dry experience, one that fits a perfect pre-made mould of what it

means to be a human of gender X, Y or Z, in a large portion of literature and societal interaction, this exact problematic ideal is upheld. Therefore, Tom's unashamed exhibition of his own masculinity, with all its aspects, both masculine and feminine alike, provides an excellent example of exactly the type of natural, imperfect masculinity almost every person experiences or develops for themselves.

Chronologically, Peekay's story in *The Power of One* comes next. The beginning of this novel is set roughly around the mid-1950s to early 1960s, and Peekay's story mirrors much of Tom's early years. Rather than an orphanage, Peekay is forced to attend boarding school at the age of five. Like Tom, he is horribly abused and persecuted due to his British heritage, but unlike Tom he has no fatherly figure like Mattress. He does have Nanny, but she is sent away when Peekay's family moves relocates. Tom and Peekay both explore the same problem but from different angles: lack of love from the home. Tom obviously grows up in an orphanage where love was not to be expected, but Peekay experiences what he deems love from Nanny, who is then taken away from him. While he has a family in the form of his mother and Granpa, neither of them form a strong emotional connection in his life and are instead seen as obligations to be met.

From the boarding school he learns that toughness earns respect, but hiding himself and his gifts allows him to avoid harm to begin with. He carries this concept of hiding his true self throughout *Power* and *Tandia*, only confiding his true feelings to Doc. From Hoppie Groenewald he is introduced to boxing and learns his lifelong mantra, "First with the head, then with the heart". These two concepts, toughness and exceptionalism both hiding the true state perceived as weakness, align with the mantra. Peekay keeps his heart hidden, using his head to solve problems and hide his true self from the world, but he knows that when all else has failed, he will need to rely on his heart, his courage, and his emotions to see him through.

Doc teaches him to use his brain both logically and creatively, directly contradicting Seidler's concept of the male being rational and logical to reaffirm his masculinity. Between Hoppie's mantra, Doc's lessons, and the time spent with Rasputin, Peekay learns that the heart is not just a last resort, but a crucial component of a successful man. Once he has accepted this idea, he is able to open up and let down his guard, allowing Tandia to see him for who he truly is, which results in them falling in love with each other. It is made abundantly clear by Geldenhys's crusade against them both that their love is not the accepted

norm of 1980s South African society. In fact, Geldenhys's reaction to them is merely the most extreme version of society's expectations of the time.

Everything that Peekay has learned and experienced and all the trials he has been through serve to focus him on to a path he deems as right. This path is doing everything in his power to protect people of colour, like Gideon, Tandia, and many more who are being persecuted just for existing. Perhaps this is merely the idealised hero archetype in action, the white knight protecting those weaker than himself, but what is important is that the reader is able to experience his development from frightened child to confident hero-type. Courtenay's writing portrays the growth and development of Peekay from child to adult and all the mental and emotional lessons he learns to get to where he is at the end of *Tandia* and Peekay's story contains elements of the lives of white activists and allies from the end of the apartheid era of South African history. His story is important because it can recreate some of the events that caused white people within a system of oppression designed to benefit them to turn against said system by recognising its intrinsically flawed and abusive nature, in favour of fighting for and protecting the rights and lives of people of colour, and this can be expanded upon to include racial activism from many other systems, such as Civil Rights in America. This allows writers intent on studying the apartheid period in South African history to get a better understanding of the mindset behind the white people who were a part of ending the apartheid regime, but in a way that absolutely does not erase the horrors of the acts committed during that time or the implicit benefit of being a white person within said systems.. Importantly, it also does not absolve white people or characters from their privilege; through characters like Geldenhys, we are given the opportunity to observe the mindset of individuals who are firmly a part of the oppressive regime and how their assurance that they are in the right can be corrosive to their own mental wellbeing, but also the very fabric of society. Peekay may be a hero-archetypal character, but he is flawed too; it may be his love of Tandia which finally awakens his hate towards Geldenhys, but this hatred is what eventually results in Tandia having to flee to escape being jailed and most likely killed. Peekay's hatred of Geldenhys causes him to act recklessly when pursuing him through the courts, and further drives Geldenhys's own hatred of the two in turn. Peekay's indifference to the mine workers in Rhodesia also shows that, for all his empathy, love and respect towards black people, he is not without a certain amount of white privilege.

That being said, his masculinity is more complicated than Tom's. Peekay's story stretches over two novels while Tom's only fills a single book. Therefore, the understanding

of Peekay as a character and an individual will be far more detailed. Naturally this results in a more complex and nuanced view of his identity. His suffering and loneliness as a child combined with his experiences of Barberton prison result in a pathological need to protect others, especially those in positions of precarity. In the societal structures of 1980s South Africa, this is almost always a black person, and with his opportunities to study Law at Oxford and his reputation as a world champion boxer, he is able to lend real social weight to his decisions. He uses this education and reputation to continue his self-appointed task of protecting black people from a system designed to persecute them. From witnessing his development, it is evident that this is not for any sort of agenda; he is doing this because he feels it is right. Alternate viewpoints, like those of Tandia and Geldenhys, show how Peekay's activities may come across to others on different sides of the struggle.

Peekay's masculinity is complicated because his character is complicated. He is set up as a hero, but through the narrative structure the reader is able to witness his flaws and his struggles to address them. The payoff is that his growth is evident and accessible as he rises to the challenges he is presented with and overcomes them. When the novel ends, he has become a stereotypical hero, even dying to save the life of the damsel (Tandia) and defeating the villain (Geldenhys) while simultaneously allowing the last hope for a united and free South Africa to escape to be born and grow into a leader (his and Tandia's unborn child, Lumukanda). Unlike Tom's story end, which combines all of the lessons he has learned to inform his identity, Peekay's identity has slowly grown through the challenges he has faced. Tom's story end can be likened to drawing of multiple threads together to form a tapestry that is his identity. Peekay's story develops like a staircase; each new situation requires Peekay to climb up a step, leaving certain things behind and picking up new ones as he does so, until he is standing atop the pinnacle as we witness him at the end of *Tandia*, as a hero reminiscent of any epic story, requisite identity intact.

There is a sour taste left by Peekay's death, however. He has been set up as someone who would give his life to save those he loves, but his actions at the end of *Tandia* seem contrary to his nature. He allows Dum and Dee to join him in his journey to move Tandia across the mountains into the relative safety of Swaziland, and instead of encouraging them to escape to safety themselves, he allows them to put themselves in danger and both of them are killed as a result. They are all that has been left of Peekay's relationship with Nanny, closer to Peekay than his own biological family. While it is in character for Peekay to sacrifice himself for those he loves, it seems utterly against character for him to allow people

he loves to risk themselves for him. Perhaps it can be argued that the stress of Geldenhys hunting Tandia or later from his own blood loss that caused Peekay's priorities to change, or that he simply did not believe that Geldenhys would actually find him, or in the case of them being discovered, that he would hurt them. This is the point: in the climax of the novel, Peekay acts against his nature. He ignores the masculine identity he has developed throughout the two novels, and behaves in an uncharacteristically selfish manner. Courtenay's intention is definitely to portray Peekay as an excellent example of the masculine white knight hero, complete with the highly problematic sacrifice of people of colour to ensure that the hero and those most important to him survive. However, Peekay's death at the end of the novel slightly undermines the white knight stereotype, as while he does die protecting the damsel, in this case she is a woman of colour and already pregnant, being very unlike the stereotypical white virginal damsel normally associated with the white knight trope.

Peekay's masculinity is important because, like Tom's masculinity, his is not a masculinity that conforms entirely to the masculine ideal. As discussed with Tom's masculinity, Courtenay's narrative style allows the reader to observe the development of the character's identity from within the character's own mind and follow their experiences as they occur and the ramifications and lessons learned from those experiences. This then can echo the reader's own experiences with what is deemed 'imperfect' gender identity development, as perfectly matching the ideal (as discussed in the Introduction) is virtually impossible. Examples such as Tom and Peekay provide alternate samples of masculine identity in ways that do not shy away from their inherent variance and instead show characters who have accepted and embraced the variety in their own masculinities.

Tandia is the last of the three protagonists and her titular novel is set to begin in the late 1960s and end somewhere in the 1980s with her escape into Swaziland and the death of Peekay. In Tandia's case, it is not necessarily masculinity that she develops as her identity but her understanding of masculinities serves to inform her identity. She begins to learn about masculinities and how to use them to her advantage by Mama Tequila in *Bluey Jay*, and it is these lessons that drive her development more than any sense of femininity that she develops. The environment of *Bluey Jay* is one intended for the male gaze. Femininity within the walls is a performance used to entice men to spend money, not to assist in the development of the identity of the self. Her identity is the most complex of the three, as up until the novel ends she is unsure of where her fear, hatred, and rage end and her own self begins. In fact, most of

what she understands as her identity is informed by the constant stoking of her hatred towards Geldenhys specifically and the society that created him in general. While her walls are broken down by her relationships with Juicy Fruit Mambo, Gideon and Peekay, this serves only to confuse her, especially when it comes to Peekay. She finds it almost incomprehensible that she would find herself so drawn to him, with his many physical similarities to Geldenhys, a man who has physically, sexually, and emotionally abused her. In *Tandia*, there is an opportunity to study masculinity from an outsider's perspective: Tom and Peekay both being white and male ensured that they had a place firmly within the white, male and Christian hegemony of apartheid South Africa. *Tandia*, being mixed-race and a woman, is entirely outside of the hegemony, and so her perspective is one of a complete outsider. Her distrust of white people, especially white men, spills over into her interactions with black men. Only Mambo is exempt, as he has carefully cultivated a trusting relationship with *Tandia* over time.

Of course, *Tandia*'s perspective difficult to justify considering Courtenay is a white man attempting to write from the perspective of a mixed-race woman. He appears to have carefully researched Zulu and Afrikaner culture, on top of what he remembered from his own early life living in South Africa, and he has competently provided examples of gender and sexual fluidity and affectional openness within the novels, alongside the cross-racial understandings and relationships, which are all progressive and at variance with the racial, gender and political attitudes of the time period. While he may succeed in many aspects of his writing, it is unlikely that he could reliably or faithfully recreate the perspective of a mixed-race woman living under apartheid laws. While Courtenay's writing is the basis for this dissertation and its discussion it therefore has to be noted that, as has been mentioned in the Zulu masculinity section in "Chapter One", this is Courtenay's version of these characters. Someone who exists within the social group of those characters in reality may be able to find fault and flaw in Courtenay's portrayal.

For the purposes of this dissertation, it has been necessary to assume competency in Courtenay's ability to respectfully write characters of colour accurately. If this is taken into account, then *Tandia* is a very successful character in terms of identity development. Even though she suffers at the hands of Geldenhys and her lessons by Mama Tequila serve to further enhance her distrust of men by making her aware of the weaknesses and flaws of masculinity and how to take advantage of them, by the end of *Tandia* she has accepted her feelings for Peekay, allowing him to take up space in her heart that previously had been

entirely filled with hatred for Geldenhys and the apartheid system. By doing so, she allows herself to become vulnerable, something she desperately feared before. Now, with Peekay, she accepts this weakness as a part of life. While it is problematic that throughout the novel she has been built up as an independent woman with the grit and determination to fight back as she chooses and die if necessary for her cause, and at the end the love of the white hero reverts her to the damsel stereotype, it can be argued that this too is a part of her acceptance of love into her life and allowing it to replace the hatred. While Peekay's story is all about building up his strength to be able to do what is necessary to keep his loved ones safe and ensure that the hope for freedom is literally carried to safety, Tandia's story is about letting go of her negative emotions and allowing herself to love and be loved in turn. It is absolutely a sexist sentiment that the 'hard' woman needs to be made soft to be a successful example of a character, and the fact that her identity is left in flux at the end of *Tandia* implies that she will continue to evolve into the woman needed to shape the future of South Africa through becoming Lumukanda's mother. The strong woman has to be softened and become a mother in order to be understood or related to by the reader, or at least Courtenay would have it seem so. Perhaps it can be stated that in this regard Courtenay failed in his portrayal of Tandia in the final moments of her story, which is disappointing as up until that point her character development had been nuanced and complex. The shift in her perceptions of masculinity by the end of the novel from being a tool used by men to justify their violent oppression of women to being able to accept that not all masculinities are violent and abusive and even allow herself to open up to a white man no less and not only learn to love him but let herself be loved by him in return shows growth.

I hope that this dissertation will introduce Courtenay's work to the academic community in a way that inspires others to explore his novels and use them as tools to better understand the societies we live in. Within this dissertation, only the South African context has been explored. Hopefully Courtenay's work and work of other authors like him can receive more attention from the academic community, as this dissertation has demonstrated how relevant and useful novels like these can be. How these realisations, studies, and personal development can be used as a springboard for academic research is through expanding our understanding of the world, using examples provided by authors and writers who have come before. Masculinity is an ever-evolving topic and the conversations surrounding it need to be conducted, specifically by men themselves. By providing examples using the work of writers like Courtenay, perhaps the bridge between feminist writing and

popular fiction can reach men on a larger scale and draw more of them into these discussions on gender and masculinity.

I hope this dissertation has proven that even authors considered unworthy of academic study due to the popular status of their work can have said work used in an academic setting to further understand the historical context of turbulent societal systems, like apartheid South Africa, and the identities formed under such systems. I believe that by addressing work by popular fiction writers like Courtenay and by opening the study of masculinities using a variety of sources, there can be progress made towards a better understanding of society.

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