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**An Investigation into the Effects of the Contemporary Crisis
of Masculinity on the Advertising of Selected Beer and Cider
Brands in South Africa via Semiotic Analyses.**

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Abstract:

Beer and cider brands are relentless in their portrayal of the hegemonic masculinity pervasive in South African society. Existing research extensively looks at the relationship between beer and masculinity. The author of this paper investigates the impact of the media on societal gender norms and the role of the media in the construction of identity. Within the context of South African contemporary advertising, beer is continually equated to hegemonic masculinity in every form, in every place, in every way. The crisis of masculinity has created a space for men to step outside of the boundaries of the hegemonic masculinity promoted throughout South African society. What this means is that there has been an increase in a variety of male audiences and advertisers have had to take this into account. This paper looks at how the contemporary crisis of masculinity affects the advertising of beer and cider brands in South Africa. This is done through research into the history of masculinity (and femininity) in South Africa in order to fully understand the origins of the current hegemonic masculine society. This research will be conducted through semiotic analyses of advertisements from Savannah Dry, Black Label, Windhoek Lager, and Flying Fish. What is found is that instead of beer and cider brands embracing these newly popularised masculinities, they are rather continuing to promote the hegemonic masculinity already entrenched in South Africa. This results in the removal of women from these narratives and leaves beer and cider brands behind as the rest of the world continue to grow and challenge gender norms.

Introduction:

The hyper-masculinity at the core of the advertising of alcohol brands is not limited to South Africa but, in fact, follows a global trend towards overt masculinity (Gee & Jackson, 2012). There are various studies done in Australia, New Zealand and Russia showing very similar findings (Gee & Jackson, 2012; Hinote & Webber, 2012; Towns et al, 2012). As a woman, I noticed that the alcohol that I drink is marketed directly towards men and 'men being manly' in particular and I am interested in discovering why this is and what effects this may have on South African women and men.

Researching the effect of the crisis of masculinity (Decoteau, 2013) on alcohol brands will be interesting as well as current because this crisis is rather evident in post-apartheid South Africa (Conway, 2008) where not only black individuals, but also *women* and *queer* South Africans are liberated. I therefore argue that these social shifts are possibly perceived by South African men as a threat to their dominance. These alcohol brands seem to be trying to 'rebuild' masculinity into the pure-bred, hard core, macho man of the Apartheid era (Mager, 2005). What is interesting is that I could not find any research on this topic in particular so not only will it fill a knowledge gap, but it will also be significant because the South African alcohol industry is dominated by male images and it is necessary to disrupt this in order to promote gender equality in the market and in South African media in general.

Based on evidence from my immediate environment and other sources (Horsley, 2005), this problem is worth investigating because it is important to point out prejudices in the media as its institutions provide people with coordinates for understanding themselves and others. The media and pop culture mobilise damaging stereotypical gender norms because they are far-reaching (Horsley, 2005). Because of the crisis of masculinity in which men face anxiety about what it means to be a man (Decoteau, 2013), alcohol advertising seems to exploit this 'soft spot' and creates a space in which men are encouraged to embrace the hyper-masculine model entrenched in South African society through the Apartheid government via, for example, compulsory military conscription (Mager, 2005; Conway, 2008; Decoteau, 2013). As a result of this type of marketing, gender stereotypes are maintained and women are rendered invisible in the marketing of particular brands of alcohol (although this paper will exclusively focus on beer and cider brands). Consequently the stereotype of the hyper-masculine man is enforced via the *presence* of men in advertising campaigns, and the stereotype of the hyper-feminine woman is enforced via the respective *absence* (or anonymity) of women.

This study is mainly concerned with uncovering the ways in which the crisis of masculinity affects the advertising of beer and cider brands in South Africa. A number of relevant sub-questions are also answered as the study progresses, and include:

- What is the history of masculinity in South Africa?
- How are stereotypes upheld in alcohol advertising?
- How do such masculine images render women invisible, inferior, dominated, or merely decorative?

This study will investigate the effect of the crisis of masculinity (Decoteau, 2013) on the branding of alcohol, in particular beer and cider. It will show how marketers are targeting men and their feelings of uncertainty by creating advertisements that encourage a hyper-masculinity. This will be done by finding imagery which connote a hyper-masculinity in the advertisements of Savannah Dry, Windoek Lager, Black Label and Flying Fish. There will be an investigation into the strategies that advertisers use in order to connect with male audiences, for example phallic symbolism, sports culture and male camaraderie.

The study will also show how this type of advertising leads to the maintenance of strict gender binaries and the deliberate exclusion of women from some examples of alcohol advertising. It will also illustrate how this exclusion highlights the patriarchy still entrenched in South African society: a constant, unwanted reminder of the Apartheid regime (Mager, 2005; Conway, 2008; Decoteau, 2013).

The key concepts of the paper are hegemonic masculinity, the crisis of masculinity, the 'new man', and the 'new lad'. Hegemonic masculinity refers to the traditional form of masculinity which is most present in a society, and operates (via its perceived naturalness) to suppress or oppress other forms of masculinity, and femininity. In South Africa, hegemonic masculinity appears to centre on men being tough, rugged and insensitive. They love sports and beer and spending time with friends in pubs where they can combine the two. They reject all forms of femininity in their spaces and prefer to have power over women. They are often homophobic and sexist (Horsley, 2005; Robinson et al, 2011; Conway, 2008; Hinote and Webber, 2012).

The crisis of masculinity emerged in the wake of social progress, especially in terms of the Women's Movement and feminism, as well as the increased visibility and social legitimacy of LGBTQI individuals. Men do not know exactly where they stand in society anymore because for the first time in extremely long they do not hold all the power (although they do still hold most of it) and they perceive feminism and homosexuality as a threat. As a result there is a crisis of masculinity because

it is becoming more fluid and malleable and this is worrying for many who would prefer a fixed identity that offers surety and comfort (Decoteau, 2013; Gee and Jackson, 2011; Horsley, 2005; Towns et al, 2011).

The 'new man' is a man who does not exhibit traditional masculinity. They are sensitive, well dressed and comfortable in spending time with women. They embrace the fact that masculinity is more fluid today and are often referred to as metrosexual (Robinson et al, 2011; Peberdy, 2010; Horsley, 2005). The 'new lad' is a direct reaction to the 'new man'. It refers to men who have made a conscious decision to turn back to traditional, hegemonic masculinity in order to feel like they have a place in society. (Robinson et al, 2011; Peberdy, 2010; Horsley, 2005).

In order to undertake this investigation, I employ a semiotic analysis of selected advertisements from Savannah Dry, Windhoek Lager, Black Label and Flying Fish. These advertisements will be analysed through a gendered lens. In terms of symbolism and signification, I will be looking out for gender stereotypes of both men and women, the objectification of women, the prominent power of men in traditional male roles, and so forth. In their analysis, these advertisements are subsequently shown to engage the crisis of masculinity by harking back to a 'rugged' masculinity that 'reclaims' manhood.

The chapters to follow include a literature review in which all of the literature surrounding the subject of masculinity and alcohol advertising around the world and within South Africa are critically engaged with and will provide this paper with theoretical orientation. It will also help to contextualise where South Africa is in comparison with the rest of the world in terms of gender dynamics. Once this has been established a chapter on the research methodology will begin. In this chapter the methodology of the semiotic analysis will be explained. Once this has been done the data analysis chapter will start where the advertisements will be analysed individually using the concepts explained in the methodology chapter. The advertisements will be discussed individually in order to identify trends or categories that relate to the masculinity I suspect is being portrayed or propagated. Finally conclusions will be drawn from the above in which a summary of findings will be evident as well some concern into ethical implications and how to take this research further.

Literature Review:

Hegemonic Masculinity:

Gender identity is a social practice that has a reciprocal relationship with the social settings in which it is formed. In fact, the concepts of masculinity and femininity only arose in the 19th Century when lawmakers enforced a "social regulation of men and women into separate 'spheres' of living"

(Horsley: 44). Judith Butler, acclaimed gender theorist, says that gender categories are brought into being through a performance of them- they are not natural (1996). Peberdy agrees with Butler, saying that “masculinity is something to be demonstrated, staged, [or] ‘put on’” (2010: 238). Thus masculinity and femininity are performances that people ‘put on’ in varying ways according to the society in which they live, for example dress, occupation, demeanour, relationships and beliefs.

Since the 1990s there has been an increase in the use of the term ‘hegemonic masculinity’ (Luyt, 2012) and many different theorists have turned to it in order to explain gender dynamics (Luyt, 2012; Morrell et al, 2012; Reardon & Govender, 2011; Robinson et al, 2011; Horsley, 2005). They all seem to agree on what hegemonic masculinity is, and Horsley sums this up in her book on men’s lifestyle magazines in a way that incorporates most theorists’ opinions: “The concept of hegemony describes the cultural processes by which a certain section of society establishes and maintains its dominance over others” (2005: 57). Regarding gender, this means that “one form of masculinity rather than [a multiplicity of masculinities] is culturally exalted” (Connell, 1995: 76) and this is dependent on the society in which one lives. For the purposes of my research report I follow Horsley’s description of the attributes surrounding hegemonic masculinity in specifically Western societies:

In general, the characteristics associated with men in Western culture combine to form an *active* role, as opposed to the typically passive qualities often associated with females. Three of its main attributes are strength, ambition and command – all useful in ‘getting ahead’, and usually viewed in a positive light. Even the less positive characteristics associated with traditional masculinity – such as stubbornness and aggression – retain an air of respectability in that they remain indicative of power and control rather than weakness (2005: 43).

What many of these theorists disagree on are the ways in which hegemonic masculinity is actually enforced in societies. Robinson, Hall and Hockey (2011), for example, focus on masculinity in hairdressing. Their main finding surrounding masculinity in this case was that “hegemonic masculinity builds on a system of associations that privileges heterosexuality and perpetuates a model of gender and sexual relations that women’s and men’s bodies and actions must conform to” (2011: 32). According to them, hegemonic masculinity is enforced by the fear that men have of being judged by other men. They argue that “the dread of being ‘unmasked’ as not a real man has been a central organising principle of dominant cultural definitions of manhood” (Robinson et al, 2011: 32). What is interesting about their argument is that they found that men behave in a certain way

according to the society in which they live and it is men who police these specific masculine behaviours. As a result men are brought to believe that they must police each other and enforce a hegemonic masculinity. It is only this fear of judgement that keeps these men in, what I termed, the hegemonic masculine line.

What Luyt argues is that “the ascendancy and maintenance of a particular version of masculinity as hegemonic relies on cultural processes. These include texts, images and ideas... Representations of the ideal are made familiar through institutions such as the mass media” (2012: 49). Thus, instead of theorising that men police other men’s masculinity, Luyt insists that it is in fact the images and messages one sees in the mass media which are unavoidable in contemporary society and therefore constantly shape gender identity. Towns, Parker and Chase also argue that the media is “reinforcing problematic gendered institutional, social and cultural practices” (2011: 299). I align my research with these notions from media studies since I analyse advertisements of various beer and cider brands in South Africa through the lens of critical gender theory.

Media is such a vital part of this research regarding hegemonic masculinity and alcohol advertisements because “media is argued to act as an important cultural process through which a particular version of masculinity achieves as well as maintains hegemony” (Luyt, 2012: 36). A semiotic analysis of the chosen advertisements (evidently, a form of media) will be used because “language, symbolism and representations are critical to the messages employed in advertising to sell consumer items and alcohol is no exception” (Towns et al, 2011: 391). Towns et al state that “alcohol advertisements have been found to target young consumers by selling brand identities that draw from and reinforce certain existing social beliefs, values, identities and lifestyles” (2011: 391). This means that certain beer and cider brand identities (the so-called ‘personality’ of the brand) perpetuates the constructions within that society and it is important to study these brands and discover their identities in order to expose the gender inequality of the society. Thus advertising can be said to be a socialisation agent used to enforce current social notions of gender identity.

Crisis of Masculinity:

What is interesting about hegemonic masculinity today is that although it has been pervasive throughout history in almost all societies, it has almost always been challenged in varying degrees. Examples of these challenges include the women’s liberation and suffragette movement, the civil rights and black power movements, and the gay rights movement to name the most prevalent of the Twentieth Century. Since the 1990s, however, it has started to be challenged more frequently and widely and in real, concrete ways spread rapidly through social media. Towns et al defined these

challenges as “the potential undermining of the construction of white masculinity in the latter half of the twentieth century” (2011: 393). As a result of the changing position of men and their power in societies and the realisation that gender norms are not, in fact, natural, there is what has been “a perceived threat to men’s power and privilege” (Gee & Jackson, 2011: 86) which has been deemed a crisis of masculinity.

Robinson et al said that this crisis began “as modernity eroded patriarchy [and] men’s privileged position has come under scrutiny” (2011: 32), as discussed above. Men are subsequently afforded more room to express themselves in non-traditional ways. The so-called ‘new man’, whom Horsley describes as “caring, nurturing and sensitive on one side, and more narcissistic, passive and introspective on the other” (2005: 27) has therefore emerged in many Western societies. He is “more sensitive and domesticated” (Peberdy, 2010: 237) compared to the hegemonic, hyper-masculine man, and is more comfortable in female company as he does not feel that his masculinity is threatened in these spaces. Essentially, the ‘new man’ came about in the late 20th Century when feminism created awareness about gender performance, giving men the opportunity to express their masculinity (and femininity) in new ways.

Other men, however, began to experience their masculinity as compromised by the prominence of the ‘new man’. The emergence of the so-called ‘new lad’ can therefore be conceived of as a direct reaction to the ‘new man’: the ‘new lad’ marks a return back to the attributes surrounding hegemonic masculinity in an attempt to regain the sense of power that men possessed before advancements in gender equity. Horsley states that this ‘new lad’ phenomenon is an attempt to “re-distance men from any accusations of ‘feminine’ behaviour” (2005: 30) and thus turn back to the hegemonic masculine ideals of sports culture, male camaraderie, female objectification, hyper-masculinity, enforced heterosexuality and the policing of other men (Peberdy, 2010; Horsley, 2005; Gee and Jackson, 2012).

Masculinity in South Africa:

These trends of the new man and the new lad surrounding masculinity are evident in South Africa (SA), but because of South Africa’s fraught political history they seem to have local nuances at their bases. Luyt argues that “hegemonic masculinity in contemporary South Africa emphasizes the importance of masculine control, (un)emotionality, physicality and toughness, competition, success, responsibility, and (hetero)sexuality” (2012: 48). His findings are based on a discourse analysis exploring masculinity with ten focus groups of South African men. He found that the form of

machismo that is entrenched in SA society is a legacy of the Apartheid government and Afrikaner nationalism.

Conway actually suggests that it was this “masculine ideology that gave the apartheid state its legitimacy” (2008: 422). During apartheid national call-up (the compulsory two year conscription of all white men) was linked closely to the militarised masculinity that the National Party (NP) wanted to instil in young men. It was seen as a masculine privilege and duty to do military service for the country (Conway, 2008). President Botha actually said that SA is “not a nation of weaklings” (cited in Conway, 2008: 428) proving that the masculinity propagated by the NP was hegemonic and focused on male power. Therefore South African men were apparently socialised into linking their masculinity to aggression and physical strength, thereby inspiring a toxic model of masculinity. This hegemonic Afrikaner masculine legacy lives on in South Africa today and is evident in many spheres of society.

When the democratically elected African National Congress (ANC) came into power in 1994 many changes to the constitution were made. According to Morrell et al, “the new Constitution foregrounded women’s rights and recognized the right to sexual orientation” (2012: 16). The ANC brought in a new form of masculinity compared to that of the NP via Nelson Mandela’s politics. Morrell et al support this argument saying that “his public representation challenged much of the violent and authoritarian behaviours and attitudes associated with apartheid’s white male politicians, some elements within the [black] liberation movement and the patriarchal, traditional African masculinities of Bantustan leaders” (2012: 17). Reardon and Govender, who “used a quantitative correlational design to examine the relationship between traditional masculinity, conflict resolution and body image”, state that “for the majority of white people, post-apartheid South Africa is marked by a profound sense of loss; the loss of well-known roles, privileges and certainty” (2011: 78, 80). Men were suddenly shown different forms of masculinity to aspire to and this added to the already global crisis of masculinity in SA (Decoteau, 2013).

Mandela’s successor Thabo Mbeki tried to portray the same ‘modern man’ attributes but failed to resonate with the public and as a result he was quickly succeeded by South Africa’s next president Jacob Zuma. Zuma “epitomized a rejection of more thoughtful, egalitarian masculinities, rather asserting in the name of ‘tradition’, a masculinity that was heterosexist, patriarchal, implicitly violent and that glorified ideas of male sexual entitlement, notably polygamy, and conspicuous sexual success with women” (Morrell et al, 2012: 17). In her research, Decoteau found that “for many, the

past signifies horrific racism, violence, and oppression, but also the glory of struggle and the hope for freedom” (2013: 154). This means that now that SA has established a democracy, men are struggling to find a cause on which to hinge their masculinity, which may be why a reversion to the past is such a popular notion. Since his first term as president began Zuma has succeeded in presenting gender equity as “anti-African, implicitly equating it with modernity, (white) middle-class aspirations, and widespread lack of (male) economic advancement” (Morrell et al, 2012: 18). This popularity gained on the discourse of hegemonic masculinity has led “many social commentators to interpret Zuma’s rise to power as simply a return to sexual conservatism” (Decoteau, 2013; 147). What this illustrates is that SA is no different to the rest of the world in that it has had exposure to the ‘new man’ (in Mandela) as well as the ‘new lad’ (in Zuma) and this return to hegemonic masculinity is evident in the advertising of beer and cider brands in the country.

Masculinity and Alcohol:

For many years theorists have been discussing the link between alcohol, particularly beer, and masculinity. In their study on masculinity and alcohol in the USSR, Hinote and Webber found that “men actively use their bodies to embody successful masculinity through heavy drinking. Moreover, this drinking is a marker of masculine identity, which means it is one of the revered ways of being a man and thus requires other men to position themselves in relation to it” (2012: 296). Thus if men drink alcohol they are considered to embody one of the most prominent behavioural attributes of hegemonic masculinity. Gee and Jackson agree in their paper on beer and masculinity in New Zealand, saying that “beer - in conjunction with particular cultural practices such as sport and leisure activities - is one cardinal leisure commodity in suturing masculinity with male power and privilege” (2012: 83). They also found that “the role of beer in signifying and symbolising masculinity is unparalleled. Beer typically functions as a medium for many men to initiate them into adulthood, demonstrate their masculinity, and form relationships with other men” (2012: 86). Therefore, for the purposes of this study, beer is assumed to occupy a hierarchical position amongst alcoholic beverages. By implication, other beverages are therefore taken to signify either a lesser masculinity or, indeed, the lack of masculinity. According to Stibbe, who did an analysis on *Men’s Health* magazines, “if beef is raised to almost legendary status among foods in *Men’s Health*, then it is beer that is given this position among drinks” (2004: 41). Considering these magazines are supposed to focus on health it seems contradictory that they would advertise beer to such a large extent. It can thus be said that the cultural significance of beer is ubiquitous across media aimed at men, despite the specific focus of various publications. Stibbe states that “the glorification of beer beyond its health benefits (in moderation) and despite its dangers (in excess), again, goes beyond

straightforward health goals and relates to the reproduction of hegemonic masculinity” (2004: 43). Thus the literature shows that from America to Russia to New Zealand all findings are the same: alcohol relates directly to the performance of masculinity.

This is also evident in South Africa and is discussed with regards to South African Breweries (SAB) by Chetty who says that SAB “linked itself with, and helped to define, the masculine culture of beer drinking through its advertising and support of sporting events, particularly black soccer tournaments and rugby matches” (2010: 229). She states that “in the post-1994 period of democracy, sport became a unifying factor along with its association with beer drinking” (2010: 230), but this unifying only occurred amongst men and continues to exclude women. This unifying is also sentimental and imaginary because it completely ignores the historical inequality of black and white men (Mager, 2005). As a result even in SA’s democracy whose constitution demands gender equity, women are still consistently told not to drink beer because it is related to sport which is emphasised as a masculine space. In this sense, beer (as well as the *practice* of drinking beer) becomes a salient signifier of (specifically male) power. Thus SA follows the global trend of relating alcohol, particularly beer, to the construction and maintenance of a hegemonic masculinity.

In this research paper I will be exploring the effects of the crisis of masculinity on selected beer and cider brands in SA. It combines the very current topics of gender theory and alcohol but still fills a gap in the knowledge available because alcohol and the crisis of masculinity has not yet been researched in SA.

Research Methodology:

The problem this research will be dealing with is the sexism present in the advertising of beer and cider brands in South Africa - a concept supported by theorists including Gee and Jackson (2012), Hinote and Webber (2012), Mager (2005), and Towns, Parker and Chase (2012), amongst many others. It will particularly concentrate on how these advertisements display an exclusive hegemonic masculinity, discussed in the previous chapter, and how this focus on men and masculinity completely erodes women from the space of beer and cider drinking in the media. Women therefore often find themselves relatively absent from selected beer and cider advertisements, an issue that will be problematised in this paper through a focus on the representation of masculinity within the selected advertisements. In researching this problem certain questions must be answered: In what ways has the crisis of masculinity affected the advertising of beer and cider brands in South Africa?

How are stereotypes upheld in alcohol advertising? And, finally, how does this render women invisible in this sphere?

The research design is qualitative and secondary because it consists of an analysis of advertisements and various informative sources while no primary research will be done, for example focus groups or interviews. Qualitative research is beneficial to this study because it offers a “richly descriptive reading” (Merriam, 2002: 5) of the advertisements. The study will not be using any data like figures, percentages or graphs (which are used for quantitative research), but will instead intensely analyse specific beer and cider advertisements.

A critical qualitative approach was taken because the study is aimed at discovering general laws that guide the relationship between gender and alcohol advertising and will not be dealing with individuals, but rather their contexts. This type of approach focuses on “how larger contextual factors affect the ways in which individuals construct reality” (Merriam, 2002: 4). The research is interested in the constructedness of gender and how this is illustrated in alcohol advertisements in South Africa, particularly regarding beer and cider brands. Such advertising images can therefore be conceived of as constituting the population of this study. This constructedness will become evident through this type of study because it “uncovers, examines and critiques the social, cultural and psychological assumptions that structure and limit our ways of thinking and being in the world” (Merriam, 2002: 9). Thus a critical qualitative approach in this case is important to use because it will expose the ways in which specific masculinities are used by advertising agencies in order to promote beer and cider and thus exclude women from the realm of these brands, and their associated claims to power.

The research is object-based because a reading of beer and cider advertisements will be conducted. The sample size will consist of one advertisement from each brand, namely, Windhoek Lager, Black Label, Savannah Dry and Flying Fish. These advertisements will be collected by looking for advertisements that either support or disprove the argument that hyper-masculinity is evident in beer and cider brands’ marketing and that this results in the exclusion of women in these spaces. This data will be collected on YouTube, thus limiting the study to only one form of media and excluding print media. Television advertisements will be used to prove the argument surrounding hegemonic masculinity and the construction of gender in private and public spaces in alcohol marketing in South Africa. These advertisements are all recent and all fall into 2015 and 2016, ensuring that they are contemporary and current. Advertisements that possess the qualities of hyper-masculinity or hyper-masculine behaviour identified earlier will deliberately be chosen. The advertisements that offer the most to work with to facilitate rich description and analysis will be

used. This is, therefore, a purposive sampling method. As Merriam argued, “the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis” (2002: 5) in qualitative research. This is because the aim of this research is to gain understanding and so “the human instrument, which is able to be immediately responsive and adaptive, would seem to be the ideal means of collecting and analysing data” (Merriam, 2002: 5). This individualistic form of data collection is weakened by any prejudices that the researcher may have. This obstacle can be overcome, however, as long as the researcher knows exactly what their prejudices are before they begin so as to be aware of them at all times and attempt to master them.

The research procedure is desk-bound and includes semiotic analyses (without losing sight of uncovering the constructedness of gender) of the chosen advertisements. The aim here was to identify signifiers of masculinity within these advertisements: they include, but are not limited to, male camaraderie, objectification of women, the public space in the form of a bar, and men watching sports. Semiotics and advertising are known to go hand-in-hand; Bianchi states that “brands act as signs, and therefore as fundamental semiotic devices” (2011: 263). This form of analysis was chosen because “semiotics can be applied to anything which can be seen as signifying something - in other words, to everything which has meaning within a culture” (Chandler, 2014); such as advertisements. According to Bianchi advertising is “viewed as suitable terrain for examining visual codes in terms of the relations between rhetoric and ideology” (2011: 247), again proving the effectiveness of semiotics in the advertising field. Semiotics is an appropriate methodology (while, essentially, also fulfilling the role of a major theoretical body that guides the study) because the advertisements act as the vehicles for the larger discourses surrounding male power that manifest in society in general – semiotics allows the researcher to identify and critique the signs that are strung together in codes (the culturally constructed superiority of men) which become naturalised.

A semiotic analysis consists of various concepts which when applied to an advertisement, for example, allow a researcher to conduct an in depth analysis. This type of analysis relies more "on persuasive argument than objective data analysis to achieve its ends" (Banks, 2007:7). Semiotics looks at both encoding (the creation of texts) and decoding (the interpretation of texts). Chandler (2014) suggests that there are five steps to the process of a semiotic analysis in which these concepts emerge. These steps will be used to analyse the chosen advertisements. However, only the steps that are relevant and that apply to each individual advertisement will be used for each individual analysis. Step one is to identify the signs. Oswald says that “the sign is a unit of culture” (2015: 119). Chandler defines signs as aspects of advertisements that “take the form of

words, images, sounds, odours, flavours, acts or objects, but [which] have no intrinsic meaning and become signs only when we invest them with meaning" (2014). This investment of meaning from the viewer shows that advertisements have specific cultural meanings in specific contexts which is why a semiotic analysis works so well with this critical qualitative approach which has a focus on constructedness. Semiotics works well with advertisements because "the very idea that brands have semiotic value for consumers is based in the idea of symbolic consumption, whereby consumers endow goods with meanings" (Oswald, 2015: 117). Chandler states that we interpret signs on a subconscious level "by relating them to familiar systems of conventions" (2014). There are two aspects of signs one should be aware of when conducting a semiotic analysis- these are the signifier and the signified. The signifier is the form that the sign takes and the signified is the concept that the sign represents to the reader (Chandler, 2014).

Another aspect that is important to look at when discussing the text (and which is usually looked at in the beginning of the analysis) is the modality of the text. Modality refers to the reliability and authenticity of the text (Chandler, 2014). Chandler states that "the extent to which a text may be perceived as 'real' depends in part on the medium employed. Writing, for instance, generally has a lower modality than film and television" (2014). This can be attributed to the fact that film and photography are mimetic media – they 'mimic' reality. The formal features of the mode which should be looked at here include whether it is three-dimensional or flat, detailed or abstract, colour or monochrome, edited or unedited, moving or still, audible or silent, among many others (Chandler, 2014). The content features of the text which can be used to determine the modality include whether it is possible or impossible, plausible or implausible, familiar or unfamiliar, current or distant in time, local or distant in space, and so on (Chandler, 2014). Ultimately the modality involves deciding whether the text is believable to the viewer.

Chandler's second step in the semiotic analysis process is to identify the codes present in the media. According to Chandler, "signs are not meaningful in isolation, but only when they are interpreted in relation to each other" and "the production and interpretation of texts depends upon the existence of codes or conventions for communication" (2014). Thus it can be said that codes essentially provide a framework in which signs can be interpreted. Bianchi stated that advertising is "*a form of communication* that interacts with other forms within a specific cultural and social context" (2011: 260) and is it because of this context that codes are important to understand. Oswald states that semiotics "enables the researcher to investigate how cultural codes structuring culture and social organization influence the ways humans respond to messages in their environments" (2015: 120). In order to 'read' or comprehend the code of masculinity, which is at the core of these texts, I

therefore employ critical gender theory as an interpretive scheme. This means that the signifiers and the signified within the chosen advertisements will be understood through the lens of gender theory.

The next step to take according to Chandler is to identify paradigm sets within the media being analysed. Paradigms concern substitution; they are associative relations. A paradigm is a typical example of something. In the case of this paper, a paradigm that represents masculinity could be beer. As stated by Chandler, paradigms are “functional contrasts- they involve differentiation” (2014). He says that “paradigmatic relations refer intertextually to signifiers which are absent from the text” (Chandler, 2014). Paradigms are important to assess in a semiotic analysis because they “provide a structural context within which signs make sense; they are the structural forms through which signs are organised into codes” (Chandler, 2014). In order to understand a sign one needs to understand what can be substituted into its place and know the associations that the sign carries. Within paradigms one can also focus on intertextuality which is when one text is used or is referred to within another text. Denotations and connotations can also be examined: denotations being the literal or dictionary meaning of a sign and connotation being the cultural and personal associations of a sign. Both intertextuality and denotations and connotations can help the viewer understand what substitutions can be made and can thus understand the paradigms in which the signs exist. Essentially “signs are in paradigmatic relation when the choice of one excludes the choice of another” (Chandler, 2014).

Chandler’s next step in the semiotic process is to identify the relationships between various signifiers, otherwise known as a syntagmatic analysis. He stated that “thinking and communication depends on discourse instead of isolated signs” (Chandler, 2014) which is why the relationship between signs and the conversations they are in with each other are necessary to understand. Spatial syntagmatic relations look at where the sign is in relation to other signs in the text and are important in media such as advertisements which are usually dominated by visuals (Chandler, 2014). Here one would focus on relations such as above or below, in front or behind, close or distant, left or right, centre or periphery, and so on. Another important aspect of this step is to look at the horizontal and vertical axes and where the sign falls on these: horizontal, because of the fact that Western languages usually read from right to left and right objects are usually seen as hierarchically more important than objects that fall on the left; and vertical, because objects that are on top of others are seen as more important (Chandler, 2014). Such ‘spatial considerations’ are indispensable to my analyses, since they often give access to understanding the gendered relationships that exist

between the male and female subjects in the selected advertisements. The structure of a narrative and the relationship it has with the viewer or with the visuals included is important too because it can serve to normalise or to shock, depending on whether the narrative has been heard before or not, or whether it relates to the visuals or not (Chandler, 2014).

The fifth and final part of the process is to discuss the ideological functions of the signs in the text and of the text as a whole (Chandler, 2014). Ideology refers to “codes that reinforce or are congruent with structures of power. Ideology works largely by creating forms of ‘common sense,’ of the taken-for-granted in everyday life” (Chandler, 2014). The ideology within the texts analysed in this paper is the ideology of the Western world and the gender politics within it. Ideology links quite closely to code in that they both naturalise particular discourses, but codes are on a smaller, individualistic level (advertisement) and ideology is on a much broader, universal level (society). According to Oswald, semiotics can be used to provide clarity through cultural context (2015: 116) and it is this cultural context which is highlighted in the chosen ideology. In other words, ideology represents the society in which an advertisement exists and light can thus be shone on this society through a semiotic analysis of what it has produced. Once each of Chandler’s five steps have been taken (where applicable or appropriate), a complete semiotic analysis of a chosen text, in this case advertisement, will have occurred.

Data Analysis:

Savannah Dry

The first advertisement to be analysed is for Savannah Dry, called “Savannah’s got apples, have you?” (2015). This is an interesting case because ciders are generally considered to be womanly (in other words, *not* beer) alcoholic beverages and yet Savannah Dry still chooses to direct their advertising towards men. One can only assume that this is in order to lure in more buyers because they consider the female target audience to be ‘locked down’ in that ciders are most commonly purchased by women. What they may be achieving, however, is an alienation of women because of the direct focus on masculinity.

The advertisement centres on an ordinary office worker at his office party. There is only one cocktail sausage left which his boss and he both want. He takes the sausage and eats it while looking his boss in the eyes in a daring manner. The advertisement ends with the narrator asking, “Savannah’s got apples, have you?” with a shot of a Savannah bottle and one apple on either side of it. The advertisement focuses on the rhetoric of men having enough confidence to be able to drink a cider

which is arguably considered a feminine drink, but also engages the stereotype of men as courageous and competitive.

The codes and signs in the text firstly have to be situated in the social and cultural context discussed in the literature review. Within South Africa there is a dominant hegemony of masculinity and patriarchy still rules (Luyt, 2012; Conway, 2008) and this results in alcohol advertisements focusing on men rather than women, even if they are the dominant drinkers of the cider (in this case). The signs below are thus viewed through the lens of critical gender theory.

There are three dominant signs in this advertisement and they are all phallic symbols. The first major sign is that of the cocktail sausage that Mark and his boss both want. The cocktail sausage is an obvious signifier for a penis, indeed, in the very word 'cocktail' lies the word 'cock', which is a colloquial term used for penis. The next sign is verbal and emerges from the narrator saying that what Mark did "took serious apples". This refers to the frequently used colloquial proverb employed by men to provoke competition over who has the "balls" (testicles) to take risks. One can note that apples are also used in making Savannah and this begs the question whether it takes 'balls' to drink Savannah and risk feminisation, or whether Savannah 'gives' one 'balls'. The third sign appears at the end of the advertisement and features the Savannah bottle with an apple on either side of it. The bottle and apples respectively signify a penis and testicles and refers back to the narrator substituting "balls" with "apples". The narrator's voice also operates as a sign. It is a deep, manly and authoritative voice commentating on the actions of the subjects in the advertisements, none of whom speak. The voice is God-like (and in typically patriarchal fashion) dictates and looks down upon its subjects. This is a powerful metaphor for the manner in which patriarchy and heteronormativity police society and especially gender-appropriate behaviour (Conway, 2008).

A paradigm, as previously mentioned, refers to the ease with which signs can be replaced with other signs which may connote similar or different abstract concepts. In this case, besides the connotations of the phallic symbols discussed above, there is the glass of wine that Mark's female co-worker is drinking when she looks at him in admiration. One has to wonder why, when it has already been stated that women are the main drinkers of Savannah Dry, she is not drinking a Savannah Dry, considering that is the drink that the advertisement is promoting. What this communicates to female drinkers is that they cannot drink Savannah Dry because they do not have "apples".

Syntagmatics (the relationship between signs and the communication they're in together (Chandler, 2014)) is an important aspect to be analysed too. The representation of women in the advertisement

is almost non-existent, and when they are represented they are relegated to the background. In the beginning of the advertisement there are two women who are talking to Mark. The one woman has her back to the camera, making her completely anonymous to the viewer, and the other woman (who will be seen later on in the advertisement) is drinking wine and laughing at Mark's joke. The woman drinking wine mentioned above looks at Mark through the window of where her and the anonymous woman are sitting after he takes the last cocktail sausage. She looks at him as if she is completely shocked and with a look of complete admiration that he took something the boss wanted. The women in the advertisement are thus all anonymous in that they are unnamed and are not heard. They seem to be placed in the advertisement in a merely decorative sense. In their voyeurism they also reinforce the men as the dominant subjects of the advertisement: the women are also always in spaces outside that of the main party space- they are always looking in. Thus, Savannah can be said to alienate their female drinkers because their advertisement is directed towards men: there are no women drinking Savannah in the advertisement, women are not directly involved in the advertisement- their existence makes no difference in the narrative, and women do not have the so-called "apples" that are apparently needed to drink Savannah because they, indeed, lack masculinity.

A final analysis needs to be done on the modality of this Savannah advertisement. It has a high modality because film is the most mimetic of real life. For women, however, the modality may not be as high because the fact that Mark's female colleagues do not involve themselves in the office party is unrealistic. Also keeping the modality low for women is the way that Mark's colleague reacts to him taking the last cocktail sausage. She looks at him with her mouth open in utter shock (as if this act is completely out of the ordinary) and with a look of new found respect. This incident is actually completely insignificant and is blown out of proportion by the narrator and the dramatic music. The male action is amplified and revered and the exaggeration, therefore, serves to lend more power to the male figure and his performance of masculinity. Thus the modality may be high for male viewers but is more than likely lower for female viewers.

In the Savannah advertisement "Savannah's got balls, have you?" they are targeting an all-male audience because of how they exclude women from their advertisement. They do this by keeping women out of the narrative and by not having women drink Savannah in the advertisement. They also do this by promoting a reclaimed masculinity through their punchline "Savannah's got apples, have you?" This reclaimed masculinity refers to the 'new lad' phenomenon which Horsley described as an attempt to "re-distance men from any accusations of 'feminine' behaviour" (2005; 30) after the emergence of new forms of masculinity started to be accepted and incorporated in society.

Windhoek Lager:

In the following advertisement for Windhoek Lager, "The Bro House Party" (2016), there is, again, a direct focus on masculinity. This Windhoek Lager advertisement is part of a series of advertisements called "The Bros", based on the colloquial term used by men to address each other. The series follows five men and shows how each one of them somehow breaks the "Bro Code". Each man has a different persona and in this case the advertisement focuses on "Romance Roger". The advertisement is set at a house party that the five friends are attending. Roger is talking to a woman and his friends want to know who she is because she is so beautiful. Then a competition (shown onscreen) suddenly pauses the advertisement and interrupts the narrative by asking the viewer which 'bro code' Roger breaks. They are then given the options: A- "don't try to BS your bros about a hook up" or B- "Bros don't go to salons, ever". After this competition that the viewer can enter via SMS has been shared, the advertisement continues. Roger's friends find out that the girl he has been talking to and giving nods to his friends about behind her back was actually his babysitter when he was younger. A voiceover then says "pure beer has three ingredients and nothing else" as Roger gets given a Windhoek Lager by a friend. The beer becomes a signifier of 'pure' (hegemonic) masculinity.

This text's codes are similar to those in the Savannah Dry advertisement: the patriarchal South African society and culture. This advertisement also lends itself to the crisis of masculinity in that it portrays particularly well the previously discussed 'new lad' phenomenon (Horsley, 2005). This Windhoek Lager advertisement shows men who are obsessed with being "bros" and ensuring that each other stays true to what is called "the Bro Code". This is reminiscent of the previously discussed policing of other men's masculinity by other men. Robinson et al describe this policing as "the dread of being 'unmasked' as not a real man has been a central organising principle of dominant cultural definitions of manhood" (2011; 32). Thus the analysis is done through a gendered lens and the codes of the crisis of masculinity.

The signs in the advertisement vary unlike the phallic symbols in the Savannah Dry advertisement but they relate to Savannah Dry in that the women here are also decorative and play roles that emphasise the centrality of the men. The first sign is the woman in the red dress that Roger is speaking to who remains nameless even though she plays such an integral role in the narrative. The women in this advertisement are seen as objects who are there merely for the entertainment and excitement of the men because of not only their anonymity but also because they do not drink the Windhoek Lager. In fact, the moment she is offered a beer Roger immediately takes it from her saying that the lady needs a glass. By now the advertisement is past half way and she has yet to say anything even though she has been the focal point of the advertisement. As a sign she merely

represents the male gaze and an opportunity for the 'bros' to embarrass Roger when they discover (when she finally speaks) that she used to babysit Roger.

The next sign is the competition that pauses the advertisement so that the viewer can enter via SMS. As already stated, the viewer is asked which part of the Bro Code Roger breaks: that he has been to a salon or that he lies to his friends about a 'hook up'. The Bro Code becomes a powerful metaphor for hegemonic masculinity in this advertisement. In order to enter the competition, the viewer must have a knowledge of the 'bro code' which immediately excludes those who are not 'bros'. It is thus impossible for a woman (who is excluded from 'brohood') to enter this competition and thus their interest is lost in the rest of the advertisement because they do not care how Roger disappoints his friends because they are unable to enter. In fact, the discourse is permeated by power: the 'bro code' remains obscured to women, who find it unintelligible, thereby creating binaries of 'inside' and 'outside'; included and excluded. By promoting the rules of the Bro Code, this Windhoek Lager advertisement acts as a guide on how to be a man. 'Real' men do not go to salons (reminiscent of the findings of Robinson et al (2011) when they did an investigation into masculinity in hairdressing), and they should pursue many sexual conquests, and flaunt them. This is a difficult tightrope of rules to manoeuvre and places unrealistic expectations of hegemonic masculinity on men.

As a sign, the Windhoek Lager beer itself acts as a barometer of acceptable 'bro' behaviour. It is used to combat any signs of deferral from the hegemonic masculinity ingrained in South African society (Luyt, 2012) and the beer industry (Gee and Jackson, 2011). Thus the beer signifies the judgement and domination over women and also one's belonging to the masculine group of the 'bros': all of Roger's 'bros' are drinking Windhoek Lager when they are talking to the woman in a line, as if in a panel. They are acting like judges, deciding on whether this woman is good enough to be considered good looking by them. So in this case Windhoek Lager is used by the men in order to show solidarity between them and ostracise the woman who is not drinking the beer. Again, women are discouraged from drinking the alcohol brand advertised. It is also used to show the men's status as 'bros'. Roger lies to his friends about who the woman is and thus breaks the Bro Code and for that time is not considered a part of the 'bros' until he is forgiven by them and is embraced back into their group by being given a Windhoek Lager. No matter what a man does, as long as he is drinking a beer he will be considered a 'real' man.

The syntagmatics of the advertisement relate to the way that the Windhoek Lager is physically positioned. Throughout the advertisement, as previously stated, the 'bros' constantly have Windhoek Lagers in their hands (besides Roger who only gets given one at the end as some kind of 'bro'-reward). Roger and the main female character do not have Windhoek Lagers until the end.

When they join Roger's friends, the woman is given a Windhoek Lager but it is immediately taken away from her because Roger needs to "get the lady a glass". As soon as she comes in contact with the Windhoek Lager and Roger's friends she is differentiated from them. A woman cannot be a 'bro' because according to Roger she has to drink the beer out of a glass, not from the bottle like everyone else. It also marks a double-standard regarding the 'informality' that men can enjoy (without being judged as uncouth), while a level of sophistication (and indeed 'daintiness') is expected of women. Drinking straight from the bottle connotes the 'ruggedness' these advertisements try so hard to portray. When Roger gets back and gives the woman a glass along with her Windhoek she still does not drink it, or even pour it into the glass as if she is going to drink it. Thus although she gets close to the beer, Windhoek Lager is never consumed by her and there is thus always a distance between her and the beer.

In the shot where Roger is talking to the woman they are both seated but Roger is seated in a chair that is higher than hers and she has to look up at him when they are talking. These signs are nonverbal and are referred to as performative. He has one foot propped up on her chair in a position of dominance whereas she has her legs crossed. He therefore physically, and in terms of presence, dominates the space. This shot reinforces the patriarchy that the advertisement portrays via the 'bros' because he is seated above her in a position of dominance and his relaxed seated posture shows he is very sure of himself compared to her (whose arms and legs are crossed as if she does not feel comfortable). He is able to feel comfortable in this position because, like his 'bros' who judge her from a panel, he looks down on her and judges her from above. The men are given more dominance than her by means of their numbers, confident demeanours and in the fact they all have names (while she remains anonymous).

The modality of the advertisement is high because of the use of film as a medium. South African audiences particularly would find it realistic in that the terms 'Bro Code' and 'bro' are frequently used in South African society, especially by the younger generations. The narrative is also realistic because, in patriarchal terms, the conquest of women is held in high esteem. The advertisement perfectly shows how men police each other's masculinity (Robinson et al, 2011). In this case Windhoek Lager is used to gauge masculinity: they are implying that as soon as a man drinks a Windhoek beer then he will be exemplifying the hegemonic bravado of masculinity in South Africa and he will thus be considered one of the 'bros'.

Windhoek is a sign of cementing oneself as a 'bro' in South Africa. The advertisement links the brand closely to the 'new lad' phenomenon (Horsley, 2005), illustrating the beer industry's policing of hegemonic masculinity in South Africa. This is also achieved by the way that women are treated in

the advertisement: they remain anonymous and, like the Savannah Dry advertisement, do not *actually* drink the beer.

Black Label:

Black Label has become synonymous with South African men feeling 'manly'. This advert, called "The Horse" (2015) illustrates this perception of the brand and further solidifies its position as a masculine brand in consumers' minds. In the advertisement a woman is towing a horse in a horse trailer but the horse starts to get upset and so the woman stops her car and gets out of it to try and calm the horse down. It only gets angrier though and ends up kicking down the door of the trailer and running out. The woman then screams for help and three men chase the horse through the streets of Cape Town. When the three men get to the horse one of them steps forward and calms the horse down by stroking its face. Afterwards there is a shot of the men and the horse owner at a bar and the woman gives the man a cowboy hat. The words "champion men deserve champion beer" are then said.

The focus of this advertisement is on how men arguably cannot assert their masculinity without the presence of femininity (although, as I have argued, men also perform masculinity for other men). The men are only able to prove their masculinity because the woman loses control of her horse and shouts for help. In the Black Label advertisement women are portrayed as helpless and in need of being rescued by men. The crisis of masculinity is evident here as the 'new lad' tries everything in his power to prove his masculinity (Horsley, 2005) - even run after a horse.

The first sign of the advertisement is the horse. It is an enormous black stallion and there are many shots of its muscles working, showing how strong the horse is. The horse itself is a signifier of masculinity or virility. It also emphasises the physical strength, indeed *physicality* and *action*, often associated with the masculine. The fact that it breaks down the trailer door also proves this. When it is running through the streets there are also close-up shots of its eyes which show its fear and as a result the viewer knows that it is dangerous. Finally when the three men catch up to it the horse rears back onto its two hind legs, showcasing its power and size. The man then steps forward and tames this supposed wild beast with ease. The fact that the horse is represented as a magnificent, powerful being renders the man that can tame it even more powerful. This illustrates the 'new lad' phenomenon because men who watch this want to be as masculine as the man taming the wild horse and being a 'new lad' is about constantly proving one's masculine worth (Horsley, 2005).

The woman in the advertisement is also a sign. She signifies the "damsel in distress" which is typical in fairy tale narratives in which women await being saved by men. She is wearing a blush coloured

top while the men wear varying shades of grey, further emphasising her femininity. This trope of the fairy tale is further cemented when she gives him a cowboy hat at the end of the advertisement. This gesture is mimetic of the princess giving the knight her handkerchief as a token of gratitude for saving her. Instead of giving him something as feminine as a handkerchief, however (because what would a masculine man like him do with a feminine item like that?), she gives him a cowboy hat. The advertisement portrays women as weak and helpless in order to further enhance the masculinity of the men in the narrative. When they are all in the bar celebrating the fact that the horse was caught the men are all drinking Black Label but she not drinking anything. This, like the other advertisements, alienates women from the brand because they are not told by the media that they should or can drink beer.

The syntagmatics of the Black Label advertisement, too, are interesting. In the scene where the man tames the horse in the alleyway in the beginning it is shot from a low angle, showing the height of the horse and making it seem much bigger and more frightening than the man. The shot then changes to the man's face and the viewer watches as he becomes more determined and more in control. As this happens the camera moves up so that the shot is from a normal angle, showing that the man and the horse are equals.

However, the men and the female character are not represented as equals. This is illustrated by the fact that she is refused the signifier of the beer. In the bar scene at the end, she does not drink Black Label with them, further isolating her from the celebrations of the taming of the horse. She does not even drink wine like the office colleague in Savannah Dry's advertisement because the space of the bar, and as discussed in the literature review the public space, is the space of men and if she drinks alcohol in this space then she would start to feel more comfortable. For the masculine subject this appears to be a form of control over the woman. In the final scene, the 'new lads' are happy to have her there to dote on them and to thank them but they do not want her there as an equal who can socialise with them. This would mean the penetration of their purely masculine space and thus a threat to their masculinity because they hinge their masculinity on spaces like this. Further emphasising this fact is the music playing when the man takes a sip of Black Label with the lyrics "I'm a man... Yes I am". This cements the positioning of Black Label as a manly beer, and simultaneously engages a self-congratulatory discourse of male valour and confidence

The modality of this advertisement is high in that it is a film but the narrative is not. The exaggerated plot serves only to mythologise masculinity, but (ironically) also represents the unrealistic expectations placed on men by hegemonic masculinity. The fact that these men can run as fast as a horse that size with that strength is hard to believe. It is also unlikely that the female character

would not have anything to drink when celebrating at a bar, even if it was a glass of wine and not a beer. Thus the modality of the advertisement is not high, particularly for women, but South African men who are facing the crisis of masculinity would find the advert appealing because it reasserts their masculine worth (drinking Black Label).

The analysis of this Black Label advertisement serves to further highlight how obsessed beer and cider brands are with masculinity. Black Label clings to the hyper-masculine allure of the hegemonic masculinity within South Africa in order to try to convince men that if they drink Black Label then they will be manlier. Advertisements act as socialising agents and are parasitic in that they seize upon existing social discourses (in this case the crisis of masculinity). As Luyt explains that “media are argued to act as an important cultural process through which a particular version of masculinity achieves as well as maintains hegemony” (2012; 36). And this works because of the already discussed crisis of masculinity that is rife in South Africa (Luyt, 2012; Conway, 2008). The women in these advertisements are only there to serve the purpose of the men, they always remain anonymous and they never drink the alcohol being advertised. I argue that this lack of agency and representation in the advertisements of beer and cider brands ensure that women do not feel comfortable drinking them and ensure that masculinity remains intact. These advertisements prove the fragility of masculinity, the crisis that masculinity is in at the moment, and the fact that gender is a social construct. They also expose how advertisements exploit the crisis of masculinity.

Flying Fish:

The Flying Fish brand does not follow the conventions of masculine advertising that the other beer and cider brands portray. It instead shows men and women drinking the beer together, usually in a party situation. It is possible that they are able to target both men and women in this way because beer is traditionally considered a manly drink (Mager, 2005) but it is also fruit flavoured which markets it towards more of a feminine target group.

The chosen advertisement is called “Flying Fish: flavoured beer” (2013) because it was one of the first advertisements for the brand when it came onto the market. It shows a party on the beach where everyone is drinking Flying Fish. Men and women are flying kites together, sitting together, dancing together and, most importantly, drinking Flying Fish together. The voice over says “who says life has to be ordinary? Who says beer can’t be flavoured? Go on, add some flavour with new Flying Fish premium flavoured beer”. This advertisement lacks the same kind of discursive detail provided by the previous three advertisements analysed. As a result, Chandler’s five steps are not explicitly employed to analyse this particular advertisement. Yet, this advertisement has been purposively chosen specifically because it offers a vision of masculinity different from the discourses that

permeate the previous advertisements: whereas Black Label, Windhoek Lager and Savannah Dry appear to appeal to the 'new lad', the gender politics of Flying Fish engage the notion of the 'new man' (Horsely, 2005), thereby offering the study with an alternative vision of masculinity and alcohol advertising in South Africa.

As this was one of their first advertisements the advertising team would have been sure to portray the brand properly so that people know exactly what Flying Fish is and what it stands for as a brand. What the viewer finds is that Flying Fish is apparently about having a good time with friends in a very inclusive environment. They completely overlook the traditional notion of public and private spaces being gendered and instead focus on both sexes drinking together. The only way they are able to do this, however, is by taking the location away from the bars and the cities and the workplaces to the beach, a place unencumbered with particular notions of gender. But then it must be asked whether Flying Fish even disrupts anything in the advertising of beer because they are taking it away from the spaces dominated by men in beer and cider advertisements instead of challenging or negotiating these spaces. What would have been more effective for women would have been to have set the party in a bar or at a house party where beer and cider advertisements frequent and where hegemonic masculinity reigns. To disrupt a public space like that would have been a much more poignant campaign for Flying Fish, but perhaps they were too worried about alienating their male audience (although no other brands seem to worry about alienating female audiences).

Also interesting is the line "who says beer can't be flavoured?" It is directly towards the male audience who may be sceptical about a beer that is fruit flavoured. As previously discussed, masculinity is policed by men and so to answer this question: hegemonic masculine men. For them, it may seem to encroach on their masculine beer space. It may be a threat because it may be seen to 'feminise' beer. This further motivates the fact that Flying Fish is specifically targeting the 'new man' (Horsley, 2005) because he is someone who is willing to try things that are considered feminine. The 'new man' goes against hegemonic masculinity and would not be deterred by other men when considering drinking a flavoured beer.

While it is good that Flying Fish integrates the genders, it does not succeed in rocking the proverbial boat because it is a *flavoured* beer. One can be almost certain that if it was normal beer then it would not be so equally advertised. Although 'equally' here seems misplaced considering only the 'new man' is advertised towards and not the traditional hegemonic man in this advertisement. This is why, although Flying Fish is a beer and it thwarts the previously discussed advertisements overrun with masculine propaganda, it has no effect on the dominant paradigm. It refuses to completely go

against the grain which is why the advertisement produced is so shallow that it cannot be analysed with Chandler's five semiotic steps.

Conclusion:

Unfortunately, even though the rest of the world and the different brand spheres continue to change and adapt to new gender norms in society (Gordon, 2016), the beer industry is far behind. In South Africa beer and cider brands still promote a particular hegemonic masculinity and drinking these alcoholic beverages thus imbues its male drinkers with particular, gender-specific qualities. In the case of Savannah Dry it means the man has courage, for Windhoek Lager it mean he is a 'bro', for Black Label it means he is extremely masculine. The only beer that seems to stray from this masculine focus is Flying Fish because of their portrayal of men and women drinking together but, as assessed above, it can only do this because of the location of the advertisements.

Women have a strict place in the advertisements for these beer and cider brands. In all advertisements they are kept anonymous and often silent. They are not seen drinking the alcohol which seems to tell them not to because if someone does not drink the brand in the advertisement where the product is being advocated, when are they supposed to? The implications of these advertisements promoting masculinity are that women are completely left out of the narrative.

The crisis of masculinity in South Africa allows room for alcohol to be advertised towards the 'new lad' (Horsley, 2005) in cases like Savannah Dry, Windhoek Lager and Black Label, as well as the 'new man' (Horsley, 2005) in cases like Flying Fish. What this means is that hegemonic masculinity still exists, but that (given my research) this construct appears to have changed in order to selectively incorporate 'softer' types of masculinity to ensure the continued dominance of men, or, in fact, images of men in pop culture. Women, on the other hand, continue to be marginalised in the media where only very certain types of femininity are represented: regarding my analysis, for example, it appears that objectification of women persists; observable via the decorative roles they are locked into in these advertisements. Thus it can be argued that although there is a crisis of masculinity, women still have less power than men in South African society and they still have less flexibility in their femininity than men have with their masculinity.

There will great implications of this research on the future practices of beer and cider advertising because the longer they continue to abide by traditional and outdated gender norms, the further behind they will fall as brands in the minds of consumers. Gordon states that recently "the broader stereotypes of gender and the reinvention of masculinity have come into focus" (2016) in the world of advertising. She states that in order for brands to stay relevant they "need to not only *reflect* the

shifting definitions of gender in society but also play a central role in *actively reshaping culture*" (Gordon, 2016). "The separate domains of men and women are increasingly a thing of the past" (Gordon, 2016) and if these South African beer and cider brands do not realise this and change their advertising strategies they will become insignificant.

Possible future research into this topic could be done on other alcoholic beverages like vodka or rum. Another interesting focus could be to look at alcohol that is advertised towards women in South Africa and to see how they are portrayed and the implications of this on women. But most interestingly, further research could be conducted into unintentional homoeroticism in these overtly masculine advertisements. In the Savannah Dry advertisement, for example, the signs of the toothpick that the boss is chewing on in the beginning of the advertisement, the ties that the men are wearing, the cocktail sausage that both Mark and his boss want, and the Savannah bottle all connote the image of the penis. There is an overabundance of phallic symbols in the advertisement which forces one to wonder why, if the advertisement is directed towards men, that there would be so many penises. Is this done unconsciously by Savannah or is there a reason?

The limitations of this research are that only television advertisements were chosen. There are still many print and radio advertisements that could be analysed and that wield the same or different results. It is also limited because only four brands were chosen to be analysed but there is a plethora of beer and cider brands in South Africa that could have been chosen instead. Finally the research is limited because the analysis was done through a gendered lens and so the only focus was on masculinity and femininity. Another focus that could have been included is race, a pertinent issue in South Africa because of the ramifications of apartheid that is difficult to overlook and yet had to be for the sake of focus and length of the paper.

Ethical implications in this paper are that because sexism, homophobia and unrealistic expectations placed on men are so widespread, this study can be said to fulfil a role of 'watchdog': it, to a small degree, marks and discloses social injustice or unfairness.

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I hereby declare that the Research Report submitted for the Vega BA Honours degree to The Independent Institute of Education is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for degree purposes.